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Executive Director

caroline@mocoalliance.org

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Associate

kristina@mocoalliance.org



MAINTAIN AGRICULTURE AS THE PRIMARY USE OF LAND IN THE AGRICULTURAL RESERVE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

SUPPORT THE CONDITIONAL USE PROPOSAL FROM AGRICULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS TO ALLOW SOLAR ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS

OUR CLIMATE DECISIONS CAN AND MUST REINFORCE – NOT DESTROY – OUR FOOD AND WATER SECURITY

January 2021

Dear Councilmembers,

Montgomery County is home to the nation's most celebrated farmland. Our County's Agricultural Reserve – a forty-year effort and model of farming on the edge of a metropolis – is 93,000 acres of land preserved for farming. Led by a coalition of farmers and advocates for local agriculture, food justice, climate justice, and clean water, the undersigned request your support to maintain agriculture as the sole primary land use in the Agricultural Reserve. This means rejecting ZTA 20-01 as written, and voting "Yes" on the Agricultural Stakeholders' Conditional Use proposal for reviewing and permitting solar installations in the Agricultural Reserve.

A well-protected Agricultural Reserve is key to food security, human health, and environmental sustainability for all residents in Montgomery County and the Chesapeake region now and in the years to come. Its 562 farms supply food and fiber, along with clean drinking water and clean air, to the Greater Washington D.C. region. The ability to grow food locally has been critical during the pandemic, while 100,000 people in Montgomery County are food-insecure. The Farm to Food Bank Program is helping farmers ramp-up the supply of healthy table crops to families in need. And local food production will become even more critical as the climate crisis worsens. At present, 5% or less of the table crops eaten in our region are grown in our region; as fuel prices increase and food supplies are disrupted, Montgomery County's need for the Ag Reserve, for the food security of its residents, will increase. All Montgomery County residents have been part of and paid for the Agricultural Reserve, and all Montgomery County residents benefit from preserving it for agriculture.

ZTA 20-01, if passed as written, will break the legal tools that have protected the Agricultural Reserve so far. The bill's current language would allow a non-

agricultural industry to be considered a “permitted use”, the same category as farming. **This will destroy the legal protections that have allowed the County to preserve this land for agriculture.** The fact that Montgomery County has maintained farming as the sole primary land use in the Ag Reserve for forty years supports the case for adhering to the Master Plan and maintaining this crucial land use commitment to agriculture. If Montgomery County now establishes large-scale solar as a co-equal permitted use for land in the Ag Reserve through this ZTA, its strongest argument against State siting of large industrial facilities will be lost, and the County will lose its control of land use in the Ag Reserve. Making solar power a conditional use instead, [as proposed by the Stakeholders](#), will allow appropriate solar projects to move forward in the Ag Reserve while retaining the County’s local control over land use. [This is the legal framework Howard County and Baltimore County have used](#), and Montgomery County must follow suit.

Smart solar siting does not require Montgomery County to rush to displace renting farmers. A sound climate response should not pit energy producers against farmers; we can choose to expand the solar industry in places where it won’t have such negative effects (including brownfields, parking lots, industrial roofs, and more) and there are many more effective methods we can use in the Agricultural Reserve that can assist the County in meeting their climate action goals - including using regenerative agriculture practices on our lands to pull carbon back into the soil. Neither Montgomery County nor the state of Maryland have completed a [comprehensive study to determine where solar can and should be optimally placed](#); communities that have done so [found more than enough appropriate sites to build solar without taking prime farmland](#).

If the Ag Reserve is opened to non-conditional solar development, this land use change will displace farmers from their land. Farmers rely on access to affordable land to rent: that’s why Montgomery County residents have invested for decades in easements, Transfers of Development Rights, and other tools to keep this valuable land affordable for farmers. But land rents being offered by the solar industry are more than 20 times higher than what many land-leasing farmers currently pay. Some of Montgomery’s tenant farmers are already losing their long-term leases, due to solar speculators’ offers to landowners. ZTA 20-01 would open 2% (1800 acres) of the land in the Ag Reserve to solar, but industry representatives have said this is only the beginning of the land they wish to access, with their aim being solar conversion of anywhere between 13,000 and 18,000 acres in the Ag Reserve. *[Reimer, Hans. Statement during July 22, 2020 Joint Planning, Housing, & Economic Development and Transportation & Environmental Committees worksession, minutes 8 to 11.]* Through the “[Land Link](#)” program of [Montgomery Countryside Alliance](#), 40 new farmers - many of them immigrants, people of color, women, and veterans - are now seeking suitable land in the Ag Reserve, with 15 landowners offering farmland; the more landlords are able to raise rents and speculate on solar development, the fewer farmers will be able to afford and access land. [Fifty-seven percent of land in the Ag Reserve is rented, not farmed by its owner](#) – so renting farmers and new farmers searching for land to rent will lose out if forced to compete for land access with the deep-pocketed solar industry.

Montgomery County should not base its zoning decisions solely on private corporations’ profit and convenience. Solar industry speculators and owners are seeking to profit from

converting “cheap farmland” to energy production, but that inexpensive farmland is not a happenstance - it is the result of the forty-year effort to create and protect the Ag Reserve to benefit farming, because producers need affordable, stable land access. By developing on this publicly-subsidized farmland instead of on available, more appropriate sites, the solar firms can increase their profits – but increasing corporate profits is not why Montgomery County has invested in preserving the Agricultural Reserve. The industry objects to the Conditional Use process because they claim it will take too much time – but that is the same process that other industrial uses that may be in the public interest, like cell phone towers or transmission lines, follow in order to use land in the Ag Reserve. Giving the solar industry a special dispensation that other industries do not have is not necessary to build solar power in Montgomery County.

We ask you to support the compromise Conditional Use amendment to the ZTA. The undersigned organizations and individuals ask you to work with the Stakeholder community to:

- Reject ZTA 20-01 as written.
- Support the compromise Conditional Use proposal instead

Montgomery County already has the [second-most solar installations in the state](#); we don't need to destroy the Agricultural Reserve to create solar power. The County can keep fighting climate change and working for environmental justice by expanding the Farm to Food Bank program, instituting a regenerative agriculture pilot program in the Agricultural Reserve, conducting a solar siting study and Smart Solar location policy, and prioritizing solar development on degraded land, brownfield, built surfaces, and industrial zones (like the 500-acre former coal plant site in Dickerson). Let's build a harmonious food and climate justice strategy that honors complementary roles for agriculture and appropriately-scaled and sited solar facilities.

For Food and Climate Justice,

Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Sugarloaf Citizens Association
Clean Water Action
Safe Skies Maryland
TALLE - Takoma Alliance for Local Living Economy
TAME Coalition (Transit Alternatives to MidCounty Highway Extended)
Divergence, LLC
Maryland Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
Preservation Maryland
Sugarland Ethnohistory Project
Landscape and Nature Discoveries
Biodiversity For A Livable Climate
Conservation Montgomery
Poolesville High School Chesapeake Bay Coalition
One Tree Club
Friends of Ten Mile Creek
Echotopia LLC
West Montgomery County Citizens Association

Environmental Justice Ministry-Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Valley Mill Camp
Richard Montgomery High School Fishing Club
Voices MD
L & M Farm
Montgomery County Farm Bureau
Envision Frederick County
Town of Barnesville
League of Women Voters of Montgomery County
Kingsbury's Orchard
Cloverly Civic Association
Audubon Naturalist Society
Sunrise Rockville
Sunrise Einstein
Nick's Organic Farm
Sunrise Movement Frederick
Safe Healthy Playing Fields Inc
Sunrise Movement Baltimore
Cedar Lane Ecosystems Study Group
Citizens' Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Seneca Creek Watershed Partners
Future Harvest - Chesapeake Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture
Shepherd's Hey Farm
Around The Mountain Farm
Darnestown Civic Association
Bethesda Chevy Chase Izaak Walton League
Muslim Voices Coalition
Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club
Montgomery County Civic Federation
Progressive Democrats of America
One Acre Farm LLC
District 1 Neighbors
Dodo Farms
Tiewyan Farms
Green Plate Catering
By Boyds Civic Association
Comus Sky Farm
Hidden Ridge Farm Flowers and Herbs
Peach Tree Pottery
Compost Crew
Potomac Oak Center and Cinnamon Hill Apiaries
Chesapeake Bay Coalition
Potomac Bridle and Hiking Trails Association
Westmoreland Citizens Association

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024 10:28:55 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Adrienne Thomas <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 8:57 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Adrienne Thomas

adrienne.thomas427@gmail.com

17069 Oxley Farm Rd

Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/8/2024 8:21 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Hello - protection or diverse new local farms is something very important to me. My senior project at Poolesville High School was a documentary warning of the consequences of a lack of new generation of farmers. We need to protect our remaining farmland to make it possible for new farmers to grow food.


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Alexandra Goldman
allielgoldman@gmail.com
15711 Hughes Rd
Poolesville , Maryland 20837


Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

8/10/2024 12:55 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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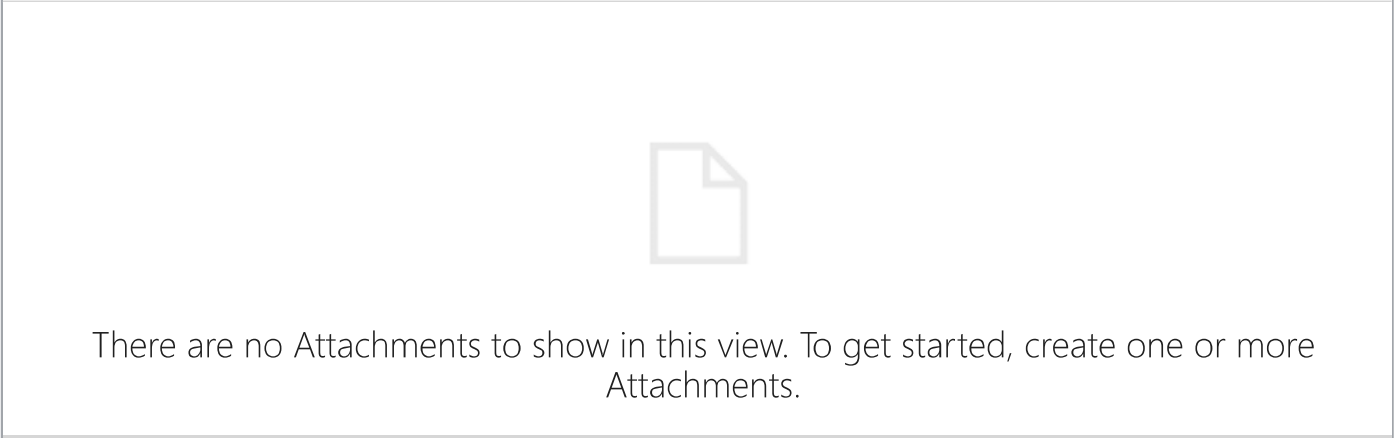
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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

**amy truly
atruly@aol.com
12106 Jan Lane,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904**

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 5:15:22 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Amy Wokasien <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 3:28 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm copying and pasting what I'm supposed to write but adding in my own comments: every time we change the original Ag Reserve zoning we chip away at its' integrity. Solar farms are not farms!

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Amy Wokasien

awokasien@aol.com

18205 Darnestown Rd

Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 2:42 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Ann Connor
conrfam@aol.com
17325 Soper St
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 3:20 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

I think there is always a path of least resistance when it comes to open and/or agricultural land. Just like it's easier to put a road thru a forest than to remake an existing road:Plus there is timber to be sold as a benefit! This is true with solar panels. It is easier to put them in agricultural land instead of existing parking lots & roof tops.

So what? The need for food, water & trees for breathing is more important. As this county continues its work to streamline development, they seem to forget these things.

**Ann Smith
annsmithscwp@gmail.com
10760 Wayridge Drive
Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886**


Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 2:29 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I am writing now to reaffirm my commitment to balanced solar siting policy in Montgomery County. We arrived at that policy through much consideration and compromise. I urge you to protect the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. An end run around this policy, which is what is at issue here, would surely put an end to most agriculture in our Ag Reserve, which simply can't compete with the flood of money offered by solar companies.

According to law, the Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I am urging the county to mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies before the PSC as it considers allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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Sincerely,

Anne Ambler
anambler@gmail.com
12505 Kuhl Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902-1443


Attachments

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Email




FW: Uphold County Zoning...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/3/2024 7:37 PM
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From: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 3:19 PM
To: Branda, Ilana <Ilana.Branda@mncppc-mc.org>
Cc: Coello, Catherine <catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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A logo with text on it
Description
automatically generated

Artie L. Harris
Chair

Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reddie Dr, 14th Floor, Wheaton, MD 20902

MCP-CHAIR@mncppc-mc.org
o: 301.495.4628

From: Anne Sturm <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 11:56 AM
To: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Please protect our food growing soil while promoting solar in the Ag. Reserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Anne Sturm
annets1@aol.com
P.O. Box 341, 22120 Beallsville RD
Barnesville, Maryland 20838

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
image001.jpg	5,445	
image002.png	1,230	
image003.png	1,429	

image004.png	1,464
image005.png	1,482
1 - 5 of 5 (0 selected)	Page 1

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From
📧 Liz Calzadillas

To
📧 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>; 👤 MCP-Chair #; 📧 MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject
Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent
Date Received
7/3/2024 5:08 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I have lived on a farm in the Ag Reserve since 1980. I have objected to using any of our limited agricultural land for community solar. We should use roof tops and parking lots first. (Yes, I know it is more expensive than siting solar on bare ground.). I do not believe that Montgomery County can provide all our energy needs with wind and solar. There is nothing wrong with importing energy from other states--we already do. The developers who are spinning a tale of free energy will be long gone when these panels crack or break or need to be replaced as technology evolves. And you really need battery back-up for when the sun is not shining, like every night.

Reluctantly, I supported the compromise reached in 2021 for limited community solar in the Ag Reserve.

I'm writing now to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to


consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Anne Davies
nannedavies@verizon.net
305 Old Bucklodge Lane
Boys, Maryland 20841

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Antoinette Hudson](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/3/2024 7:26 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

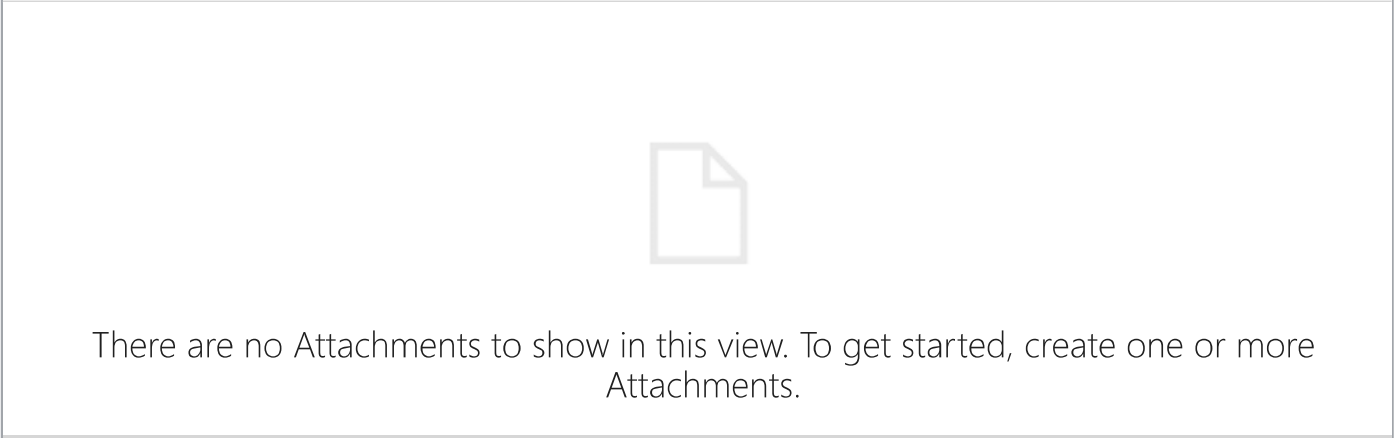
ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Antoinette Hudson
johudson@erols.com
214 Tulip Dr
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

Attachments

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FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Friday, July 5, 2024 10:22:32 AM

Are the two of you getting these? If not, I will need to forward them all...

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedsie Drive - 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177

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-----Original Message-----
From: Barbara Hoover <hooverb@mon.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 12:10 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@moacppc.org>
Subject: Upheld County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugrue/Chaberton Solar Ranch, LLC - Case No. 9733)

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approval under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approval projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Sober develops an offering timeline 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage – locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county apt for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of the, *namely* fields of prime soils. Please uphold the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.


Barbara Horvath
 knoworth@jpmc.com
 940 Wilshire Lane
 Potomac, Maryland 20854

[illegible]

Email

Good to see solar in the Ag...

Owner

 MCP...
 

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Good to see solar in the Ag Reserve

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 11:20 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.


Planning Chair Artie Harris,

I'm writing to encourage the County to support solar on the Ag Reserve. In the spirit of keeping development off the Ag Reserve land, solar provides a highly valuable land use for landowners to produce energy, contribute to the region, and ensure that open space remains open.

Ben Bellows
Takoma Park

Ben Bellows
bbellows@gmail.com
6425 5TH AVE
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 9:39 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

As farmers in the Agricultural Reserve since 1974 we are not opposed to solar. We have had 85 solar panels installed on our farm building rooftops since 2016, and plan to expand that system to generate up to 200% of our power requirements as soon as we have the cash available. On our 57 acre farm we have approximately 6 acres of pasture on class 4 soils that we would consider for ground level solar array to accomplish this if rooftop space is not sufficient. All of this would be in accordance with the compromise criteria established in the Montgomery County zoning text amendment (ZTA 20-01) for the Agricultural Reserve which allows solar and protects a viable, profitable farming culture.


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Bev Thoms
thoms.bev@icloud.com
21700 Big Woods Rd
Dickerson, Maryland 20842

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/11/2024 10:40 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Brad Thoms
rbradthoms@yahoo.com
21700 Big Woods Road
Dickerson, Maryland 20842

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 C Tunis

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 7:31 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I am **STRONGLY OPPOSED** to siting additional solar in the Ag Reserve. The Reserve is for agriculture! Solar should be sited on taller buildings, commercial buildings, parking garages, and parking lots where it can do good without doing harm to the environment. No trees should be harmed to produce solar energy!

