

The Green Grannies of Charlottesville

480 Rio Road East

Charlottesville, VA 22901

SP2021-1
Midway Solar

Albemarle Planning Commission

401 McIntire Road

Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Members of the Albemarle Planning Commission:

On behalf of the Green Grannies of Charlottesville [some of whom reside in Albemarle County] we wish to encourage you to support the solar farm instillation near Batesville. The Green Grannies of Charlottesville are an environmental group of elders who wish to promote alternative forms of energy by educating, energizing and entertaining our community about the perils of climate change and what will happen if we don't act now. As elders we want change now, so that our children and grandchildren can still live on this planet after we are gone. The installation near Batesville is a wonderful step forward in helping our community become less dependent on fossil fuels. We take our hats off to Sun Tribe Solar for perusing this bold and appropriate plan and hope that this is just the first of many such projects in Albemarle County. We appreciate all that the Planning Commission has done to help propel Albemarle County to be a leader in changing the course we are currently on. Thank you and please vote yes for the Solar Farm near Batesville.

Sincerely,

Virginia Mule
for
The Green Grannies of Charlottesville
3/4/21

To: Albemarle County Planning Commission

Re: Midway Solar Project

First, I am in favor of the clean energy produced by solar power. After some research I now understand there are adverse effects of solar power. They are associated with land use, water use, soil erosion, habitat loss, interference with migrations, and the toxic materials used in the manufacture of solar panels. I think careful analysis is necessary to determine the proper location for a large size solar industrial complex.

There are environmental problems associated with solar panels. The toxic chemicals in solar panels include **cadmium** telluride, copper indium selenide, **cadmium** gallium selenide, hexafluoroethane, **lead**, polyvinyl fluoride, and Silicon tetrachloride. These chemicals may or may not prove to be a problem during the life of the panels. But a crack in a panel due to storm damage or time would allow rainwater penetration to leach the chemicals out into the soil and eventually our water sources. There is not enough oversight to monitor cracks in >30,000 panels. Apparently cracks are common. Currently there are no regulations in place for end of life disposal. 78 million tons of solar bulking waste is projected by 2050. We need a clearly stated plan of disposal for this project. And an alternate plan is needed in case Sun Tribe Solar is no longer in business in 25 years.

Storm Water Analysis Plan. I would like to see this plan available to the public. Both the plan during destruction and construction period as well as the long term plan for storm water management. The Mechums River is on the proposed Solar Project property. The Mechums River is listed as "impaired" status with significant sediment load. Solar panels have an impervious surface. Rainwater will run off, unable to soak in the ground. This creates a loss of groundwater recharge, increased storm water runoff, erosion. I hope the plan is not to push the water back into the Mechums River and her tributaries. Runoff must be mitigated. The water should be clean. The runoff should have low or no impact. There needs to be ongoing monitoring to enforce the storm water requirements, especially water quality.

Our driveway is in a 100 year flood plan on Batesville Rd. The flooding occurs from a tributary creek which comes to us along the North side of Craigs Store Rd. as it feeds into the Mechums River on Batesville Road. This would be a tremendous problem and expense for residents on River Hill Lane if drainage from the solar farm makes it's way to this tributary. I would like assurance this will not be the case.

My property is adjacent to the proposed project to the NE. I am on high ground so I will have a view of the solar complex. I do believe this project will have an impact on my property value. In Rhode Island, it was reported houses within 1 mile of the solar farm saw 5% reduction in their home values. I certainly know it will be shocking to see a large industrial complex sitting in the middle of heaven on earth.

Padma (Alma) Ball

6809 River Hill Lane

From: Carolyn Graves <cgraves52@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 10:29 AM
To: Bill Fritz <BFRTZ@albemarle.org>
Subject: RE: SP 2021-01 Midway Solar

CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.

Good Morning Mr. Fritz: Regarding the Midway Solar Project Proposal near Batesville, my property sits below the project near Craigs Store Road. I would like to address a few concerns regarding the proposed project. When we have heavy rains there is a large amount of run off that comes from above my property resulting in the small stream located behind my house to overflow. If the trees and underbrush that is now on the hillside above are removed I am concerned there will be even more run off resulting in a larger amount of water flowing into the stream. Also in articles that I have read there is something called "Cadmium Telluride" which is a substance that is in the panels of the solar panels and should they break or become damaged that substance can leach out into the water supply. Our neighbor Mrs. Williams had sent an email earlier to you regarding her concern for the watershed supply being damaged and this is a major concern also the fact that we all have well water that we do not want to become damaged. There are also articles stating the toxic waste the solar panels can produce after there lifespan has ended. I understand the normal life cycle for the solar farms are around 25 to 30 years, during which time they will need to be maintained on a regular basis "hopefully". What will happen to the panels once there lifespan is ended, I have heard horror stories about SOLAR GRAVEYARDS where they are just left and we cannot dump them into the landfills. All of these concerns should in my opinion add up to not approving the solar farm in this area, we will be damaging the wildlife, the water supply, the landscape and least but not less the value of our property will most likely go down. We ask that you give much thought before giving an OK to this project as it will be effecting many aspects of life in our neighborhood.