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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C Tunis
catherine.tunis@rcn.com
907 Larch Ave
Takoma Park , Maryland 20912

Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Carol Allen

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 8/9/2024 8:17 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Carol Allen
carolallen@erols.com
14320 POPLAR HILL RD
GERMANTOWN, Maryland 20874

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/16/2024 9:01 PM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

CAROL DREHER
carolmalia@yahoo.com
5225 Pooks Hill Rd, Apt A-28-South
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Carolyn Conlan

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 3:22 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

We support Montgomery County policies that balance the siting of solar generation systems with the protection of precious prime soils in our Agricultural Reserve. We strongly encourage our County’s elected officials to do the same. Please oppose the installation of two large solar arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with County zoning.


ZTA 20-01, which allowed solar development in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement, and Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are now being built on less-than-prime soils.

Recently, however, solar developers have been offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers currently pay to lease acreage to build arrays on prime soils. If allowed, this development would lock out a new generation of diverse producers from land set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please reaffirm and take action to support the county's 40-year commitment to the Ag

Reserve by vigorously engaging on this issue before the Public Service Commission.
Thank you.

Carolyn Conlan
cgconlan@rcn.com
13609 Esworthy Road
Darnestown , Maryland 20874

Attachments

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: solar on ag reserve
Date: Thursday, July 18, 2024 9:30:42 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Carrie Witkop <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:35 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: solar on ag reserve

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

good morning. I hope that common sense prevails when it comes to solar on the ag reserve and you do not allow building on our limited farm land. There are so many other spots to install solar arrays that we should not even consider putting them on our prime farm land. Please do not allow solar to go onto our precious ag reserve. Try the tops of new county building construction and schools... or at the side of highways. Please please take care of our ag reserve, our land and our water. All the best, Carrie and Tom Witkop

Carrie Witkop

carriewitkop@gmail.com

8827 McGregor Drive

Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

Email


Uphold MoCo Zoning and ...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold MoCo Zoning and Master Plan @ MD Public Service Commission

Date Sent	Date Received	7/16/2024 2:33 PM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Dear County Executive and County Council:

As a voter and long-time Montgomery County resident, I'm writing to endorse and reaffirm MoCo's commitment to a balanced solar siting policy that protects the prime soils of our unique and irreplaceable Agricultural Reserve. Maryland's Public Service Commission is required to give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that Montgomery County mount the strongest possible defense of our master plan and zoning policies as the PSC weighs allowing two large solar arrays on prime soils in the Ag Reserve, in direct conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, while several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, which is unable to keep up with the number of new requests.


Now, solar developers are offering landowners 10 to 20 times what farmers currently pay to lease acreage -- prices that will effectively lock a new generation of diverse producers

out of the only county land set aside for farming. The economics of the Agricultural Reserve will be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use MoCo's finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils.

I urge you to stand firm on Montgomery County's 40-year commitment to our treasured Agricultural Reserve through strong engagement on the current solar array applications before the Maryland PSC.

Catherine Lemp
cathylemp@gmail.com
18407 Jerusalem Church Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837-8512

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...






Email

From

 [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:46 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Thank you for your public service. The County Council of the 1970's which established the Ag Reserve was a wise body. MoCo now imports 86% of its vegetables and fruit. If we are truly to lower emissions as the state dictates, we need to grow more of our own consumption. There are limited places to do that; the Ag Reserve is an obvious choice. If this council wants to make the Ag Reserve more effective in lowering emissions, use it for farming. If you want solar, add incentives for rooftops. It won't please the solar manufacturers, but it will lower emissions in the county in 2 ways - fewer imports and more supply of solar. Perhaps the state is more motivated by serving those who fill election coffers rather than solving emissions issues. In this period of institutional trust failure, let's not stoke the fire.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Thank you for considering my suggestion.

Celia Martin, Bethesda resident, solar owner, weed warrior supervisor


Celia Martin

celiavmartin@outlook.com

5326 Falmouth RD

Bethesda, Maryland 20816

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 1:42 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.


Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

It is imperative that local preservation efforts, which have long term, multigenerational implications, take precedent over the short sighted goals of fast buck developers. Solar panels, I have read, have a twenty year lifespan and need replacement at that point. Farmland has no such built in overhead, ongoing expenses. We need local farms, we do not need developers and the public service comissioners overriding local plans while plenty of alternative possibilities exist.

**Charles Alexander
ch_a_alex@hotmail.com
10308 M Malcolm Circle
Cockeysville, Maryland 21030**

Attachments

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024 10:29:05 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Charlie Ugaz <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 11:10 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

As a farmer in Boyds, Md of over 50 acres in the AGRICULTURAL RESERVE... we need protection or lose farming forever in this county!

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Charlie Ugaz

jakeugaz@aol.com

21730 Clarksburg Rd

Boyds, Maryland 20841

Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 8:46 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Christine Rai
sunny_rai@verizon.net
17320 Whitaker Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From


To




Cc

Bcc

Subject

Date Sent

 Liz Calzadillas

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Received

7/3/2024 7:15 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Christy Bumanis
christylb8011@gmail.com
21101 Kaul Lane
Germantown, Maryland 20876

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 3:06 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Claire Wolfe
c_wolfe2003@yahoo.com
14305 Long Channel Drive
Germantown, Maryland 20874

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Testimony from the Climate Coalition Montgomery County

Submitted by Karen Metchis

July 9, 2024

RE: Chaberton Solar Sugarloaf I LLC's Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Construct a 4.0 MW Solar Photovoltaic Generating Facility in Montgomery County, Maryland

Case: Jacket., Case Number: 9726

Date Filed: 03/05/2024

The Climate Coalition Montgomery County (the Coalition) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above referenced Certificate of Public Convenience (CPCN) application, and we trust that the PSC will seriously consider the important points we make, below. In addition to our stated positions, this letter documents the challenges to rural farming that our Coalition argues would be lost by approving the proposed projects.

Summary of Testimony, with details following:

1. The Climate Coalition Montgomery County opposes both the Chaberton Sugarloaf and Chaberton Ramiere CPCN applications which propose to install solar arrays larger than 2 megawatts in the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, particularly on prime Class II agricultural soils, and we request that the PSC deny both applications.
2. The Chaberton solar facilities' proposed siting on prime soil including Classes I and II, combined with standard solar construction practices, threaten to compact and strip topsoil, and threaten to destroy prime farming soil during construction.
3. The health of soils is essential to a resilient planet. In fact, the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) warns us about the impacts of climate change on agriculture and emphasizes that preservation of soils is key to not only crop production but also to every ecosystem service that we depend upon.
4. Solar companies' offers to landowners are resulting in escalating rents and land prices, and threatening early termination of farmers' long-term leases as landowners respond to the immediate cash gain from solar firms. Solar firms have begun targeting low cost farmland by offering land rents ranging from \$1,700/acre to \$5,000/acre annually, compared with tenant farmers' average rental payments of \$120/acre.
5. The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve stands as a national model, often cited as "the most successful farmland preservation program" in the country. It is unique and unlike any other agricultural land in Maryland and is therefore deserving of special protection.
 - a. *The Transferable Development Rights program provides tax benefits and compensation to landowners for loss of equity.*
 - b. *The Building Lot Termination Program has successfully protected against the risk of sprawl.*
 - c. *Land Link connects landowners with new farmers, helping them find affordable land for farming, but rising competition with commercial enterprises makes this more challenging.*
6. The Climate Coalition Montgomery County supports the expansion and development of solar photovoltaic (PV) and other solar energy projects throughout Montgomery County, including Smart Solar

Siting of PV facilities on rooftops, brownfields, and other already-urbanized sites, along with the continued appropriate development of PV facilities on land in the Agricultural Reserve, in balance with farming and in compliance with Montgomery County's ZTA 20-01.

7. Over-riding ZTA 20-01 enables companies to intentionally circumvent long-standing and well-honed agreements that support both solar power generation and agriculture.

8. We urge you to not allow large solar arrays to be placed on our prime agricultural Class I and II soils.

1. The Climate Coalition Montgomery County opposes both the Chaberton Sugarloaf and Chaberton Ramiere CPCN applications which propose to install solar arrays larger than 2 megawatts in the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, particularly on prime Class II agricultural soils, and we request that the PSC deny both applications.

The Climate Coalition Montgomery County (the Coalition) represents 20 local organizations and several individuals who work to help Montgomery County take action to achieve its climate change goals. The County's goals include reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035 as well as to build resilience to impacts of climate change especially for vulnerable County residents. Achieving both goals can sometimes appear to conflict, as in the case of both Case Number 9726 (Chaberton Sugarloaf) and Case Number 9733 (Chaberton Ramiere). Weighing the balance to meet both goals requires taking a long vision, as both the reduction of GHG emissions and the building of resilience will unfold over a long horizon.

The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve (the Reserve) is a long-standing land use plan that has been in existence for more than 40 years to protect the primacy of agriculture in this important part of the County.

In 2020/21, the County engaged a stakeholder workgroup to address a proposal to build large scale solar in the Reserve. Montgomery's Ag-Solar zoning law, Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 20-01, is the result of that collaboration of 60+ local and state organizations and stakeholders to craft a balanced solar policy for our Ag Reserve.

The stakeholders developed a compromise between farmers (including the American Farmland Trust), solar advocates, and the concerned community which the County Council adopted as ZTA 20-01. The ZTA allows arrays up to 200% of on-farm needs without condition. It also strikes a balance that allows up to 2 Megawatts on prime Class III soils as well as lower quality soils (IV to VII) but preserves the most precious Class I and Class II soils for the Reserve's intended goal – to preserve farmland and support farming. There are no restrictions on solar installations in Montgomery County outside of the Ag Reserve.

Spurred by ZTA 20-01, two Community solar installations have already reached the construction phase in the Reserve, along with 50+ farms installing farm accessory solar power generation facilities (e.g. on barns).¹

¹ Communication from Mike Scheffel, Montgomery County Office of Agriculture to Caroline Taylor, Montgomery Countryside Alliance.

2. *The Chaberton solar facilities' proposed siting on prime soil including Classes I and II, combined with standard solar construction practices, threaten to compact and strip topsoil, and threaten to destroy prime farming soil during construction.*

Solar industry representatives have acknowledged that topsoil management practices during the site construction phase remain a persistent challenge². Soil handling for construction of solar facilities may include stripping the topsoil and grading. The topsoil that is stripped may or may not be re-applied later. We've also learned that a sand layer may be applied to the soil at solar sites.³

We know from similar construction projects in other industries, that the underlying subsoil will be compacted in many locations by heavy construction equipment. This is a problem particularly in Montgomery County with our clay-rich subsoils of the Appalachian Piedmont. These practices tend to destroy soil structure, reduce soil carbon storage, decrease deep infiltration of rainwater; decrease groundwater recharge, and emit soil carbon to the atmosphere.

3. *The health of soils is essential to a resilient planet. In fact, the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) warns us about the impacts of climate change on agriculture and emphasizes that preservation of soils is key to not only crop production but also to every ecosystem service that we depend upon.*

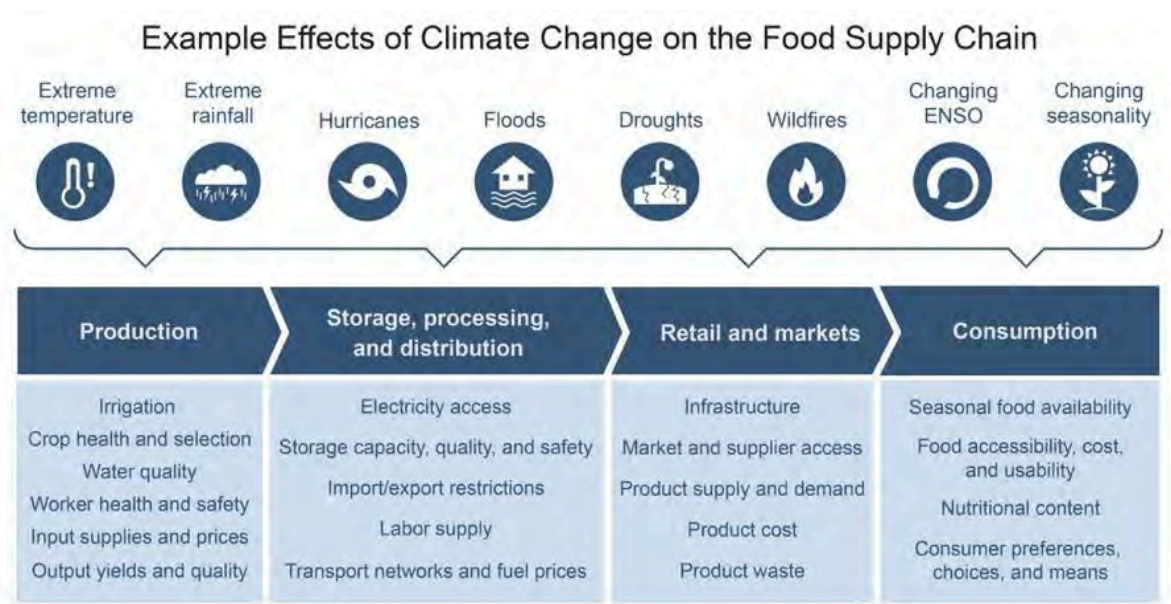
Climate change—especially shifts in precipitation, air temperature, and soil moisture—is disrupting agricultural production and food systems and is projected to reduce the availability and affordability of nutritious food. Impacts are distributed unevenly, with farmworkers, subsistence-based communities, and rural populations facing increasing risks. Opportunities that leverage agroecological approaches can limit emissions from agriculture and improve the resilience of rural communities.

[\(https://nca2023.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/\)](https://nca2023.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/)

USGCRP has documented trends and indicators of the nationwide challenges as both rural and urban communities struggle to be resilient to the effects of climate change, and documents the challenges to rural farming that our Coalition argues would be lost by approving the proposed projects. Local agriculture is increasingly important considering the climate-driven losses of productive farming elsewhere, including losses in California and Florida.

²https://www.chesapeake.org/stac/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/FINAL_Report_Solar-Development_24_001-1.pdf

³ <https://www.reuters.com/info-pages/transcript/9356e138-03f8-11ef-a782-874084676f9d/>



Climate change has cascading and compounding effects on all stages of the food supply chain. Extreme events fueled by climate change (first row, icons) can affect each stage of the food supply chain (second row, dark blue), resulting in compounding and cascading effects on the food system (third row, light blue).

Adapted with permission from Davis et al. 2021.

<https://nca2023.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/#fig-11-10>

Furthermore, the USGCRP has underscored that preservation of soils is key to not only crop production but also to every ecosystem service that we depend upon.⁴

4. *Solar companies' offers to landowners are resulting in escalating rents and land prices, and threatening early termination of farmers' long-term leases as landowners respond to the immediate cash gain from solar firms. Solar firms have begun targeting low cost farmland by offering land rents ranging from \$1,700/acre to \$5,000/acre annually, compared with tenant farmers' average rental payments of \$120/acre.*

Approving the Chaberton projects opens the floodgate to expanding the footprint and market presence of solar firms in the Reserve. Small and start-up farmers seeking to rent land have already been hurt, by forcing them to compete with deep-pocket solar firms for the few available farm leases. *(See Appendix I for samples of offer letters.)*

This influx of lucrative solar lease offers in the Reserve over the past several years, has contributed to a dearth of farmland for lease at any price; has discouraged small start-up farmers when they can't find affordable land for lease and has displaced existing farmers through rising land rents and loss of land access when leases are terminated or simply not renewed. It is this twin need – to preserve our prime soils and to expand - not erode - the vibrancy of our farming economy here including land access for start-up farmers, that drives our concern and the reason why we oppose the Chaberton facilities' proposals.

⁴ <https://nca2023.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/-fig-11-2>

5. The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve stands as a national model, often cited as “the most successful farmland preservation program” in the country. It is unique and unlike any other agricultural land in Maryland and is therefore deserving of special protection.

According to the Agricultural Services Division of the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development: “The majority of Montgomery County farms are family-run operations, many reaching back several generations.” Fifty percent of the county’s farmers work full time in farming and 10,000 people are employed in farming enterprises.⁵

Three programs in particular support landowners and agriculture.

- a. The Transferable Development Rights program provides tax benefits and compensation to landowners for loss of equity.

Before the Reserve was created in 1980, the density for land that is now the Reserve allowed one dwelling unit per five acres of land. Following establishment of the Reserve, density limits were reduced to allow one dwelling unit per 25 acres. To compensate landowners for this loss of equity, the County established the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) program. The TDR program is a zoning mechanism that grants property owners in the Reserve one development right for each five acres of land. Property owners can then receive compensation by selling TDRs to landowners or developers who can use them to develop at a higher density in designated areas elsewhere in the County (see [map](#)).

To receive compensation through the TDR program, property owners must first create a TDR, then sell the TDR to another party to achieve increased residential density in another part of the County, and grant a perpetual easement to the County that severs that development right from the property. A property owner may sell a single TDR for each five acres of land, minus one TDR for each existing dwelling unit on the AR zone property. Property owners in the Reserve that have participated in the TDR program have been paid to keep their land in open space/agriculture and were required to grant a perpetual easement to the County that severs that development right from the property.

Furthermore, property owners in the Reserve are taxed at a lower rate than residential and commercial properties elsewhere in the County. This agricultural use assessment allows a property in the Ag Reserve to be taxed at the agricultural rate, rather than the “highest and best use” rate (i.e., residential). This lower property tax rate helps to keep farming affordable in Montgomery County and benefits farmers; however, it means other property owners outside the Reserve must make up the difference (in addition to bearing the burden of greater development density from the TDR program). This is an equity issue in which some County residents bear more of the cost than those in the Reserve. This is understandable if it is in service to agreed-upon County policy. That would not be the case if the PSC overrides County policy. Thus, if Reserve property owners are allowed to have solar arrays inconsistent with ZTA 20-01 and receive the considerable lease payment income, out of fairness they should not be allowed to enjoy the lower agricultural use assessment and perhaps should pay a higher tax assessment.

⁵ See: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/ag-facts.html>

b. The Building Lot Termination Program has successfully protected against the risk of sprawl.

In 2008, the County also established a Building Lot Termination (BLT) program to further limit non-agricultural residential development in the Reserve.⁶ Without the TDR program, the Reserve would have developed into “ranchette” suburban sprawl (one house per five acres) and there would be little agriculture in the County today. Changes that allow non-agricultural uses will set a precedent that could ultimately result in the loss of open space and agriculture forever.

c. Land Link connects landowners with new farmers, helping them find affordable land for farming, but rising competition with commercial enterprises makes this more challenging.

Land Link matches emerging farmers with farmland here in our Reserve - but competition from deep-pocket non-farming entities including solar firms, is already taking available farm leases and squeezing farmers out. We must alleviate this situation and help more emerging farmers start up farms here - not open the door wider to stiffer competition from large-scale solar in the Reserve, which will further drive up farmland prices and farmland rents, and would further reduce the number of small farms available for lease.

The net result of the proposed Chaberton projects would be to expand and accelerate the loss of existing small producing farms in the Reserve and discourage new start-up farms; such losses would be particularly devastating to high-skill/low-wealth farmers from diverse communities.

Over the past few years, about 40 farmers seeking to come to Montgomery County to farm applied through Land Link for help in accessing available land, many of them women, people of color, veterans, and immigrants. Since 2011, Land Link has matched over 500 acres of local farmland with new and expanding farmers. With 12 - 20 farmers applying to access land through Land Link each year but only about 4 landowners offering land each year, many applicant farmers are waiting longer than a year to find the right place, and often are taking land that is less suitable than desired. Some new farmers, discouraged by the lack of available land for affordable lease terms, have given up the search for farmland here and are looking at other counties in Maryland. We can turn this situation around by doing more to support land access for new and expanding farmers, including enforcing ZTA 20-01 that strikes the right balance between farming and local food production and production of solar energy in the Reserve.⁷

Please see these sites for more on the history and management of the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve: <https://www.mocoalliance.org/history-of-the-ag-reserve.html> and <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/agricultural-reserve/>

⁶ see https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2023_reports/OLOREport2023-1.pdf.

⁷ Email on Land Link statistics from MCA staff member Kristina Bostick to Diane Cameron, 6/18/2024: Out of the 40 farmers applying for land, the number of who have found a farm here to lease varies each year, but we are making an average of 3 matches per year (between 12 and 20 farmers apply each year). Over the past 5 years we average a 15-20% match rate. Landowners joining the program are far more anemic - an average of 4 join per year - making the case for keeping the playing field level with competing uses. That being said, many [farmers] are waiting longer than a year to find the right place and often are taking land that is less suitable than desired (size, water, ability to have housing, livestock).

6. The Climate Coalition Montgomery County supports the expansion and development of solar photovoltaic (PV) and other solar energy projects throughout Montgomery County, including Smart Solar Siting of PV facilities on rooftops, brownfields, and other already-urbanized sites, along with the continued appropriate development of PV facilities on land in the Agricultural Reserve, in balance with farming and in compliance with Montgomery County's ZTA 20-01.

When it comes to proposed land use changes to our Reserve, we believe energy solutions must be weighed against other important climate change considerations and values, e.g., local food and fiber production, clean groundwater and surface water supplies, cooling and cleansing the air, biodiversity, and sequestration of carbon in soils.

The American Farmland Trust has developed principles for Smart Solar Siting that we support for Montgomery County: (1) accelerate renewable energy development through prioritizing of solar siting on the built environment (e.g. already-urban sites) and brownfield sites; (2) strengthen farm viability; and (3) safeguard land for farming and ranching.^{8,9}

Montgomery County is still in the beginning stages of solar PV adoption in our urban and suburban areas, with 3% of homes in the county installing rooftop solar as of 2021 (i.e., of more than 300,000 homes in Montgomery County, about 8,400 had solar panels on their rooftops as of 2021¹⁰); and is likely closer to 5% in 2024. The potential for smart solar siting remains otherwise largely untapped.¹¹ Rather than easily yield to demands to open up the Reserve to solar, we urge the State of Maryland to increase incentives and technical support for Smart Solar Siting projects in urban areas.

7. Over-riding ZTA 20-01 enables companies to intentionally circumvent long-standing and well-honed agreements that support both solar power generation and agriculture.

It concerns us that the PSC is considering overriding the County's zoning in favor of private companies seeking opportunistic loopholes that undermine intended social benefit. It would set a dangerous precedent whereby protections adopted by one part of government for a social benefit are taken away by another part.¹² Once this precedent is set, other parties who disagree with County zoning will seek to have it overridden by another part of government – and perhaps more insidious is the likelihood that solar companies will circumvent ZTA 20-01 by ensuring their installations are greater than 2MW. In fact, the Chaberton Ramiere CPCN application boldly notes:

“The Project being developed by Chaberton Solar Ramiere LLC will satisfy all land use and zoning requirements established by the County with the exception of the prohibition of Solar Collection Facilities on class I/II soils and greater than 2 MW AC in the Agricultural

⁸ Montgomery County ranks second in the state behind Prince George's County for both the number of solar facilities and solar capacity (MWs) (see PSC [Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Report](#) - Data for Calendar Year 2022, pps 36-37).

⁹ Smart Solar Siting: See [smart solar](#) and

https://farmland.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/AFT_Smart-Solar-Handout-General-D.pdf

¹⁰ <https://marylandmatters.org/2021/07/23/county-adds-tool-for-one-day-processing-of-solar-panel-permits/>

¹¹ 2020 DEP presentation titled "Solar in Montgomery County",

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/climate/Resources/Files/climate/solar-presentation-2-26-20.pdf>

¹² Sadly, we saw the Governor and General Assembly take away the PSC's power to review back-up generators at data centers. Data centers are high energy demand facilities and diesel generators emit greenhouse gases - trends that are in themselves contrary to the need to control greenhouse gases.

Reserve. *Development of the Project began as early as 2020 and was originally intended to be a 1 MW AC project prior to the County's Zoning Text Amendment. As the project size was increased for the CPCN submission, the project premises have not been expanded.*"

This strategy was corroborated in a presentation by **Lightstar (Solar +Farming Maryland** <https://mda.maryland.gov/Documents/11.29.23%20Solar%20Summit%20Presentation%20.pdf>) at the Maryland 2023 Agri-Solar Summit:

- In Maryland, community solar projects are less than or equal to 5 megawatts. Agrivoltaics can co-locate up to 10MW.
- Permitting occurs through the Public Service Commission (PSC) for projects above 2MWs to obtain a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN).
- Below 2 MWs may permit locally or elect to permit via the PSC if project does not conform to local law.
- *County-level permitting is extremely restrictive in some areas. Many developers are now exclusively using the PSC process.*

8. We urge you to not allow large solar arrays to be placed on our prime agricultural Class I and II soils.

We ask the PSC to recognize the critical importance of the need to "preserve the Reserve" in its entirety and for its initial purpose. Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's prescient first sentence of the first goal of its 1964 land use plan¹³ states: "Land should be treated as one of our most precious possessions, using efficiently what we need..., and conserving the [Reserve] for the unforeseeable future." The most prudent stewardship of this otherwise unforeseeable future is to keep the Reserve for farming, both for the land and for the expertise of its caretakers.

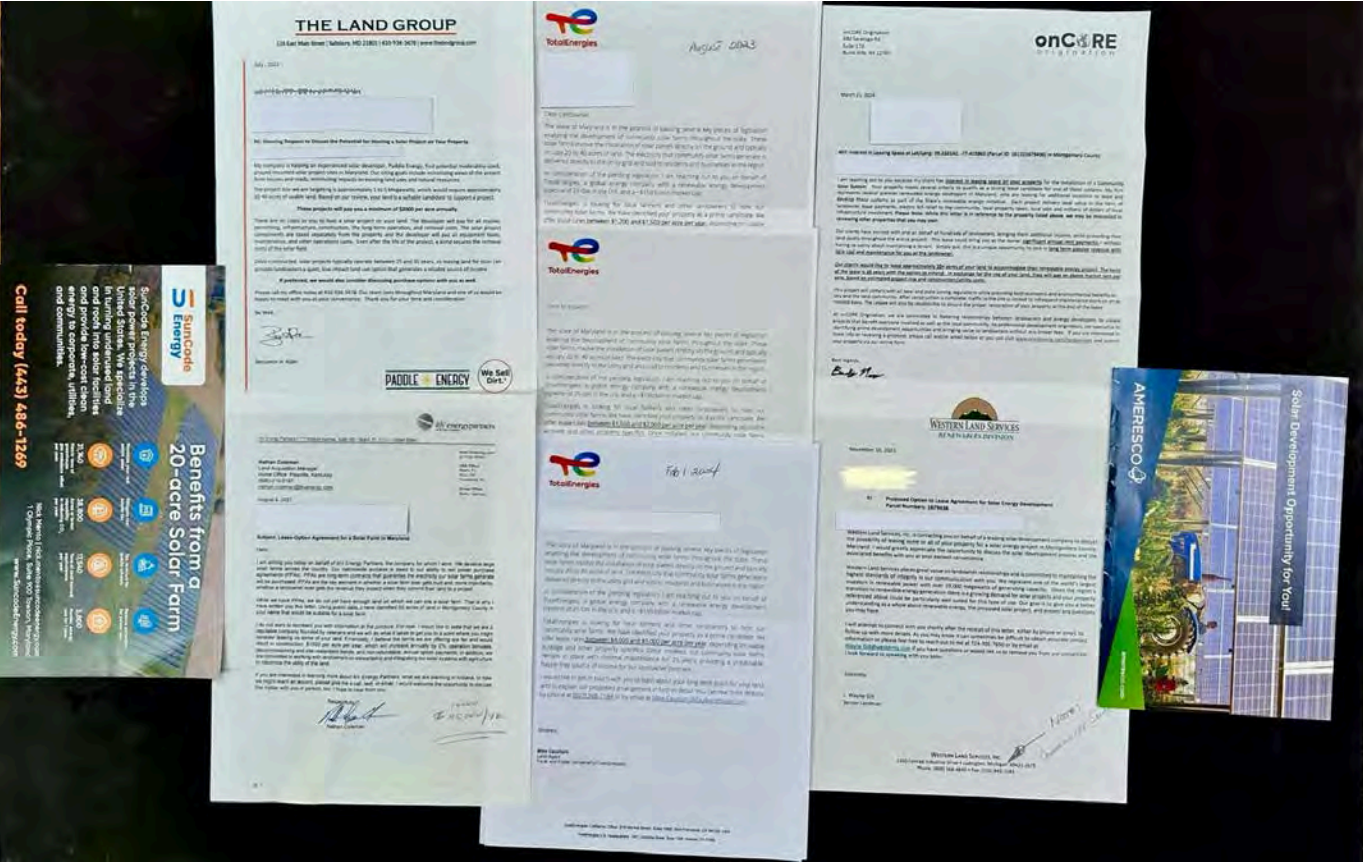
Respectfully,

The Climate Coalition Montgomery County - signatories to this testimony

Ask the Climate Question (ACQ)
Biodiversity for a Livable Climate
Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Ecosystems Study Group
Green Sanctuary Committee of the UU Church of Silver Spring
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Safe Healthy Playing Fields
Sugarloaf Citizens' Association
Transit Alternatives to Midcounty Highway Extended (TAME) Coalition
The Climate Mobilization MoCo (TCM)
Takoma Park Mobilization – Environment Committee (TPMEC)
Zero Waste Montgomery County

¹³ <http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/master-plan-list/general-plans/wedges-corridors-general-plan-1964/>

Appendix I: Sample Offer Letters



Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 9:12 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve.

We have tons of parking lots and roofs that could have solar panels on them, but they want to use farmland instead. Laziness and shortsightedness

Come on, let's have some more urban development of solar instead of wasting our farmland to do this just because it's an easier easier thing to do Perhaps Perhaps not There are many examples nationally and throughout the globe where people have integrated solar With urban environments To the benefit of all involved

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built

on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

We need the ag reserve far more than the PSC needs to put solar panels on our productive farm fields

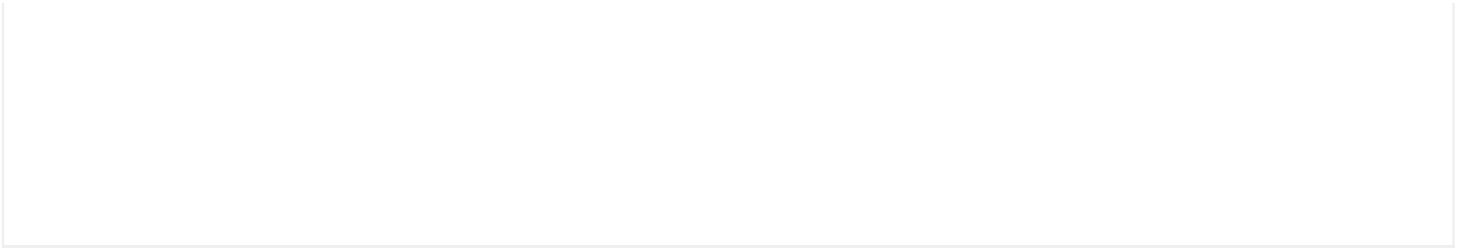
There are lots of other alternatives

Protect the Ag reserve

Constance Bevitt
cbevitt3@yahoo.com
11215 watermill lane
silver spring, Maryland 20902

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  David Bowen

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 5:40 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Simply put, this case seeks to undo the 2021 compromise allowing solar development of subprime soils within Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve. Allowing these runs counter to the letter and intent of the Agricultural Reserve -- the preservation of agricultural lands and open space in Montgomery County.

Please ask the at Maryland PSC reject Case Nos. 9726 and 9733.

**David Bowen
OYAATL@GMAIL.COM
23720 Old Hundred Road
Dickerson, Maryland 20842**

Attachments

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Beall, Mark

From: Butler, Patrick
Sent: Monday, August 19, 2024 7:46 AM
To: Beall, Mark
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

From: David Rodgers <david.rodgers@starpower.net>
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2024 6:26 PM
To: Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Up County Planning Chief Patrick Butler,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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We should only approve community solar development on non-prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

David Rodgers
david.rodgers@starpower.net

7310 Hilton Ave.
Takoma Park, MD

■

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024 4:49:19 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: David Salkeld <Davidjr@willardpackaging.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 4:28 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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David Salkeld

Davidjr@willardpackaging.com

26800, Clarksburg Rd

Damascus , Maryland 20872

Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 9:04 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Please preserve MoCo's prime farmland!

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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Thank you,
Deela Dicello, DVM, M.Ed.

Deela Dicello
deeladicello@gmail.com
9810 Posterity Lane
Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:18 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Deirdre Smith
farmerdms@gmail.com
1117 Greenspring Valley Road
Lutherville, Maryland 21093

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Cc: [Butler, Patrick](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, July 6, 2024 12:18:01 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

I'm just going to start forwarding all these to you to make sure they end up in the Record. I apologize for any duplication, but the last thing anyone needs is for something to have been sent to me but no one else (for whatever reason) and not ending up in the master correspondence file, even though every email is identical.

Thanks again for all your help,
Matt

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Delilah Seaman <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, July 5, 2024 3:23 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Delilah Seaman
delilahsea222@gmail.com
5306 Yorktown Rd
Bethesda, Maryland 20816


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/19/2024 2:39 AM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Diane Yendrey
dyendrey98@gmail.com
24011 Old Hundred Rd.
Comus, Maryland MD. 20842

Attachments

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Email


To all our County and Sate ...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Peter Eeg

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

To all our County and Sate officials. Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/5/2024 12:19 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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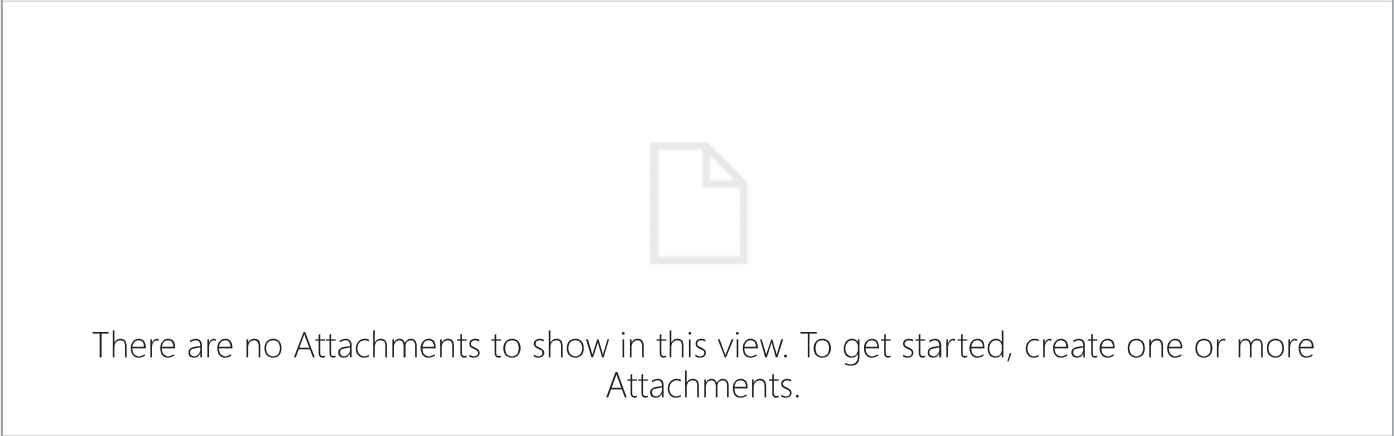
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Dr. Peter Eeg
laserveteeg@netzero.net
16400 W Old Baltimore Rd
Boys, Maryland 20841

Attachments

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Email

County Zoning. Selling far...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject County Zoning. Selling farmable land to solar developers.

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 11:36 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Edna Nemeth
ednanemeth@gmail.com
11010 Edison Rd
Potomac, Maryland 20854

Attachments

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 25, 2024 11:47:29 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Elizabeth W Whitehead <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2024 11:42 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning. Please do not permit solar panels to be erected on USDA Class I & II soils, which are clearly best suited for growing food.

In addition, when permitting solar panels to be erected on less-prime soils, please consider requiring that food be grown under the solar panels, which must be built taller to allow this. This is being done with great success in Colorado and states in the middle and northeastern part of our country. It requires a different kind of farming but makes excellent double use of the land.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

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Elizabeth W Whitehead
mtnmama27@hotmail.com

530 Leaning Oak St
Gaithersburg MD, Maryland 20878


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/10/2024 3:12 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Protect prime farm land when siting commercial projects in an area supposed to be reserved for Ag use.

We have plenty of asphalt parking lots which could use solar umbrellas in this heat.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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Erika Bucciantini
erikabucciantini@gmail.com
22014 Dickerson Rd
Dickerson , Maryland 20842

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div></div> <div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:25:58 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
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301.495.2177



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From: Mary Kingsley <mary@lady-farmer.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:37 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve.