Thank you for your time, Carolyn Graves

From: Napier, Elizabeth <enapier@middlebury.edu>
Sent: Thursday, April 8, 2021 4:12 PM
To: Bill Fritz <BFRITZ@albemarle.org>
Cc: Barbara Ryder <tisryder@gmail.com>; Mary Ryder <maryrydercullin@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: SP 2021-01 Midway Solar

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Dear Mr. Fritz,

We would be grateful if you would include the following comments and questions in the packet for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for April 20.

We write in regard to the proposed Midway Solar Project on Route 635 in Batesville. We are an abutting property owner (across the road and to the south, parcel id no. 8500-00-00-00400). We were not all able to attend the meeting on February 23 and to speak at the meeting on March 16. Would you be kind enough to discuss and to request that SunTribe address the following questions in detail?

1. Describe light mitigation plans at and around the site. If lighting will be limited to times of maintenance and maintenance will be limited to daytime hours, what kind of lighting specifically is SunTribe requesting approval for? Bird migration is negatively impacted by artificial light, and we ask the committee to provide evidence that such adverse effects will not be introduced by this project.
2. Describe noise mitigation plans at the site.
3. Describe screening plans to preserve views from higher elevations (on housing lots higher up Burnt Mountain). We are concerned about probable negative impact on the values of adjoining properties, the viewsheds of which may be significantly compromised by this project.
4. Specify construction hours and days as well as duration while project is underway.
5. We are concerned about the plan to "stabilize" as opposed to reforest the area of the installation after the project is decommissioned. Such a decision could have a negative impact both aesthetically and on wildlife. We would urge the committee to consider whether reforestation would be an appropriate condition to levy in accordance with appropriate guidelines for the area and to provide evidence if it is not considered appropriate.
6. We would like to request a formal visibility analysis for our property as well as a visual simulation from representative parts of our property.

Thank you for considering our questions.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Ryder Napier

Barbara Ryder Studholme

Mary Ryder Cullin

1521 Craigs Store Road

Afton

From: Sara Tueting <tueting6@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 4:56 PM

To: Agricultural Forestal District Committee <AgriculturalForestalDistrictCommittee@albemarle.org>

Cc: Bill Fritz <BFRITZ@albemarle.org>

Subject: Tonight's meeting, 3/16/2021

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Dear AFD committee members:

My family and immediate neighbors are opposed to two items on your agenda for tonight's meeting: Central Virginia Electric Cooperatives and SunTribe Solar's proposal to install a solar generating facility off Craig's Store Road, and the special use request for a day camp on the Haupt property off Batesville Road.

As a homeowner whose property immediately abuts the proposed location of the solar generating facility, my family and I are frankly outraged that you would allow this facility to be constructed in this location. We purchased our property nearly 20 years ago, in part because the land behind us was in a forest conservation district. Why would the county have designated that area as a forest conservation district if not to preserve the important rural nature of the area? This property is home to Virginia pines and a host of bird species, including pileated woodpeckers.

We have many concerns about this proposal, including the detrimental effect it will have on our property values, the noise the construction will create, as well as the damage to the watershed and our own property created by runoff to the Meecham River and nearby streams. The proposed site is at the top of the hill, so it sits higher than my home. We do not want to see 12-foot high chain link fencing and have our night skies ruined by the proposed security lighting. The vegetative buffer zone and plantings that have been proposed by Solar Tribe are inadequate at best. County staff have noted that the project may be visible from the Batesville Historic District, which is one mile from my home. So how visible will it be to someone whose house is less than 1,000 feet from the actual panels? How big are these things going to be?

I do not understand why you would throw your support behind a plan that calls for the destruction of forest in an area that for years has been considered important enough to conserve. Access to the site is limited, and Craig's Store Road is narrow and winding -- not the safest route for large trucks and motorists, even if you approach the site from the west off Route 151.

We have discussed this proposal with a representative of the Piedmont Environmental Council, and he said his group has reservations about the plan, in part because of concerns about runoff from the site and the fact that this area is considered high-quality agricultural land. As county personnel have pointed out, this would be the first such project of its kind within the drinking water supply watershed. Is this wise, or even necessary?

We are not opposed to solar, but we absolutely do not support developing industrial solar projects on rural and agricultural land. If the site was zoned for commercial or industrial development, this would be an entirely different matter.

Finally, the plan to allow a special use permit for a day camp along Batesville Road is a cause for serious concern because of the potential traffic and noise. Much of Batesville Road isn't paved, nor is it wide enough for two vehicles to pass comfortably.