Why don't the solar companies lease space over the hundreds of sprawling parking lots in the county, rooftops of shopping centers or abandoned urban lots? Filling up usable farmland should be the very last resort.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Mary Kingsley

mary@lady-farmer.com

14401 Partnership Road

POOLESVILLE, Maryland 20837

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 8:55:44 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
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From: Maryann Brondi <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Friday, August 9, 2024 6:33 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Maryann Brondi

maryann_brondi@hotmail.com

8605 Hempstead Ave

Bethesda, Maryland 20817

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Butler, Patrick](#); [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Monday, August 19, 2024 10:31:20 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
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From: Maureen Malloy <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 9:01 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Maureen Malloy

maureen.a.malloy@gmail.com

136 Fleetwood Terr

Silver Spring , Maryland 20910

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:35:54 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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From: Megan Barbour <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:26 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Additionally, there is NO reason that viable Ag land needs to be used for this. Why not put them on top of buildings in our many CBD areas? Or put up covers over parking lots at grocery stores or other large parking areas and put panels on top of those? Please stop the continual assault on our Ag land!!!

Megan Barbour

half_shekel@yahoo.com

18325 Barnesville Rd

Barnesville, Maryland 20838

From: [Butler, Patrick](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024 8:52:11 AM

From: Patricia Hermans <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, August 10, 2024 8:30 AM
To: Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Up County Planning Chief Patrick Butler,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Patricia Hermans
pathermans@verizon.net
19622 Bruner Way
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

I

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 25, 2024 2:59:44 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
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From: Sandra Cepaitis <slcep@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2024 2:41 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Sandra Cepaitis

slcep@msn.com

4321 Dresden Street

Kensington, Maryland 20895

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#); [Butler, Patrick](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Monday, August 5, 2024 9:52:41 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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Office of the General Counsel
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From: Sandra Nicht <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, August 3, 2024 8:09 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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(and wouldn't it be better to site large solar projects on non farm land like the flat roofs of industrial buildings or over large parking lots? not only providing power but SHADE).

Sandra Nicht
yogahon42@verizon.net
1 Carling Circle
Halethorpe, Maryland 21227

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:21:18 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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From: Sharon Cranford <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 12:05 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing as your UpCounty constituent and a life-long resident of Montgomery County to request that you do all in your power to reaffirm the commitment to the balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Sharon Cranford

shc18828@gmail.com

18828 S Meadow Fence Rd

Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886-3149

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Sunday, July 14, 2024 1:31:55 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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From: Stephanie Bradley <stbgreen@live.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 13, 2024 9:42 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Stephanie Bradley

stbgreen@live.com

6601 Sweetwater Drive

Derwood, Maryland 20855

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:18:12 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Susan Byrne <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:36 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Solar build outs in metro and suburban areas on existing public and private structures is a cost-effective and best-practice alternative that will wisely preserve our commitment to our agricultural benefits and conserve the rich soil lands from which we derive them.

Susan Byrne

smlbyrne@gmail.com

203 Martins Ln

Rockville, Maryland 20850

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:17:52 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
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From: Elizabeth Wilbur <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:29 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve is a national treasure and a model for all to follow for preservation of prime agricultural land that can never be replaced. Please uphold Montgomery County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC.

Elizabeth Wilbur

bwilbur@gmail.com

15428 Conrad Spring Rd

Boys, Maryland 20841

From: [Butler, Patrick](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024 9:03:05 AM

From: Calvin Henderson <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, August 10, 2024 9:02 AM
To: Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Up County Planning Chief Patrick Butler,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

More specifically, I am writing to urge you to have the courage and conviction of your predecessors who courageously voted to create the Ag Reserve so many years ago. They fully understood and appreciated that the Ag Reserve would be, and is, an irreplaceable treasure in the County. As is often said about land, "They're not making anymore of it". If the solar developers are allowed to "appropriate", use, and spoil the PRIME soils and farmland in the Ag Reserve, over-riding the will and direction of County residents as expressed in our local ZTAs, then that irreplaceable resource will have been lost forever and "sold" to the solar developers. Stand Tall and fight for OUR LOCAL SELF-DETERMINATION.

I am generally strongly in favor of Solar Energy (I have a large solar PV configuration on my roof) and fully support land-use policies that favor deployment of large-scale solar arrays where the deployment does not take away irreplaceable resources and where they can be done at reasonable development costs. Re-locating the proposed locations of the solar arrays to NON-PRIME farmland in the Ag Reserve would be acceptable and highly preferable to me.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy

stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on LESS-THAN-PRIME soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

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Calvin Henderson

ch2001@aol.com

11317 Rolling House Rd

Rockville, Maryland 20852

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:48:10 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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From: Christine Manor <clm@clmanor.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I rely on the preserve to feed my family in the summer with fresh produce and the rest of the year with frozen, canned, and dried produce. Put solar over parking lots and highway medians, not farmland.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" rely to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Christine Manor

clm@clmanor.com

910 Grandin Avenue

Rockville, Maryland 20851

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:21:56 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
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From: Claire Gunster-Kirby <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 12:11 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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It is imperative that the survival of our farmers and the affordability of leasing agricultural land be preserved. SOLAR ARRAYS DO NOT FEED US!! Are they necessary for transitioning away from fossil fuels? Yes. But placement MUST NOT be on prime agricultural land. There are an abundance of rooftops in MoCo. Let's get the solar placed there first. Save the land. Save the farmers. Stop this attempt by Charberton to abuse the agricultural reserve.

Claire Gunster-Kirby
gunsterkirby@gmail.com
19700 Westerly Avenue
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#); [Butler, Patrick](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Wednesday, August 21, 2024 11:57:54 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
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From: Dan Seamans <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2024 11:16 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

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Dan Seamans

danseamans123@gmail.com

17515 Moore Rd

Boys, Maryland 20841

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:22:06 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
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From: Evan Krichesky <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 12:23 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

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Evan Krichevsky

evank2@aol.com

9205 Copenhaver Drive

Potomac, Maryland 20854

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:25:48 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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From: Jeffrey Anderson <jaandersonii@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 12:18 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Respectfully,
Jeffrey Anderson
MoCo registered voter

Jeffrey Anderson
jaandersonii@msn.com
2009 Erskine Ave
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902-1423

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:20:53 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: John Parrish <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:36 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

July 16, 2024

RE: Chaberton Solar Sugarloaf I LLC

Application For a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity – PSC Case #9726

To: The Montgomery County Executive and the Montgomery County Council

From: John Parrish, 9009 Fairview Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-4106

Dear Executive Elrich and Councilmembers,

Please oppose the application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Case No. 9726 that has been brought before the Maryland Public Service Commission.

I am a lifelong (66 year) resident of Montgomery County. I support sustainable agriculture and sensible solar projects. Three years ago I testified before the Council on proposed solar in the Agricultural Reserve (AR) for Zoning Text Amendment 20-01 (Solar Collection Systems AR Zone Standards). The resulting legislation formed the basis for deploying solar arrays in Montgomery's AR Zone. Stakeholders on all sides of this issue, including myself did not get everything they wanted. However, for the most part, the compromises that were made arrived at workable solutions to accommodate solar while preserving agriculture.

This is why I am greatly alarmed to see that this application if approved will do an end run around Montgomery County's laws. In fact, it appears to completely undermine protections put in place three years ago. This application, if approved, would open the door to similar applications and essentially create the conditions for rampant industrial solar operations within Montgomery's Agricultural Reserve at the expense of agriculture. This is the outcome the Montgomery County Council wisely sought to prevent when they finalized ZTA 20-01.

Approving this application would allow construction of solar arrays on prime farmland soils that our county laws currently prohibit. Prime farmland soils classified by the USDA as Category I and Category II must remain off limits to solar projects of this size if we are to truly foster soil conservation and farming in the AR.

Perhaps the most insidious outcome to agriculture of allowing this type of application to go forward will be a steady inflation of land values that reward the development of large solar projects. This outcome serves to destroy the future of agriculture in the very zone that was set up to protect it. When property owners in the AR can make more money with solar compared to agriculture, land prices will rise at the expense of those seeking to lease or buy land for agricultural purposes. Where is the social equity for future farmers?

In my opinion, large-scale solar arrays are best sited in built areas of the county where the

demand for electricity is greatest. Large scale solar is appropriate for parking lots, vacant industrial sites and large roofs. When the Council approved ZTA 20-02, it smartly limited the amount of acreage to be developed for solar in the AR to 1800 acres so land values across the AR would not spike due to solar projects and so agriculture would remain strong. If the Maryland Public Service Commission grants approval to this project it appears that nothing would limit the amount of acres to be developed in the future. This outcome must be prevented.

Please tell the Maryland Public Service Commission to reject this solar application. Applications for solar arrays should abide by the conditional use process set in place by Montgomery County. To do otherwise makes a mockery of long and hard efforts by county residents and organizations to craft sensible solar laws in the AR Zone. Please oppose this application!

Sincerely,

John Parrish

John Parrish
lifeonearth@verizon.net
9009 Fairview Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:21:09 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
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From: Kristy Jensch <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:53 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Kristy Jensch

kjensch70@icloud.com

410 5th Ave E

Washburn, Wisconsin 54891

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:35:37 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
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From: Lawrence Tagrin <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:23 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Lawrence Tagrin

BizEcology@gmail.com

19019 Stedwick Dr

Montgomery Village, Maryland 20886

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:35:47 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
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Office of the General Counsel
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From: Lillian Luksenburg <lloherty@umd.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:25 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

My niece and her husband are small organic farmers in Indiana so I know how hard it is for them to compete with big developers. I'm in favor of solar energy but not at the expense of local agriculture! Surely we can find a way to balance these two progressive initiatives.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Lillian Luksenburg

ldoherty@umd.edu

609 Kemp Mill Forest Dr.

Silver Spring, Maryland 20902-1566

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:48:19 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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From: Margaret Schoap <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:39 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Margaret Schoap

schoapm@aol.com

11425 Neelsville Church Road

Germantown, Maryland 20876

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC: Where should solar farms go?
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 2:18:01 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
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From: Marie Reed <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 11:32 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC: Where should solar farms go?

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I believe a much better location for solar panels would be parking lots of which we have tons in MoCo, including Metro lots. Why not reduce the impact of these heat sinkholes and provide electricity at the same time, instead of removing prime agricultural land from active use. Be smart in your visioning and think more broadly of our future.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

Thank you!

Marie Reed

marieyoga@gmail.com

3100 N Leisure World Blvd., Apt 404

Silver Spring, Maryland 20906-8343

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/23/2024 1:10 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Gale Quist
gale.quist@gmail.com
446Egret Ct
Chestertown, Maryland 21620

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...




 

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/17/2024 4:34 AM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Geo Kidd
netgk@hotmail.com
14012 Eternity Rd.
Germantown, Maryland 20874

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 6:16 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Solar is great, it's what the future requires. Just not on the Ag Reserve. The open space, the produce, the jobs provided, the Ag reserve means something and it should be protected and managed as originally planned and executed.

Put solar at Dickerson, put it on the roofs of every public building, every school, put it on legs over open parking lots and provide covered parking in the heat island those parking lots create. But PLEASE leave the Ag Reserve to agriculture. There's nothing like it anywhere else and it speaks to the history and the foresight and vision of Montgomery County. It will never happen in Fairfax. Til and Bill saw to that.

So. I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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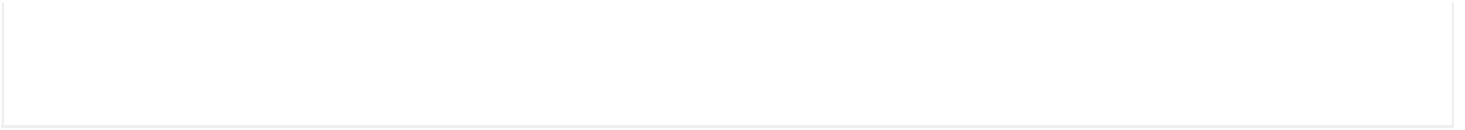
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Respectfully.
George Williams
20852

G Williams
george.williams2@verizon.net
11208 Rock Rd
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Attachments


File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1




Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 3:17 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.


Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to you as a Montgomery County voter to voice my opposition to allowing any large solar arrays on prime agricultural land in the Ag Reserve. I consider the farmers in the Ag Reserve to be vital to the quality of life in the area and the solar companies would make the price of land too high to continue their operations. I support solar power, in general, but not at the cost of Ag Reserve farmers. Just as you wouldn't allow any other kind of power plant to operate in the Ag Reserve, it isn't an appropriate to allow a solar power plan. Thank you for your consideration. — Harvey Simon

Harvey Simon
podcastroundup@gmail.com
14300 Oakvale St
Rockville, Maryland 20853-2129

Attachments

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<div></div> <div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div>			
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1	

From: [Butler, Patrick](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024 9:40:22 AM

From: Heather Reichardt <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, August 10, 2024 9:35 AM
To: Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Up County Planning Chief Patrick Butler,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

I am all for more energy generated from solar power, but there are plenty of other places where the panels can be installed. It seems like a slippery slope if the PSC can override specific county planning decisions and codes. That is not a democratic process and does not conform to the will of the local county citizens. Please do not let the PSC override the Agricultural Reserve and Montgomery County's planning decisions.

Thank you for your consideration.
Heather Reichardt
Darnestown, Montgomery County

Heather Reichardt
hjr1234@gmail.com
13312 Wye Oak Dr
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 2:03 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

James Zwiebel
zwiebelj@verizon.net
6317 Kenhowe Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20817

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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Email

FW: Uphold County Zoning...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From


To




Cc

Bcc

Subject

Date Sent

 catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Received	7/3/2024 7:38 PM
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From: jane thompson <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 11:53 AM
To: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

jane thompson
jayteehike@gmail.com
22621 W harris rd
dickerson, Maryland 20842

Attachments

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Email


Protect the Ag Reserve!!!

Owner

 MCP...
 

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Protect the Ag Reserve!!!

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 11:20 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Please protect the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The PSC must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. Montgomery County must mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Ag Reserve, in conflict with Montgomery County zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

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Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Protect the Ag Reserve!!!

Thank you.

Janene Smith
janenemsmith@gmail.com
15801 White Rock Road
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...




 

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/8/2024 9:17 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Janet Davies
davies_262@hotmail.com
.16015 Hughes Road
Poolesville , Maryland 20837

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 4:48 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Jason Makstein
jasmak@gmail.com
1 Cherry Grove Ct
North Potomac, Maryland 20878

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Email


A Request to Uphold Coun...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject A Request to Uphold County Zoning and the Master Plan before the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/9/2024 1:05 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,


(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I almost didn't write. The Council worked so hard, listened to so many people, and worked out an admirable solution to a complex issue, such that it doesn't need a reminder. It remarkably balanced the need for solar energy solutions with the need to preserve and land needed for agricultural use, consistent with this County's nationally renowned planning and foresight. Chaberton will undo that carefully achieved local balance. And if it is successful, of course, many others will follow. So I offer this not as a reminder, but as a thank you.

Jeff Seaman

Jeff Seam
jeff_seaman@outlook.com
5306 Yorktown Rd
Bethesda, Maryland 20816

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From


To




Cc

Bcc

Subject

Date Sent

 [Jeremy Stanton](#)

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Received

7/3/2024 9:41 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Jeremy Stanton
mail@jeremystanton.com
5219 BROOKEVILLE RD
GAITHERSBURG, Maryland 20882-1705

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Email


Please uphold County Zoni...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Jim Schulman

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Please uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 5:20 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

As an Architect and Regional Strategist, I write to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

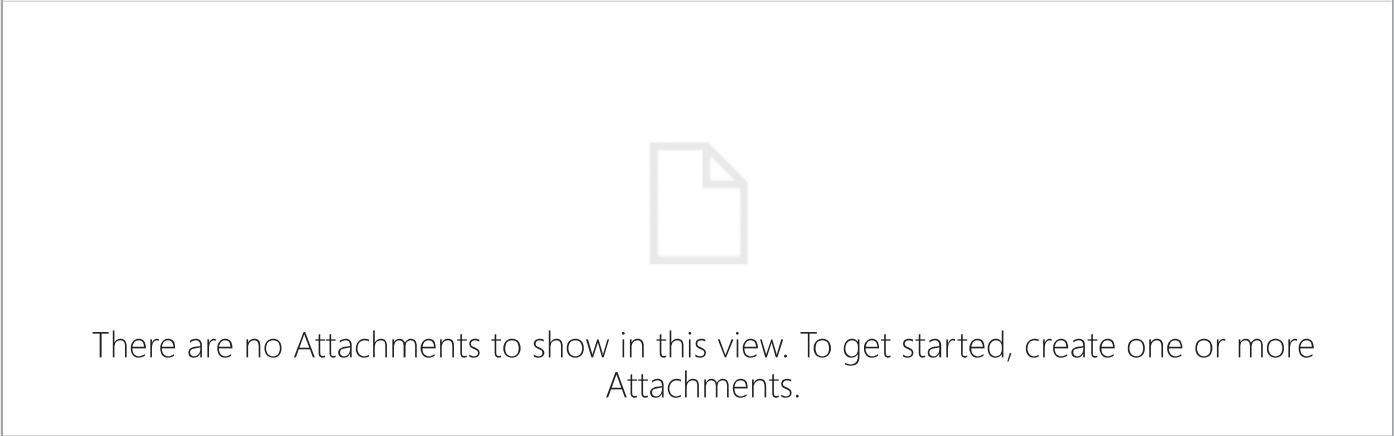
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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Jim Schulman
JSchulman@ARCdmv.org
631 E ST NE
Washington, District of Columbia 20002

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Joan Clement

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 6:45 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

joan Clement
joan@chears.org
506 Elm Ave.
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

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Email




Defend Montgomery Coun...

Owner

 MCP...
 

Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Defend Montgomery County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC - ask for "due consideration"

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/23/2024 7:52 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Montgomery County spent considerable time and effort to develop a balanced solar siting policy that protects the prime farm soils in the Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission is directed to give "due consideration" to County plans and zoning in their decision making. I'm asking that the county mount a solid defense of our master plan and zoning for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Despite the representations made by the solar developer, Chaberton, these two applications are not the only projects that can advance in the Reserve. In fact, the company is reaching out to properties throughout the Reserve offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the

Reserve may be upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Josh Goldman
joshjgman@gmail.com
15711 Hughes Road
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/17/2024 11:46 AM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Judith Holt
grammy394@gmail.com
17674 Kohlhoss Rd
Poolesville , Maryland 20837

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/15/2024 3:08 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Julie Halstead
juliehalstead@gmail.com
17117 Spates Hill Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 9:40 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Montgomery county won't be the same without the Ag Reserve. Please protect and preserve this precious resource for future generations. Solar panels can be installed on buildings and parking garages why do they need to consume precious agricultural resources?

Kara McNulty
kara.mcnulty@verizon.net
13352 Manor stone Dr
Darnestown , Maryland 20874

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, July 6, 2024 12:21:11 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Karen Ryan <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, July 6, 2024 12:06 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Karen Ryan

karenr4653@gmail.com

25602 Burnt Hill Rd

Clarksburg, Maryland 20871

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024 10:28:45 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Katherine Longbrake <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 8:32 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Katherine Longbrake

klongbrake@gmail.com

19400 BEALLSVILLE RD

Beallsville, Maryland 20839

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Friday, July 12, 2024 9:27:30 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
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From: Kellie Hodges <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 6:35 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Solar panels do not belong on agricultural land, especially our treasured Ag Reserve. Instead, make shaded car parks, rooftops, and pavilions. I love the idea of solar but please don't ruin this protected agricultural treasure!

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Kellie Hodges

kmchodges@gmail.com

14130 Esworthy Road

Darnestown , Maryland 20874

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

MCP...



Email

From

 Knight Kiplinger

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:48 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I am Knight Kiplinger, and my family has owned for 66 years a highly productive 400-acre farm on the eastern edge of the Ag Reserve, in Seneca, Maryland, fronting on River Road, convenient to power lines on the grid.

Most of our farm is under ag preservation easements, which would typically preclude its leasing for solar arrays. Despite that, I get countless offers from solar developers seeking to lease my land for vastly more than the rent I now get from the Willard family, our esteemed local farmers, for their growing of commodity crops.

I am pleased to keep my very fertile soil in this ag use, along with the pasture for the grazing of sheep done by my resident farmers at Plow & Stars Farm. But other landowners, more interested than I am in boosting their land rental income, are no doubt tempted by these offers.

If the state is allowed to override our County's sensible restrictions on ag land solar leasing, a lot of our County's best farmland will be lost to solar production. I would prefer that our County focus its solar development--a very noble mission for climate change--on such potential sites as parking lots and rooftops in currently developed areas.

For these reasons, I'm writing to reaffirm our County's commitment to balanced solar

siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Pleased stand firm for local government choice in solar development!

--- Knight Kiplinger, Seneca, Md

Knight Kiplinger
kkiplinger@outlookholdings.net
16801 River Road
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 5:15:54 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Krista Abbaticchio <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 4:45 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Krista Abbaticchio
abbaticchi@aol.com

16708 Thurston Td
Dickerson , Maryland 20842

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 8:04 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Larry Cain
larrycainjr@gmail.com
15801 River Rd
Darnestown, Maryland 20874

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  lauren mcbain

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 8/9/2024 7:49 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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lauren mcbain
lauren@mcbainhomes.com
26110 johnson drive
damascus, Maryland 20872

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 9:10 AM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)


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Lennon Gross
lennonmgross@gmail.com
215 Glendale Ave #4
Alexandria , Virginia 22302

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...




 

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/25/2024 9:24 AM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Leslye Halioua
ms.leshal@gmail.com
12504 Stable House Ct
Potomac , Maryland 20854

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 2:35 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Linda Bergofsky
bergo72@hotmail.com
17317 Hughes Road
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...




 

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/17/2024 2:20 AM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

As an 80 yr old born, raised and residing in Montgomery County, I'm am well aware of our precious farm land. And too aware of its dramatic disappearance!

Fortunately the County created the Ag Reserve to protect at least some of this farmland.

Let's keep that protection promise!!

Do not let prime agricultural land be covered with solar arrays.

(Why not direct these companies to our vast expansive heat creating parking lots and commercial roof tops that need shade to cool our communities?)


But my purpose in writing is to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

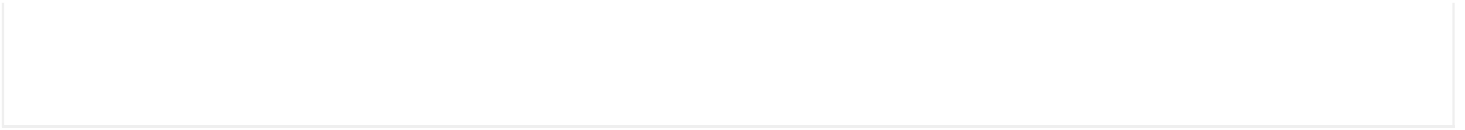
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**Linda Nishioka
lindanishi@aol.com
14450 Homecrest Rd
Silver Spring Md, Maryland 20906**

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

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Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:11 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

LuAnne Levens
lklevens@mac.com
1018 Parrs Ridge Drive
Spencerville, Maryland 20868


Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1


Email




Please Uphold County Zoni...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Lynda DeWitt](#)

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Please Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 4:52 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Not only is putting solar panels on farmland wrong, but this action will open the door to other non-ag uses in the Ag Reserve. Put solar panels in parking lots, highway medians, large store roofs. We have them on our home roof. Offer more incentives to folks so more residential panels will be installed.

Our daughter lives in Barnesville and grows vegetables and raises chickens and goats on her land. Please keep the Ag Reserve for agriculture!!

Thank you,
Lynda DeWitt & Edward Kelly

Lynda DeWitt
ldewitt@kellydewitt.com
5524 Charlcote Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20817

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
Loading Attachment records...		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From
marciatn@comcast.net

To
<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>; MCP-Chair #; MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject
Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent
Date Received
7/30/2024 8:55 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Marcia Thayer Nass
marciatn@comcast.net
326 Little Quarry
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div><div></div><div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div></div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 6:37 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

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Marcy Kelley
marcygkelley@gmail.com
6203 Dunrobbin Dr
Bethesda, Maryland 20816

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
Loading Attachment records...		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Margaret Kelley](#)
To: [MCP-Chair](#)
Subject: We must support the effort to preserve fertile farmland for future generations. Something as basic as the ability to grow food must take precedence over anything else. Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, August 10, 2024 6:21:28 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Margaret Kelley
margaretkel7071@gmail.com
17410 Conoy Road
Barnesville , Maryland 20838

From: [Butler, Patrick](#)
To: [Branda, Ilana](#); [Harris, Artie](#); [Thompkins, Melissa](#); [Coello, Catherine](#); [Vaia, Emily](#); [Mills, Matthew](#)
Cc: [Beall, Mark](#); [Penn, Joshua](#); [Casey, Jonathan](#); [Kronenberg, Robert](#)
Subject: RE: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, July 6, 2024 11:01:13 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)

Hello team,

There is a form letter that is being widely distributed to multiple people. For now, any that we receive should be filed under the Mandatory Referral for Chaberton Sugarloaf MR2024016.

Thank you,

Patrick

From: Branda, Ilana <Ilana.Branda@mncppc-mc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 3:21 PM
To: Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Ilana Branda

Chief of Staff
Montgomery County Planning Board

From: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 3:16 PM
To: Branda, Ilana <Ilana.Branda@mncppc-mc.org>
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC



Artie L. Harris

Chair

Montgomery County Planning Board
2425 Reedie Dr, 14th Floor, Wheaton, MD 20902

MCP-CHAIR@mncppc-mc.org
o: 301.495.4628



From: Margie Shultz <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 12:16 PM

To: Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>

Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Margie Shultz

margie.shultz@gmail.com

20614 big woods


Dickerson , Maryland 20842

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...


Owner

 MCP...




 

Email

From

 Marie Sheppard

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/25/2024 1:08 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

If the County believes that the goals and master plan of the Ag Reserve are outdated, then let's have an open process to discuss/update these. Instead, we're having an assault on the Ag Reserve that will undermine the purpose for which it was designed.

Farming is not easy. Please don't make it more difficult.

Thank you

**Marie Sheppard
Dickerson**

**wendy marie sheppard
marie@willowoak.biz
18015 Moore Rd
Dickerson, Maryland 20842**

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
Loading Attachment records...		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 1:48 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Marney Bruce
marneyb3@gmail.com
4541 Windsor Lane
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Attachments

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<div></div> <div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email

RE: Support for Chick-Fil-A...

Owner

 Philli...

Email

From

 Matt Swaim

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  Estes, Phillip;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org;  Phillip Estes

Cc

Bcc

Subject

RE: Support for Chick-Fil-A Clarksburg – Site Plan 82014016C

Date Sent

Date Received

7/22/2024 5:15 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Chairman Harris and Planning Board Members,

As a resident of the Cabin Branch neighborhood since July of 2020, I am writing to voice my support for the planned Chick-Fil-A restaurant as a welcome addition to our diverse and growing community.

I was able to attend the initial community meeting in which the redevelopment plans were explained in thorough detail, including traffic flow considerations. Since we've lived in Cabin Branch, we've seen the addition of a CVS and a 7-Eleven along that same corridor, along with rumors of a hotel and other possible development projects. To my recollection over the past four years, Chick-Fil-A is the first potential new Cabin Branch business to have publicly invited the community into that kind of detailed conversation before beginning a building project. As a resident in the neighborhood they intend to share with me, I am grateful they sought to consult with us.

I am also glad to know that outdoor seating is planned as part of this project. The only other outdoor seating for any food options in our part of Clarksburg is embedded deep in the Outlet Mall. Having an outdoor seating option at what is essentially the top corner of our neighborhood means that Cabin Branch — which is one of the most walkable and bikeable neighborhoods in the region — will finally have a convenient family dining option beyond the mall food court and the gas station roller grill.

It is worth noting that as of right now, the closest drive-thru restaurant to Cabin Branch is McDonald's in Milestone, a little over two miles away. Having been in my share of both McDonald's and Chick-Fil-A drive thru lanes over the years, I can tell you which of the two is a significantly more pleasant and efficient experience, and it is not McDonald's.

Also, a note from the value/cost perspective: last I checked, a medium Chick-Fil-A chicken sandwich combo meal clocks in at \$10.29, while a medium Quarter Pounder Combo at McDonald's in Milestone is \$10.39. Now I know there are probably plenty of people out there who think that a QPC with chemical composite fries at McDonald's is ten cents better than a chicken sandwich and waffle fries made out of real live potatoes at Chick-Fil-A. But for my part, if I have ten dollars and change, and a choice, give me the chicken every time. If the only people who patronize this new location are Cabin Branch residents looking for decent food at a reasonable price handed to them by a friendly person, it'll probably still be one of the most successful restaurants in the area.


Finally, one of the greatest things about Cabin Branch is its diversity. Dozens of nationalities are represented in this neighborhood; many representing their family's first generation here in the United States. And with them, they bring an extraordinary and beautiful religious diversity. I am blessed to have neighbors who are Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and more. And while each of them have their own unique convictions regarding dietary priorities and how they choose to exercise them, it turns out that chicken, of all things, falls under the general permitted purview of most of them.

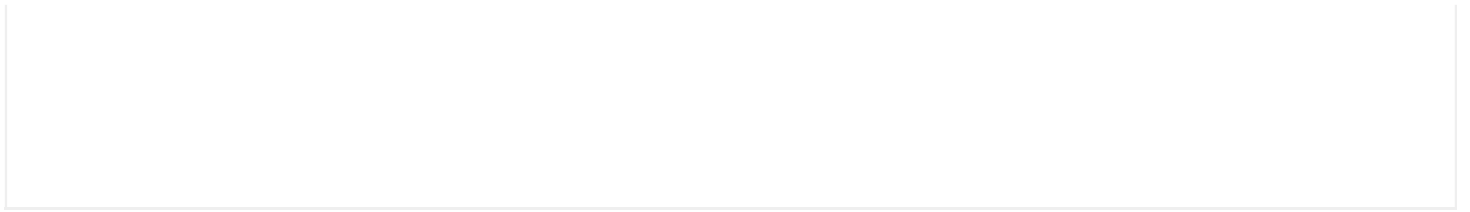
There is much more I could say about my personal support for the idea of a Chick-Fil-A in Cabin Branch. But in the meantime, I want to thank you for taking my remarks into consideration, and thank Chick-Fil-A for making the proactive effort to reach out to the community as part of this process.

Regards

Matt Swaim
Clarksburg, MD

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
		
There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1




Email




Forgot: Agricultural Reserve

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  sumax@verizon.net

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Forgot: Agricultural Reserve

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/19/2024 8:42 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Dear Chair Harris,

Shame on me. I neglected to mention that our county is faced with the fact that about 1/3rd of our county restricts lot size in the Reseve to a 25 acre minimum with the few exceptions of smaller parcels for offspring of current owners.

I don't think any comparable situation applies elsewhere. Perhaps you know otherwise.

Further, do you think there are good reasons for changing the land use restrictions in the Ag. Reserve particularly if transportation is provided to locations in the Reseve?

Thanks,

Max Bronstein

Attachments

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Page 1

Montgomery County Farm Bureau

PO Box 217, Damascus Maryland 20872

301-467-1419

mcfarmbureausecretary@gmail.com

www.montgomery.mdfarmbureau.com



June 21, 2024

Dear County Government Officials, Departments and Planning Commission,

We strongly request and support various Montgomery County representatives/commission/departments' robust defense of County zoning code and the master plan for the preservation of agriculture in the upcoming PSC proceedings:

PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf

Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733

To be clear, our groups continue to be supportive of advancing solar in the Reserve. A significant amount of transparent effort over months from a broad array of stakeholders, including local government, climate change organizations, and solar industry, went into the crafting of a balanced ZTA 20-01. Acknowledging the importance of advancing renewable energy to meet the County's climate change goals, significant compromises were made, including allowing facilities on class 3 prime soils. Most of the County's productive farmland consists of types 2 and 3 soils.

In accessing the ZTA at the 2-year mark, the [Planning report](#) notes that two solar projects are in process under the terms of ZTA 20-01, with construction set to begin this year. The report reads: "While this demonstrates a modest start to the [county's] solar program... It also demonstrates it is possible to promote solar projects on agricultural lands, aiding in reducing carbon emissions and contributing toward our larger renewable energy and solar production goals, while ensuring agriculture remains the primary use within the Agricultural Reserve."

The report further states that energy utility companies have created a significant obstacle to smaller scale solar projects. Put simply, utility companies can more easily find the renewable energy they need (under state law) for larger commercial scale projects in other jurisdictions and states. This "dissuades the utilities from working with smaller projects locally," the report concludes. Another obstacle is ready connectivity infrastructure to the energy grid. In addition, the report says that the Ag Reserve is "at the edge of the service areas for all three (regional) electricity providers (PEPCO, BG&E, and Potomac Edison); exacerbating capacity shortcomings." Overall, these energy, infrastructure hurdles "represent the largest obstacle to implementing our

Montgomery County Farm Bureau

PO Box 217, Damascus Maryland 20872

301-467-1419

mcfarmbureausecretary@gmail.com

www.montgomery.mdfarmbureau.com



collective solar goals, and zoning and land use regulation may likely have little if any ability to remedy these issues." -

What our local zoning, regulations, and master plans necessarily accomplish is the continued preservation of agriculture in the County's Ag Reserve, which will be key in our collective goal to meet the challenges of a changing climate and increased demand for locally produced food by existing, new, and diverse producers. We appreciate your efforts to give voice to this imperative and are happy to assist.

Respectfully,

Todd Greenstone, President, Montgomery County Farm Bureau

Randy Stabler, Chair, Montgomery County Ag Preservation Board

Lori Larson, Chair, Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee

Bob Cissel, Director, Montgomery Agricultural Producers

Steve Findlay, President, Sugarloaf Citizens' Association

Caroline Taylor, Executive Director, Montgomery Countryside Alliance

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Friday, July 12, 2024 9:29:26 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



Unless expressly stated otherwise, this e-mail is intended to be confidential and may be protected by legal privileges and work-product immunities. It is intended for the addressee(s) only and access to this e-mail by anyone except the addressee(s) is unauthorized. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or an employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any interception, review, retransmission, dissemination, distribution, copying or other use of, or any taking of action upon this communication/information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient(s) is strictly prohibited and may subject them to criminal or civil liability. If you are not an addressee, please inform the sender immediately and destroy all copies of the original message or printouts thereof. E-mail communications may be intercepted or inadvertently misdirected. Receipt by anyone other than the intended recipient is not a waiver of any attorney-client or work-product privilege. While the American Bar Association deems e-mail a valid and authorized form of communication between attorneys and clients, absolute secrecy, confidentiality, and security (of this e-mail message and/or any attachments thereto) cannot be assured. The relationship of attorney/client shall not be, and is not, established solely as a result of the transmission of this e-mail. Although this email and any attachments hereto are believed to be free of any virus or other defect that might affect any computer system into which it is received and opened, it is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure that it is virus-free and no responsibility or liability is accepted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission or its departments or affiliates, either jointly or severally, for any loss or damage arising in any way from its use.

From: Meghan Fultz <megfultz@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 6:33 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Meghan Fultz

megfultz@comcast.net

18294 McKernon Way

Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From
🇺🇸 Liz Calzadillas

To
📧 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>; 👤 MCP-Chair #; 🇺🇸 MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject
Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent
Date Received
7/16/2024 1:39 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Michael Gravitz
mzgravitz@gmail.com
5 Ridge Square, NW
Washington , District of Columbia 20016

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 5:57 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

There are plenty of good places for solar arrays. On business rooftops. Over parking garages and parking lots. On top of schools and universities, sports arenas, grocery stores, and government buildings.

Where solar arrays do not belong is blocking the sun over prime, healthy soil we've set aside for agriculture.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve (simple answer: no), in conflict with county zoning, not to mention the entire purpose of the Ag reserve.


ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils (rock, land that doesn't perc, etc.), several more approved

projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. This makes me regret we ever made an exception at all, and think we should revoke it. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC. The answer to the squawking childish complaints "but Jimmy next door got to build a solar array..." is a flat no.

Michelle Grissom
simhamuka@yahoo.com
14811 Ridge Oak Dr
Boys, Maryland 20841

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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Board of Directors

Michael Rubin*

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William Sheehan

Kenny Sholes

Tanya Doka Spandhala

Bob Wilbur*

*Executive Committee

Dr. Royce Hanson

Advisory Committee

Chair

Staff

Caroline Taylor

Executive Director

caroline@mocoalliance.org

Kristina Bostick

Senior Conservation

Associate

kristina@mocoalliance.org

PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733

Dear Leaders of the Planning Department,

July 1, 2024

We the undersigned reaffirm our commitment to the balanced approach to solar siting in the county's nationally renowned Agricultural Reserve represented by the passage of ZTA 20-01 as detailed in the attached letter of support from 60+ local and state organizations in 2021.

We are asking for a strong defense of our county's zoning and master plan in communications to the Public Service Commission.