We would ask that you not support these proposals.

Best regards,

Sara Tueting
1832 Craigs Store Road
PO Box 194
Batesville, VA 22924

From: Elizabeth Gathright <elcgathright@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2021 1:55 PM
To: Bill Fritz <BFRITZ@albemarle.org>
Subject: Sun Tribe

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Sounds good to me. There are a lot of possible neighbors I would rather NOT have.

From: Elizabeth K Williams <ekw777@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, March 1, 2021 12:29 PM

To: Bill Fritz <BFRITZ@albemarle.org>

Cc: Bobby Jocz <bobby.jocz@suntribedevlopment.com>; Brad Daniel <brad_daniel@yahoo.com>; Carolyn Graves <cgraves52@comcast.net>; Christopher Hawk <chawk@pecva.org>; CVEC (acotter@mycvec.com) <acotter@mycvec.com>; Debi Winstead <dewinstead724@gmail.com>; Douglas Gellman <dzg@hotmail.com>; Elizabeth Gathright <elcgathright@gmail.com>; Holmes C. Brown <orkney1942@gmail.com>; James Clark <refrep402@gmail.com>; Jane Fellows <dancingdeer.fellows@gmail.com>; Jim Andrews <andrewsjames@gmail.com>; Karen Firehock <kfirehock@albemarle.org>; Kevin Winstead <klw13517@gmail.com>; Kimberley Goossens <eddress@mac.com>; Kristin Jones <kejones1907@gmail.com>; Lisa Martin <lisamartinbooks@gmail.com>; Liz Palmer <lpalmer@albemarle.org>; Mark Tueting <mtueting@harrisonburg.k12.va.us>; Marla Muntner <mmuntner@gmail.com>; Mike Stanton <Mike.Stanton@suntribedevlopment.com>; Padma Ball <pball749@gmail.com>; Richard Keffert <richard.keffert@gmail.com>; Sara Tueting <tueting6@gmail.com>; Sharon Root <sharonrt1@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: SP 2021 -01 Midway Solar

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Hi Bill,

Thank you for keeping us informed about the Midway Solar project.

I applaud CVEC for going solar.

My property, 6793 River Hill Lane, is on the Mechums and close to the proposed property via the CVEC powerline right-of-way. I've lived here for 36 years.

I am happy to support the location of this proposal, yet I have 3 concerns regarding environmental impacts of the project.

First, many solar farms are a source of increased runoff if the panels are low to the ground and sit on gravel rather than field grasses etc. which is documented to increase runoff substantially. (One suggestion is to create swales to catch the runoff before it reaches the river so that sedimentation can be "caught". Another. is to place the panels high enough so that there room for grasses etc beneath and room for mowing or bushhogging if necessary.) Albemarle county does not need another 80 acres of degraded habitat.

As you may know, this section of the Mechums has a poor pollution rating due to sedimentation. To worsen sedimentation would be disastrous to the health of the Mechums.

Also, how would the construction of the solar farm, the construction of the storage unit and the proposed public park effect the Mechums?

Historically, this property has been a source of degradation of the Mechums River in at least 2 major ways. Large parts used to be a beautiful mature forest that was logged and replaced with a monoculture tree farm some 20 plus years ago. The loggers used poor erosion control techniques, even driving large machinery and logging trucks thru the Mechums.

And there were cows on the property that were not fenced from the river banks and routinely damaged the banks.

A second concern would be the plantings for visual and noise control.

We should get a commitment to use only native plants, local to this area.

Third, light pollution is harmful to insects and birds. With the very large deer population in this area, I would suggest on/off switchers for the lights rather than motion sensor lights, which would likely be going on and off all night.

Also, the option of public access to the Mechums is a great idea. It would also be an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of our fresh water ways, and how to protect and maintain them.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth K William's

6793 River Hill Lane. Afton, Va

[mailing address: 915 Locust Ln, Charlottesville, VA 22901]

To: Agricultural Forestal District Committee members

Bill Fritz

Scott Clark

Carolyn Shaffer

Vivian Groeschel

From: Phil and Jane Fellows

Date: March 15, 2021

Re: Special Use Permit for Midway Solar/ Suntribe

To Whom It May Concern:

We would like to take this opportunity to share our thoughts and concerns regarding this project.

Our primary concern is that views of the commercial solar operation from our property or from Thunder Ridge Road will have a negative impact on our property values.

Regarding other issues and ideas that were discussed at the community zoom meeting, we prefer that no public access or walking trails be made available to the community. We believe this increased traffic is not advantageous to the river or to surrounding properties, including our own. We do not want increased traffic on our property.

We prefer the site be planted in native, wildlife supporting habitat rather than be used for grazing livestock.

Thank you very much,

Phil and Jane Fellows