Respectfully,

Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Clean Water Action Maryland

Sugarloaf Citizens Association

Montgomery County Farm Bureau

Nature Forward

Conservation Montgomery

Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club

Montgomery County League of Women Voters

ACQ (Ask the Climate Question)

Land and Nature Discoveries

Transit Alternatives to Midcounty Highway Extended (TAME) Coalition

Friends of Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Reservoir

Sugarland Ethno History Project, Inc

Safe Healthy Playing Fields Inc

West Montgomery County Citizens Association

Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights

Policy Foundation of Maryland

Gardens by Garth

Food Resilience Working Group

Divergence, LLC

Biodiversity for a Livable Climate

Green Plate Catering

Cinnamon Hill Apiary

Shepherd's Hey Farm

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Environmental Justice Ministry



Cc: County Councilmembers, County Executive, staff

Individuals Signing On:

Royce Hanson	Tanya Spandhla	Sylvia S Tognetti	Karen Metchis
Diane Cameron	Susan Eisendrath	Ginny Barnes	Matthew Gimbrere
Karen S. Ryan	Jim Spicher	Tom Devine	Anne Ambler
Jean S. Findlay	Peter Ensign	Maureen S. Baltay	Jim Brown
Robert Wilbur	Marie Sheppard	Cynthia Jennings	Gerard Byam
Anne Cinque	Maj-Britt Dohlie	Jaime Field	Eileen Magee
Lee McNasir	E. Anne Riley	Bev Thoms	Keren Korman Cabral
Lee Langstaff	Daniel S. Koch	Patty McGrath	Kathleen Holmay
Catherine Wood	Charlotte Vogel	Thomas Rojas	Michele Albornoz
Holly Larisch	Tom Devine	Savva Brown	Connor Ransom
David S. Forman	Marcia Nass	Francoise Andre	Nelia Anne Davies
Fran Rothstein	John Parrish	Tina Schneider	James G. Ryan
Molly Hauck	Alfred Wurglitz	Stephen Vogel	Roberta G (rg) Steinman
Johanna Wermers	Glenn Miles	Linda J Davis	Audrey Morris
Geo Kidd	Marguerite Cyr	Sharon Steinberg	Susan Spock
Claire Gittleman	Marc C Petrequin	Michael Rubin	Maureen Fine
Maggie Bartlett	Mary Pat Wilson	Barbara Hoover	

**MAINTAIN AGRICULTURE AS THE PRIMARY USE OF LAND IN THE
AGRICULTURAL RESERVE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**SUPPORT THE CONDITIONAL USE PROPOSAL FROM AGRICULTURAL
STAKEHOLDERS TO ALLOW SOLAR ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS**

**OUR CLIMATE DECISIONS CAN AND MUST REINFORCE – NOT DESTROY – OUR
FOOD AND WATER SECURITY**

January 2021

Dear Councilmembers,

Montgomery County is home to the nation's most celebrated farmland. Our County's Agricultural Reserve – a forty-year effort and model of farming on the edge of a metropolis – is 93,000 acres of land preserved for farming. Led by a coalition of farmers and advocates for local agriculture, food justice, climate justice, and clean water, the undersigned request your support to maintain agriculture as the sole primary land use in the Agricultural Reserve. This means rejecting ZTA 20-01 as written, and voting “Yes” on the Agricultural Stakeholders’ Conditional Use proposal for reviewing and permitting solar installations in the Agricultural Reserve.

A well-protected Agricultural Reserve is key to food security, human health, and environmental sustainability for all residents in Montgomery County and the Chesapeake region now and in the years to come. Its 562 farms supply food and fiber, along with clean drinking water and clean air, to the Greater Washington D.C. region. The ability to grow food locally has been critical during the pandemic, while 100,000 people in Montgomery County are food-insecure. The Farm to Food Bank Program is helping farmers ramp-up the supply of healthy table crops to families in need. And local food production will become even more critical as the climate crisis worsens. At present, 5% or less of the table crops eaten in our region are grown in our region; as fuel prices increase and food supplies are disrupted, Montgomery County's need for the Ag Reserve, for the food security of its residents, will increase. All Montgomery County residents have been part of and paid for the Agricultural Reserve, and all Montgomery County residents benefit from preserving it for agriculture.

ZTA 20-01, if passed as written, will break the legal tools that have protected the Agricultural Reserve so far. The bill's current language would allow a non-agricultural industry to be considered a “permitted use”, the same category as farming. **This will destroy the legal protections that have allowed the County to preserve this land for agriculture.** The fact that Montgomery County has maintained farming as the sole primary land use in the Ag Reserve for forty years supports the case for adhering to the Master Plan and maintaining this crucial land use commitment to agriculture. If Montgomery County now establishes large-scale solar as a co-equal permitted use for land in the Ag Reserve through this ZTA, its strongest argument against State siting of large industrial facilities will be lost, and the County will lose its control of land use in the Ag Reserve. Making solar power a conditional use instead, as proposed by the Stakeholders, will allow appropriate solar projects to move forward in the Ag Reserve while retaining the County's local control over land use. This is the legal framework Howard County and Baltimore County have used, and Montgomery County must follow suit.

Smart solar siting does not require Montgomery County to rush to displace renting farmers. A sound climate response should not pit energy producers against farmers; we can choose to expand the solar industry in places where it won't have such negative effects (including brownfields, parking lots, industrial roofs, and more) and there are many more effective methods we can use in the Agricultural Reserve that can assist the County in meeting their climate action goals - including using regenerative agriculture practices on our lands to pull carbon back into the soil. Neither Montgomery County nor the state of Maryland have completed a comprehensive study to determine where solar can and should be optimally placed;

communities that have done so [found more than enough appropriate sites to build solar without taking prime farmland.](#)

If the Ag Reserve is opened to non-conditional solar development, this land use change will displace farmers from their land. Farmers rely on access to affordable land to rent: that's why Montgomery County residents have invested for decades in easements, Transfers of Development Rights, and other tools to keep this valuable land affordable for farmers. But land rents being offered by the solar industry are more than 20 times higher than what many land-leasing farmers currently pay. Some of Montgomery's tenant farmers are already losing their long-term leases, due to solar speculators' offers to landowners. ZTA 20-01 would open 2% (1800 acres) of the land in the Ag Reserve to solar, but industry representatives have said this is only the beginning of the land they wish to access, with their aim being solar conversion of anywhere between 13,000 and 18,000 acres in the Ag Reserve. *[Reimer, Hans. Statement during July 22, 2020 Joint Planning, Housing, & Economic Development and Transportation & Environmental Committees worksession, minutes 8 to 11.]* Through the "[Land Link](#)" program of [Montgomery Countryside Alliance](#), 40 new farmers - many of them immigrants, people of color, women, and veterans - are now seeking suitable land in the Ag Reserve, with 15 landowners offering farmland; the more landlords are able to raise rents and speculate on solar development, the fewer farmers will be able to afford and access land. [Fifty-seven percent of land in the Ag Reserve is rented, not farmed by its owner](#) – so renting farmers and new farmers searching for land to rent will lose out if forced to compete for land access with the deep-pocketed solar industry.

Montgomery County should not base its zoning decisions solely on private corporations' profit and convenience. Solar industry speculators and owners are seeking to profit from converting "cheap farmland" to energy production, but that inexpensive farmland is not a happenstance - it is the result of the forty-year effort to create and protect the Ag Reserve to benefit farming, because producers need affordable, stable land access. By developing on this publicly-subsidized farmland instead of on available, more appropriate sites, the solar firms can increase their profits – but increasing corporate profits is not why Montgomery County has invested in preserving the Agricultural Reserve. The industry objects to the Conditional Use process because they claim it will take too much time – but that is the same process that other industrial uses that may be in the public interest, like cell phone towers or transmission lines, follow in order to use land in the Ag Reserve. Giving the solar industry a special dispensation that other industries do not have is not necessary to build solar power in Montgomery County.

We ask you to support the compromise Conditional Use amendment to the ZTA. The undersigned organizations and individuals ask you to work with the Stakeholder community to:

- Reject ZTA 20-01 as written.
- Support the compromise Conditional Use proposal instead

Montgomery County already has the [second-most solar installations in the state](#); we don't need to destroy the Agricultural Reserve to create solar power. The County can keep fighting climate change and working for environmental justice by expanding the Farm to Food Bank program, instituting a regenerative agriculture pilot program in the Agricultural Reserve, conducting a

solar siting study and Smart Solar location policy, and prioritizing solar development on degraded land, brownfield, built surfaces, and industrial zones (like the 500-acre former coal plant site in Dickerson). Let's build a harmonious food and climate justice strategy that honors complementary roles for agriculture and appropriately-scaled and sited solar facilities.

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

8/9/2024 8:13 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

nanci wilkinson
nanciwilkinson@gmail.com
5502 Glenwood Rd
Bethesda, Maryland 20817

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From
📧 Liz Calzadillas

To
📧 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>; 👤 MCP-Chair #; 📧 MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject
Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent
Date Received
7/16/2024 7:08 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Put solar over parking lots and on roof tops, not over prime agricultural land! Solar yes, but we need to eat too.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.


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set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Noam Stopak
nstopak@gmail.com
4108 Ingomar St NW
Washington, District of Columbia 20015

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Email

Agricultural Advisory Com...

Owner

 MCP...



Email

From  catherine.coello@mncppc-mc.org

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Agricultural Advisory Committee - MC Farm Bureau Letter - PSC Case No. 9726

Date Sent	Date Received	7/3/2024 8:32 PM
-----------	---------------	------------------

From: Weyand, Michael G <Michael.Weyand@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 2:21 PM
To: Marc Elrich <Marc.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Bob Cissel <bobcissel50@gmail.com>; Doug Lechliden <doug@laytonsvillelandscaping.com>; <stevenfindlay2@gmail.com> Findlay <stevenfindlay2@gmail.com>; Kraut, Aaron <Aaron.Kraut@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Wilson, Craig <Craig.Wilson@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Edwards, Stan <Stan.Edwards@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Harris, Artie <Artie.Harris@mncppc-mc.org>; Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>; Kronenberg, Robert <robert.kronenberg@montgomeryplanning.org>; Butler, Patrick <patrick.butler@montgomeryplanning.org>; Iseli, Claire <Claire.Iseli@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Friedson's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Friedson@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Balcombe's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Luedtke's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Luedtke@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Gibson, Cindy <Cindy.Gibson@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Randy Stabler <pvfgrain@aol.com>; Tibbitts, Dale <Dale.Tibbitts@montgomerycountymd.gov>
Cc: SalazarLahera, Natalia <Natalia.Salazar@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Scheffel, Mike <Mike.Scheffel@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Lori Larson <Lori@wyndham-oaks.com>
Subject: Agricultural Advisory Committee - MC Farm Bureau Letter - PSC Case No. 9726

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Good afternoon:

On behalf of the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), I would like to reshare a letter from Montgomery County Farm Bureau to County Officials about the proposed solar project, PSC Case No. 9726. The letter was initially transmitted without considering board procedures for receiving AAC endorsement. The AAC has since reviewed it and supports Montgomery County Farm Bureau's position on local solar regulations.

Thank you,
-Mike Weyand

Mike Weyand, D.O.L
Business Development Specialist
Office of Agriculture
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2856 (Office)
michael.weyand@montgomerycountymd.gov



For more helpful Cybersecurity Resources, visit: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cybersecurity>

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
MC Farm Bureau Letter - PSC Case No. 9726.pdf	1,950,370	
1 - 1 of 1 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 9:59:50 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Olivia Bartlett <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 7:21 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Olivia Bartlett

oliviabartlett@verizon.net

7224 Beacon Ter

Bethesda, Maryland 20817


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/10/2024 4:51 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Pam Corey
pamramsey@gmail.com
23501 Peach Tree road
Clarksburg , Maryland 20871

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
Loading Attachment records...		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 1:53 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Patricia Kelly
bpjjkelly@gmail.com
15423 Conrad Spring Rd
Boys, Maryland 20841-3000

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  [Liz Calzadillas](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/23/2024 1:52 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

The proposed arrays would be a huge mistake! I was involved in the development of our current policies on solar within the Ag Reserve. Chaberton is trying to override an intelligent design by going directly to the PSC. These proposals are get rich quick damned the consequences and need to be rejected firmly.


I request that you reaffirm our commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Patty McGrath
pattymcgrath08@aol.com
11007 Edison Road
Potomac, Maryland 20854

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  [Peter Eeg](#)

To  [<MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>](#);  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC, to protect prime farm lands.

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/17/2024 1:07 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Cindy and Peter Eeg, 16400 West Old Baltimore Rd. Boyds, MD. 20841

My wife and I own Stoneoak Farm in Boyds Maryland in the Ag reserve. We have Solarized our farm, but in the right way. We followed all the permitting and Ag reserve considerations. We have two large southern facing barns. We have placed solar on these two barn roofs and now supply upwards of 3.5Mw hours to the grid monthly. This solar array does not impact our agricultural land that is used for hay and pasture and protecting woods and streams. This is the only way Solar should be placed in the Ag reserve. I am happy to have you visit our farm to discuss.


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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**Peter Eeg
laserveteeg@netzero.net
16400 West Old Baltimore Rd
Boys, Maryland 20841**

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 7:30 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

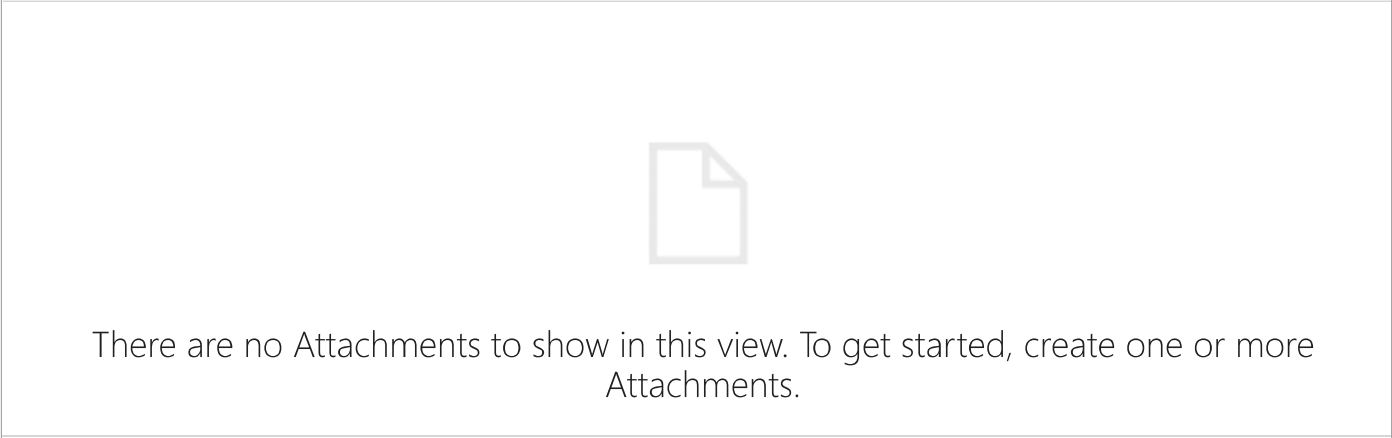
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Peter Hobby
phobby@gmail.com
113 Valley Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20816-2634

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div></div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 [QUENTIN REMEIN](#)

To

 <[MCP-Chair MCP-Chair](#)>;  [MCP-Chair #](#);  [MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org](#)

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	8/9/2024 9:38 PM
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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

With agricultural land shrinking worldwide from development and climate change and Montgomery County continuing to develop the Ag Reserve, we will have no land for agriculture. I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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QUENTIN REMEIN
email4q@remein.net
201 BRYANTS NURSERY RD
SILVER SPRING, Maryland 20905-3844

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
Loading Attachment records...		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 5:15:31 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Rachel Mattingly <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 3:29 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Rachel Mattingly
rachel.a.mattingly@gmail.com
17117 Hoskinson Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 6:56 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Rachel Rosenfeld
rrfeld@gmail.com
16315 Budd Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/16/2024 10:01 PM
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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Randi Field
scribers@verizon.net
9307 Long Branch Parkway
Silver Spring , Maryland 20901

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Email


Fight to defend the Ag Res...

Owner



 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Fight to defend the Ag Reserve from solar array developers

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 5:24 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Richard Drury
radrury@gmail.com
14500 Chrisman Hill Dr
Boys, Maryland 20841

Attachments

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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, July 13, 2024 10:55:50 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Rita Anselmo <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Saturday, July 13, 2024 7:22 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Rita Anselmo

rmanselmo@verizon.net


23101 Slidell Rd

Boyd's, Maryland 20841

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 1:20 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Robert Goldberg
goldberggrn@gmail.com
21404 Davis Mill Road
Germantown, Maryland 20876-4422

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 7:28 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Montgomery County citizens through through democratic processes decided to allow solar panels on lands poorly sited for farming. Please don't destroy good agricultural land. We all need to eat. We have lots of places for panels that are not being used -- parking lots and roofs tops of commercial buildings.

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Robert Janku
robert_janku@yahoo.com
11209 Trippon Ct
North Potomac, Maryland 20878

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Saturday, July 6, 2024 12:18:29 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Robert Wilbur <robert.wilbur@sdsu.edu>
Sent: Friday, July 5, 2024 5:24 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

This matter is a crossroads for the County. At stake is the ability of the County to control its land use. Control over land use is control over the future of the County. Once lost, it cannot be recovered. This right to control must be defended vigorously. I am asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions.

Solar siting is important to the future of the County. The County has recognized this through its firm commitment to a balanced solar siting policy that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

I recognize that there are many demands on your time, but the PSC's decision on this matter will have long lasting effects on the future of our County and on the ability of you and the people that will follow you to direct that future.

Robert Wilbur

robert.wilbur@sdsu.edu

15428 Conrad Spring Rd

Boyd, Maryland 20841

Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:58 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)
To County Executive, County Council Members, Planning Board Commissioners:

Please honor both the local 2021 solar zoning ZTA, (ZTA) 20-01, and the 1980 plan that created the Ag Reserve. Mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

Solar panels should not be erected on prime farmland.

2021 was the culmination of a 2-year process in which Montgomery County Council and interested parties intensively debated the issue of solar in the Ag Reserve and under what conditions it would be acceptable. In the end, the County Council and parties involved hammered out a workable compromise, (ZTA)20-01, that would not risk sacrificing good farmland for solar projects.

Yet the two solar projects that have applied directly to the MD Public Service Commission (PSC) for approval of their 4-5 MW facilities in the Reserve on prime farm soils are in direct conflict with (ZTA)20-01, which stipulates that “the Solar Collection System is prohibited on soils classified by the United States Department of Agriculture as either Soil

Classification Category I or Category II.” Yet, both large solar projects are proposed to be built in fields that have been farmed for years and are mostly made up of Class 2 soils. This conflicts with the County’s zoning ordinance.

Protect the Agricultural Reserve, our nation’s foremost farm protection area.

The Agricultural Reserve, established in 1980, is a nationally acclaimed land-use plan that was established in 1980 in response to the rapid disappearance of Montgomery County farms. The Ag Reserve is a vital part of the County’s economy, and the environmental, recreational and cultural benefits of the Ag Reserve extend to all residents of Montgomery County, and the broader region. Furthermore, the Ag Reserve is Important for the food security of Montgomery County residents.

The Covid pandemic revealed the extent of food insecurity in Montgomery County and underscored our need to support and increase local food production. Ag Reserve efforts such as The Farm to Food Bank Program and the Montgomery Countryside Alliance’s Land Link Program have grown in response to this need. As the climate crisis worsens, and as fuel prices increase and food supplies are disrupted, local food production in the Ag Reserve will become even more critical to our future.

Defer to the County’s zoning plan – maintain agriculture as the primary use of farmland in the Ag Reserve.

Uphold (ZTA) 20-01 and the conditional use process to allow solar on a case-by-case basis. This will keep purchase and rental of farmland affordable to aspiring farmers. Otherwise, if the Ag Reserve is opened to non-conditional solar development, a flood of commercial solar companies will continue to offer landowners more money for that land than they can make leasing the land to farmers. Such a land use change would displace farming and put affordable farmland increasingly out of reach for would-be farmers. We can sensibly accommodate solar and preserve farmland for the future by deferring to Montgomery County’s solar zoning law.


Conclusion:

- DEFEND OUR LOCAL ZONING ORDINANCES AND COUNTY LAW WHEN EVALUATING LARGER SCALE SOLAR PROJECTS**
- SUPPORT OUR COUNTY’S CONDITIONAL USE PROCESS TO ALLOW SOLAR ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS**
- MAINTAIN AGRICULTURE AS THE PRIMARY USE OF LAND IN THE AGRICULTURAL RESERVE IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

**Respectfully submitted,
Roberta G (rg) Steinman**

**Roberta Steinman
lifeonurth@gmail.com
9009 Fairview Rd
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-4106**

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/3/2024 7:46 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

Renewable energy sources are good, but more reliable energy source sexist and are dependable. The Earth is getting warmer more from other natural causes than the Carbon Dioxide hype. Higher Carbon Dioxide has greatly staved off many famines. Small modular safe nuclear reactors are a better bet for needed reliable energy sources.


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Ron Sheinson
ronsheinson@aol.com
809 N Belgrade Rd
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Attachments

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Email

Uphold County Zoning and th...

Owner

 MCP-C...



Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/10/2024 8:38 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)


I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning. Please stand strong for our county and the reserve - let's not let the commission overstep - farmland is preserved for a reason!

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

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Sarah Defnet
defnet@verizon.net
18010 Elgin Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20837


Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 8/10/2024 1:45 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Sheila Blum
sheilablum2@gmail.com
6904 Ridgewood Ave.
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:46 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Shelley Jones
Shelleyjones63@gmail.com
8500 Garland Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Attachments

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Email


Respect and uphold our Co...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Respect and uphold our County Zoning and Master Plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/16/2024 2:36 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm our County's wise commitment to balanced solar siting policy that protects the prime soils of our Ag Reserve.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with our county's zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, is the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays are being approved under this ZTA for less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused because the grid operator is unable to process more requests.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking out a new generation of diverse producers from the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics and very goals of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that wisely uses our finite supply of flat, sunny

fields of prime soils to protect our county's resiliency. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Stephen Whitney
steveatcres@gmail.com
16 Crescent Place
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 18, 2024 9:29:51 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Steve Nothwehr <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 7:49 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I live at 21030 Peach Tree Rd, Dickerson, MD in the ag. reserve of Montgomery County. Outside of the ag. reserve, there is very little farmland left in the County. I strongly support alternative energy efforts but we need to balance that with the ability to grow food. Allowing Chaberton to do an end-run around the current rules for solar in the ag. reserve would not achieve that goal. Thus, I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

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Sincerely,
Steve Nothwehr

Steve Nothwehr
nothwehrs2@gmail.com
21030 Peach Tree Rd
Dickerson, Maryland 20842

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/17/2024 4:33 AM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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I lived in Poolesville for thirty years until just a couple months ago. Now retired and moved out of state. I am INCENSED that corporations would attempt to CIRCUMVENT established RULES and PERMITTED USES within the AG RESERVE!! There should be no consideration of this stated request and WITHOUT HESITATION DENIED!!! The beautiful natural land and it being protected for use as farmland was a wise decision years ago.

The ENFORCEMENT of those rules stands strong and IT IS YOUR DUTY TO UPHOLD THEM WITHOUT QUESTION!!!!

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

**Steven Boulter
steven.boulter@verizon.net
170 Southcove Dr
Greenback, Tennessee 37742**

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div></div> <div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1

From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Monday, July 8, 2024 10:20:49 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: SueAnn Silvis <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 12:27 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

SueAnn Silvis

sasilvis@gmail.com

20501, Top Ridge Dr


Boyds, Maryland 20841

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Susan

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/16/2024 8:26 PM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Susan Miles
spmiles@starpower.net
1003 N Mansion Dr
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/24/2024 6:25 PM
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[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Please keep the Ag Reserve what it is intended for - agriculture, not solarculture.

Susanna Sammons
mum2sdk@gmail.com
14920 Braemar Crescent Way
Darnestown, Maryland 20878

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div></div> <div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div>		
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Email

Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...

Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent

Date Received

7/3/2024 6:04 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to strongly reaffirm and encourage the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve.

The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

It's more than money. It's good for our free land and to have land. Food.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended

without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue at the PSC.

Suzanne Piner
suzanne.piner@hotmail.com
17002 Hughes Rd
Poolesville, Maryland 20847

Attachments

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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 1:55 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Sylvia Dellamula
dawa.dellamula@gmail.com
18931 Fisher Ave
Poolesville, Maryland 20837

Attachments

File Name	File Size (Bytes)	
<div><div></div><div>There are no Attachments to show in this view. To get started, create one or more Attachments.</div></div>		
0 - 0 of 0 (0 selected)		Page 1


Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 7/16/2024 2:38 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Exercise caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding.

Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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Why not encourage Chaberton and others to build solar arrays on the roofs of already-existing buildings as opposed to valuable farm land. Wouldn't it be marvelous if all those high rises in Rockville and Silver Spring were covered in solar panels?

**Tatjana Meerman
tatmeer@gmail.com
10841 Whiterim Dr.
Potomac, Maryland 20854**

Attachments

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Email


Uphold County Zoning and...




Owner

 MCP...

Email

From  Liz Calzadillas

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent	Date Received	7/18/2024 3:05 PM
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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

ZTA 20-01, the provision that allowed solar in the Reserve, was the result of lengthy stakeholder engagement. Community solar arrays approved under the ZTA are being built on less-than-prime soils, several more approved projects are paused in line by the grid operator, unable to process more requests at the speed they are coming in.

Solar developers are offering landowners 10 and 20 times what farmers pay to lease acreage - locking a new generation of diverse producers out of the only land in the county set aside for farming. The economics of the Reserve stand to be completely upended without an approach that balances how we use our finite supply of flat, sunny fields of

prime soils. Please solidify the county's 40 year commitment to the Ag Reserve with strong engagement on this issue before the PSC.

Thomas Gleason
entechdev@gmail.com
10209 Menlo Ave
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-1057


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Email




Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner

 MCP...


Email

From  V W Crawford

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

Date Sent **Date Received** 8/9/2024 8:00 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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V W Crawford
vicki@hunterstrapfarm.com
17201 Whites Store Rd
Boys, Maryland 20841

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 18, 2024 9:30:30 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Victoria Wegener <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:35 AM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

As a long-time county resident and home owner, I'm writing to reaffirm the commitment to balanced solar siting policy in the County that protects the prime soils of our treasured Ag Reserve. The Public Service Commission must give "due consideration" to municipal policies in their decisions. I'm asking that the county mount the strongest defense of our master plan and zoning policies for the PSC to consider as they weigh allowing two large arrays on prime soils in the Reserve, in conflict with county zoning.

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Victoria Wegener

v_wegener@yahoo.com

804 Violet Place

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Email


Uphold County Zoning and...

Owner




 MCP...


Email

From

 Liz Calzadillas

To

 <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair #;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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7/16/2024 4:56 PM

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Planning Chair Artie Harris,

Many people have worked long and hard to establish and protect our Agricultural Reserve so we can keep the Reserve as a viable agricultural resource. Renewable energy sources are definitely a priority. There are many other options for solar power such as parking lots, rooftops, and extensive lawn areas around public and private buildings. Any solar energy projects that have to be built in the Reserve definitely need to be sited on subprime soils.

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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William George
joenemo@verizon.net
13026 Mill House Court
Germantown , Maryland 20874

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From: [Mills, Matthew](#)
To: [Beall, Mark](#)
Subject: FW: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC
Date: Thursday, July 11, 2024 4:50:44 PM
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Matthew T. Mills
Senior Counsel
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Office of the General Counsel
Wheaton Headquarters
2425 Reedie Drive – 14th Floor
Wheaton, Maryland 20902
301.495.2177



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From: Yvonnee Coyle <ymscoyle@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 4:49 PM
To: Mills, Matthew <matthew.mills@mncppc.org>
Subject: Uphold County Zoning and the master plan at the PSC

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Senior Counsel Matthew Mills,

(PSC Case No. 9726, Chaberton Sugarloaf Chaberton Solar Ramier, LLC - Case No. 9733)

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My family has prioritized local food. We love getting produce from local farmers, many in the ag reserve. We feel this choice is best for our community, our health and our earth. Please make it possible for these farms, run by hard working families, to continue supplying our community with delicious, local food.

Yvonne Coyle

Yvonne Coyle

ymscoyle@msn.com

16001 Narrows Teer

Silver Spring, Maryland 20906

Artie Harris
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board
Montgomery County Planning Department
2425 Reedie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902

Date: March 25, 2025

Subject: **Recommend AGAINST the Chaberton Solar Ramiere Plan**

Public Hearing Item: Montgomery Planning Board. March 27 2025 Hearing. Item: Mandatory Referral No. MR2024017 and Forest Conservation No. F20250480: Chaberton Solar Ramiere

Dear Chair Harris,

We recently received notice of the March 27 Planning Board hearing on the Chaberton Solar Ramiere Plan and feel compelled to share our concerns.

As strong advocates for clean energy, we actively engage in both local and national environmental issues. However, we firmly oppose the Chaberton Solar Ramiere Plan due to its significant impact on farmland preservation.

We fully support the County's commitment to protecting prime farmland and its Zoning Ordinance, which rightfully reserves lands with prime soils for growing food. Allowing solar development on this valuable agricultural land would undermine that mission.

Rather than covering farmland with solar panels, we urge the County to prioritize solar installations on existing infrastructure such as schools, public buildings, and new developments, ensuring that developers take responsibility for integrating sustainable energy solutions into their own projects.

Converting farmland into solar fields would eliminate food production on the County's richest soils, jeopardize the livelihoods of local farmers, and lock up prime agricultural land for decades – without any guarantee that it will be restored for future farming.

We strongly urge you to recommend against this plan.

Sincerely,
Carrie Witkop and Jane Houlihan
North Chevy Chase, MD
carriewitkop@gmail.com, jhoulihan@me.com

Copy: Councilmembers Kate Stewart, Evan Glass, Kristin Mink

Email

Chaberton Solar Ramiere

Owner

 MCP...



Email

N/A

From  Linda Nishioka

Bcc

Subject Chaberton Solar Ramiere

To  <MCP-Chair MCP-Chair>;  MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org

Cc  Kristina Bostick

Date Sent

Date Received

3/25/2025 3:05 PM

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Mandatory Referral Number MR2024017

To the Planning Board,

I am opposed to this plan to put in a solar area in the agricultural preserve. It's like the camel getting its nose in the tent.

As a long time resident, most of my 81 years, I have seen so many instances this "camel in the tent". Don't Start!

Do not start defiling, desecrating, and denigrating our green treasure, our Agricultural and Open space zone.

Among many reasons, It is the beginning of allowing commercial and industrial- like activity into our agriculture

zone. Also the construction of this solar array requires heavy machinery, disturbing the soil, and adding industrial materials and for decades later- panels, supports, wires, etc -that will require more non-farming machines to traffic in the area to do maintenance and such.

What more areas will be disturbed and forever changed to put in transmission wires? What of the maintenance and repairs? All of this is NOT what we citizens wanted when we opted for an agricultural preserve. It is counter to the nature and the spirit of this very special zone. Do not assault our green space with this commercial venture that is not agricultural.

Allowing this is Counterproductive for the long-term intent of the agricultural preserve, and I don't want the agricultural preserve to be challenged with this and in the future, having people point and say "oh well, you let this go in so why not let ... happen too".

No! No! No!

I wish our county would be more forward thinking and plan ahead

for more solar collection —Yes! But over present construction...over present development, over present areas that need amelioration

...over parking lots...why not up and down Rockville Pike on top of all these flat buildings with flat roof areas doing nothing but reflecting heat into our atmosphere and warming up a planet. Lets use all this overhead space !

Why don't we put solar panels on top of all commercial buildings? Why doesn't the county have an ordinance requiring all future construction to be able to support solar panels or better yet, just require them to put in solar panels with initial construction. Wouldn't that make more sense rather

than running transmission wires across the Ag. Preserve?
more sense than destroying forever the precious shrinking
open space we have?


Please leave the agriculture preserve green. Please leave the
agriculture preserve as agriculture as it is intended. Green
space with just the farming that has always been done. Leave it
for that thank you.

Please do the forward thinking thing. Do not allow this project
here.

Linda Nishioka

Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS

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Sugarloaf & Ramiere Agrivoltaic Planning Report

For Chaberton Energy and Key Stakeholders

Okovate Sustainable Energy, Inc.

Executive Summary

Chaberton Energy, a public benefit corporation headquartered in Maryland, is committed to developing sustainable infrastructure and renewable energy projects that serve local communities. With over 650 MWdc in secured site control and nearly 1.5 GW of projects in development, Chaberton is at the forefront of renewable energy innovation, bringing together creativity, excellence, and humanity in every project.

For their agrivoltaics projects at **Sugarloaf** and **Ramiere**, Chaberton seeks to integrate solar energy with agricultural practices, providing a sustainable solution that maximizes land-use efficiency. By maintaining agricultural productivity while producing clean energy, these projects will help local communities thrive, benefiting landowners, neighbors, and stakeholders alike. These dual-use systems are key to Chaberton's mission of fostering long-term sustainability and community engagement.

Okovate Sustainable Energy is a minority-owned and -operated Maryland-based firm that designs, develops, and consults on community solar projects that work in harmony with farming operations, accelerating the deployment of agrivoltaics. Okovate partners with a Stanford-backed group, [Fundusol](#), that provides co-location modeling outputs and employed machine-learning algorithms and optimization techniques to balance system configurations, crop biomass, animal productivity, and array spacing to strengthen Okovate's data-driven recommendations for agricultural strategies.

In this report Okovate carries out two comprehensive site studies evaluating potential agrivoltaics integration into Chaberton's Ramiere and Sugarloaf solar projects in Maryland. Our approach, powered by advanced machine-learning models in collaboration with our partner Fundusol, examine for each site what the optimal agrivoltaic land use would be to combine agriculture and solar energy production, ensuring high efficiency, economic viability, and environmental sustainability.

Okovate's Commitment

We are committed to delivering solar projects that align with Maryland's goals for sustainability, agricultural preservation, and community development. By integrating agrivoltaics, our tailored solutions support the state's renewable energy targets while enhancing local agricultural productivity. Okovate's ongoing stakeholder collaboration ensures long-term success, contributing to Maryland's leadership in clean energy innovation and protecting its agricultural heritage.

Key Focus Areas

- **Design and Optimization:** Tailoring agrivoltaic designs using machine learning, Okovate balances solar panel placement, crop selection, and grazing management to maximize efficiency and viability.
- **Community Engagement:** Okovate fosters community buy-in and streamlines the permitting process by building strong relationships with local stakeholders.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Efficiently navigating Maryland's regulatory environment to secure necessary permits.
- **Environmental Impact:** Ensuring that project designs are carried out with minimal environmental impact to protect the land for agriculture and proactively mitigate any potential environmental risks.

- **Long-Term Partnership:** Ongoing support to Project Sugarloaf and Ramiere throughout the project lifecycle, including development, construction, and operational assistance to Project Sugarloaf and Ramiere, the landowners, and tenant farmers.

Methodology

- **Crop Production:** In Partnership with Fundusol, we modeled crop performance under agrivoltaic conditions through comprehensive irradiance studies and microclimate assessments. By analyzing empirical and local yield data alongside site-specific factors such as climate and soil we provide an overview of crop suitability optimizing both environmental conditions and economic viability.
- **Livestock:** We assessed optimal stocking densities, pasture species, and management strategies under the shading effects of solar panels in the agrivoltaic system. This approach allows us to balance vegetation control and herd productivity, supporting sustainable land use and economic viability.
- **Apiary:** Coupled with sustainable land management practices like grazing, we suggest collaborating with local beekeepers to install and manage hives, optimizing hive density based on the future vegetation and a pollen analysis, and potentially supplementing with pollinator-friendly plantings to enhance honey production.

Okovate's core values center on farmland protection, ensuring that solar energy development compliments agricultural activities that work in practice, not just on a theoretical basis. We are committed to creating a future where communities thrive by using local land to generate clean energy and sustainably produce food.

While Okovate empowers Chaberton and the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture to choose which agricultural solution to implement, our comprehensive analysis of the Sugarloaf and Ramiere sites revealed several key insights:

1. **Landscape assessment:** Located within Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve, both sites benefit from a resilient agricultural economy with small-scale farms and a diverse crop and livestock base. Sugarloaf, with sandy loam soil and limited water retention, is suited for grazing, while Ramiere's fertile silt loam soil supports greater agricultural flexibility. The region's climate, with an annual rainfall slightly below evapotranspiration needs, makes agrivoltaics advantageous for reducing water deficits during. Key challenges at the sites include erosion, limited water retention and soil compaction risks. Mitigation measures, such as non-invasive construction and maintaining ground cover, help address these issues, ensuring sustainable agrivoltaic productivity.
2. **Crop Modeling:** Crop modeling analysis, conducted in partnership with Fundusol, revealed that certain crops, such as carrots, watermelon, and summer squash, show potential for cultivation within the agrivoltaic systems. However, due to limited row spacing and the small amount of tillable land at these sites, the viability of crop production is low.. Gaining market access was identified as one of the main challenges for crop production at these sites. Other challenges identified for some crops were high price volatility, disease risk, or physical limitations.

3. **Livestock Feasibility:** Livestock grazing, particularly with sheep, is a compatible option for both sites. We determined that smaller sheep breeds under rotational grazing are ideal for balancing pasture health and revenue. With recommended stocking densities of 3 ewes per acre under solar panels and 7 ewes per acre on open pasture, these sites can sustain a sheep herd of 80 ewes. This makes sheep grazing a viable option, especially for already established local farmers with additional land. Our analysis indicates that agrivoltaic sheep grazing could yield higher profits per sheep at these sites if including vegetation management payments to the farmer.
4. **Apiary:** The potential for integrating apiaries into the agrivoltaic systems was explored and recommended due to the benefits of co-locating beehives with solar farms, including increased honey production, creation of valuable pollinator habitats through installation of native grasses. The two sites can support a combined 450,000 honeybee population. We reviewed the costs of 1-lb honey sales from several local Maryland apiaries and determined that onsite apiaries would be profitable in Year 1 if Chaberton were to cover the nominal costs of hive installations.

Agricultural Activity	Best fit	Feasibility Score (1-5)	Economic for Local Farmer
Crop Production	Carrots, Summer Squash, Watermelon	2	Lack of market access and not enough space for equipment
Livestock	Sheep grazing	5	Suitable option, especially if local farmer is found
Apiary	Pollinator habitat with apiary	5	Yes if hive installation covered by Chaberton

Based on these insights, a phased approach is recommended for Chaberton, prioritizing livestock grazing (sheep recommended) as the primary agricultural activity and considering the integration of apiaries simultaneously or in later phases. This approach allows for flexibility, adaptability, and optimization of the agrivoltaic system over time. Okovate recommends Chaberton follow the RFP process outlined in the report to source local livestock farmers and beekeepers.

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Project Overview

Project Sugarloaf is a 4 MW-AC community solar installation located on approximately 19 acres of a 52.7-acre property at 20507 Darnestown Road, Dickerson, Montgomery County, Maryland. The solar array covers around 16 acres, and the buffer zone outside the array about 3 acres. The system features 8 ft interrow spacing and uses a single-axis tracker to optimize solar energy production while maintaining agricultural use. The project will support approximately 634 households and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 5,100 tons per year, benefiting both the local community and the



Figure 1: Sugarloaf project design

environment.

Project Ramiere is a 3 MW-AC community solar installation on approximately 11 acres of a 118-acre property at 17600 Whites Ferry Rd., Poolesville, Montgomery County, Maryland. The solar array covers around 8 acres, and the buffer zone outside the array about 2 acres. The project incorporates 8 ft interrow spacing to maintain agricultural productivity. The project will support approximately 415 households and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 3,820 tons of CO₂ every year, while supporting local economic growth.

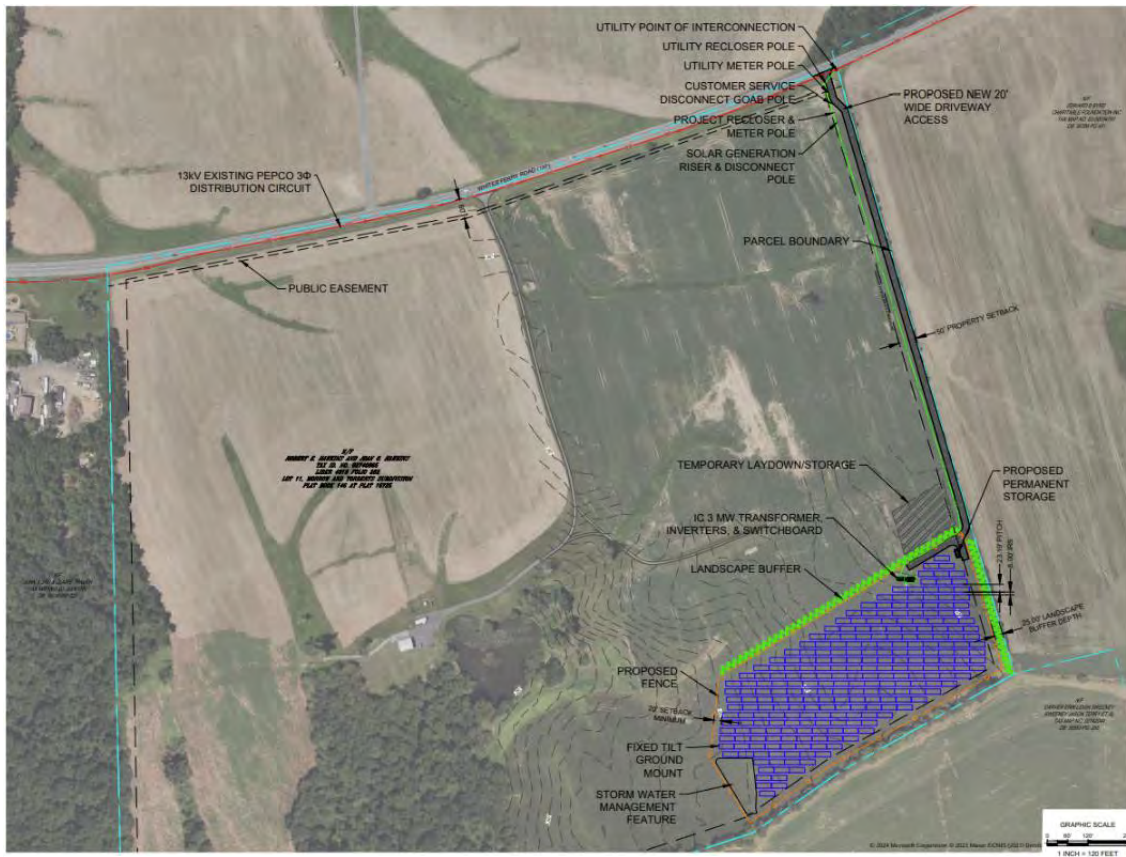


Figure 2: Ramiere project design

Scope of Analysis

Chaberton requested Okovate to analyze various agricultural solutions that might be feasible to incorporate in conjunction with the planned solar projects and recommend one or more alternatives based on their ability to be sustainably and economically integrated on these sites. Chaberton indicated it was important to comply with Maryland Department of Agriculture guidelines regarding agrivoltaics, HB 0908, to incorporate local considerations specific to agricultural practices in Montgomery County and these sites in particular and ensure any recommended solution would have a high confidence of success over the life of the project.

To achieve this, Okovate considered the following:

- Maryland Department of Agriculture guidelines regarding agrivoltaics HB 0908
- Proposed CPCN licensing condition per Case Numbers 9733 (Ramiere) and 9726 (Sugarloaf)
- Feasibility of solutions based on local soil and sunlight conditions.
- Economic feasibility based on current market conditions
- Use of sustainable development best practices.
- For each proposed solution, Okovate provides:
 - Tailored design solutions that maximize land-use efficiency.
 - Agronomic assessment and agricultural co-location modeling.

- Full support through the permitting process to meet all agrivoltaics regulatory requirements.
- Stakeholder engagement and farmer sourcing plans.

Agrivoltaics

To achieve the goal of maintaining agricultural land use in conjunction with the proposed solar projects, Chaberton aims to utilize agrivoltaic practices. Agrivoltaics, or dual-use solar, integrates solar energy production with agricultural activities on the same land, potentially increasing land-use efficiency by over 60%. This dual-use approach can not only provide an additional income stream but also offers significant environmental benefits. Solar panels create microclimates that protect crops from extreme weather, reduce evapotranspiration, and conserve water, improving crop resilience in drier climates. Additionally, they help prevent soil erosion and preserve soil moisture, promoting long-term soil health and sustainability. This synergy enhances the economic viability of both agriculture and renewable energy, making agrivoltaics a powerful tool for optimizing environmental and economic outcomes.

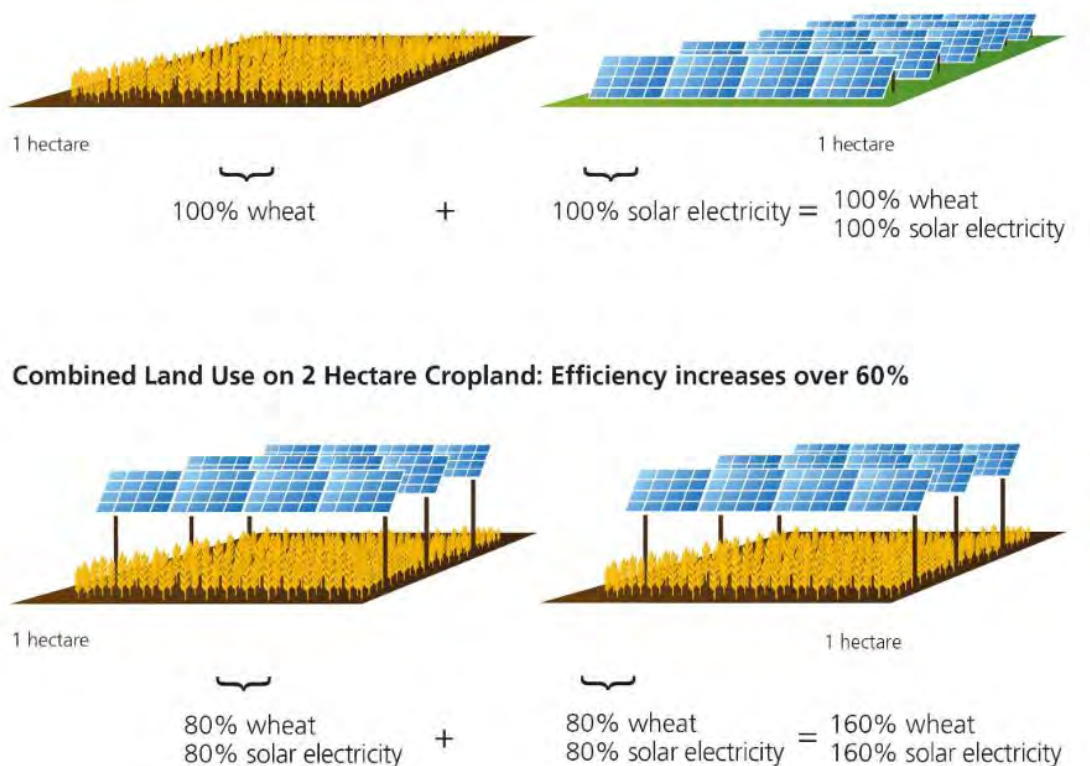


Figure 3: Dual Land use (Source: Fraunhofer Institute)

Successful agrivoltaic systems require thoughtful design that balances agricultural productivity with energy generation. Key factors include optimizing the tilt and spacing of photovoltaic panels to maximize sunlight distribution for both crops and energy production, as well as selecting appropriate crop varieties based on their light requirements. Additionally, the integration of environmental

factors such as soil health, water management, and microclimate conditions under the panels is critical to ensure that both solar and agricultural outputs are optimized¹

Montgomery County Regulatory Landscape

The County has evolving policy on solar development, driven by the need to balance farmland preservation with renewable energy goals. While the County discourages solar project on prime agricultural soils (Class I and Class II), agrivoltaics systems are permitted in the Agricultural Reserve (AR) zone, with specific conditions and limitations. For example, a solar array only qualifies as agrivoltaics if it is accessory to the primary agricultural use of the land. That means that farming must remain the primary activity, and solar cannot displace agricultural production.

Chaberton follows all of the County's guidelines relating to project development and seeks authority to develop projects above the 2 MW-AC limit on Class II soils in the Agricultural Reserve. However, Chaberton complies with all other Montgomery County's regulations:

- No development activity on wetlands or floodplains
- No scraping of topsoil planned in civil work
- Very minimal grading and soil removal that will not impact soil quality requisite to host operating agriculture
- Proper setbacks and screening to minimize visual impacts on surrounding properties and public roads
- Designated pollinator-friendly under Maryland Pollinator-Friendly Designation Program where sites are not incorporating agriculture
- Grazing, crop production, and/or apiary activities (in conjunction with grazing or crop production) at both sites
- Formal approval of interconnection from Potomac Edison (Sugarloaf) and PEPCO (Ramiere)
- Concrete-use solely for pad transformers and electrical equipment and pavement as required by Montgomery County Fire and Rescue
- Undisturbed forestry and natural landscaping

State of Maryland Regulatory Landscape

Chaberton's commitment to compliance extends beyond Montgomery County to encompass state-level legislation aimed at promoting responsible solar development

House Bill 0908: Enacted in 2022 to streamline the approval process for community solar projects while encouraging the integration of agriculture. Per HB 0908, Maryland defines agrivoltaics as the simultaneous use of land for both solar energy generation and agriculture, which includes:

- Raising grains, fruits, herbs, melons, mushrooms, nuts, seeds, tobacco, or vegetables
- Raising poultry, including chicken and turkeys, for meat or egg production
- Dairy production, such as the raising of milking cows
- Raising livestock, including cattle, sheep, goats, or pigs

¹ Dupraz, C., et al., "Combining solar photovoltaic panels and food crops for optimizing land use: Towards new agrivoltaic schemes," *Renewable Energy* 36, no. 10 (2011): 2725-2732, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.renene.2011.03.005>.

- Horse boarding, breeding, or training
- Turf farming
- Raising ornamental shrubs, plants, or flowers, including aquatic plants
- Aquaculture
- Silviculture

While this definition emphasizes the dual-use nature of the land and requires that agricultural activities remain a primary focus, it is very broad. Chaberton's Sugarloaf and Ramiere projects aim to advance agrivoltaics by innovatively integrating agricultural practices that are comparable to the activity in the state and Montgomery County. They recognize that agrivoltaics is not merely about co-locating solar panels and agriculture but about creating a synergistic system where both solar energy and agriculture can thrive.

Chaberton's projects align with this legislation by prioritizing dual-use land and incorporating agricultural practices. They go beyond simply placing solar panels on farmland; they actively seek ways to enhance agricultural productivity through engaging groups like Okovate to analyze practices such as pollinator-friendly plantings, managed grazing, crop production, and apiary activity beneath the panels. This approach maximizes land use efficiency and ensures that solar development complements, rather than displaces, agricultural activities.

House Bill 1309: Passed in 2021, this bill established the Maryland Pollinator-Friendly Solar Energy Generating System Designation Program. Chaberton actively participates in this program by incorporating pollinator-friendly ground cover and creating suitable habitats for bees and other pollinators where agrivoltaics is not implemented. This not only benefits local ecosystems and supports biodiversity but also contributes to the productivity of nearby farms by enhancing pollination services. Chaberton's commitment to pollinator-friendly practices showcases their understanding of the interconnectedness between solar energy, agriculture, and environmental health.

Current State of Agrivoltaics

National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) manages a map of all U.S.-based agrivoltaics projects called InSPIRE (Innovative Site Preparation and Impact Reductions on the Environment). This initiative within NREL focuses on researching and promoting agrivoltaics to maximize the benefits of solar development while minimizing environmental impacts. Last updated in June of 2024, this map shows that there are 584 solar projects utilizing over 62,000 acres, representing over 10 GW, that qualify as agrivoltaics either for sheep grazing, crop production, or pollinator habitat². Of these over 70% of the sites incorporate a pollinator habitat and nearly 40% incorporate grazing, being especially prevalent on larger sites (average of 226 acres/project). Only 6% (35 sites representing 360 acres) incorporate crop harvesting. In addition to the small number, these projects are small, with an average of only 10 acres / project demonstrating that this form of agrivoltaics is extremely nascent; dominated by what would be considered pilot or demonstration projects. Of note, none of these are located in Maryland. On the positive side, agrivoltaics is growing rapidly be a core part of the solar industry. The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) states that as of September 9, 2024, there a

² InSPIRE, Agrivoltaics Map https://openei.org/wiki/InSPIRE/Agrivoltaics_Map

re 209.8 GW of installed solar capacity in the U.S.³ This means that agrivoltaics makes up at least 4.7% of solar projects in the United States. With more and more projects coming online incorporating agrivoltaics – at least with pollinator friendly habitats – this percentage is growing rapidly.

Okovate Credentials

Okovate is a minority- and woman-owned and operated firm headquartered in Maryland making community solar deployment more sustainable and economic through agrivoltaics. We prioritize farmland protection and ensure that solar development works with the food system instead of against it. Our team has a deep background in agriculture and agronomy alongside experience in solar project design in order to understand how best to optimize these projects.

Our vision is to create a future where communities thrive by harnessing local land to simultaneously generate clean energy and sustainably produce food through innovative technologies.

We are a leading innovator in agrivoltaic solutions, specializing in the research, design, and implementation of systems that seamlessly integrate agricultural practices with solar energy production. Our expertise lies in developing customized agrivoltaic strategies that optimize land use efficiency, enhance agricultural yields, and promote sustainable farming practices. Our deep understanding of both the agricultural and solar sectors allows us to create synergistic systems that maximize the benefits of both.

This report was spearheaded by Okovate's Chief Agricultural Officer, Jorrit Becking. Mr. Becking brings extensive experience in the development and implementation of agrivoltaic projects across the globe. His educational background includes a Master of Science degree in Plant Science from Wageningen University, a renowned agricultural research institution in the Netherlands, and a Master of Environmental Management from Yale University.

Collaboration with Fundusol

Backed by experts at Stanford University and Carnegie Mellon University, Fundusol's proprietary agrivoltaic software provides optimized system designs for electricity and agricultural performance, across locations, crop profiles, and livestock systems. They provided co-location modeling outputs to strengthen our data-driven recommendations for agricultural strategies. They employed machine-learning algorithms and optimization techniques to balance system configurations, crop biomass, animal productivity, and array spacing. Their model integrates ASCE standards, cost functions, and environmental constraints, producing scenario analyses that explore the spatial and economic interactions between solar energy and agriculture.

³ Solar Market Insight Report, SEIA, <https://seia.org/research-resources/us-solar-market-insight/>

Landscape Assessment

This chapter explores key environmental and agricultural factors at the Sugarloaf and Ramiere sites, focusing on soil, water, and climate conditions. These factors are crucial in determining the viability of integrating agrivoltaic systems with farming practices.

Montgomery County

Agricultural Economy

Montgomery County's agricultural landscape is characterized by various crop and livestock operations. With 583 farms spanning nearly 70,000 acres, more than 75% of these farms are under 50 acres, reflecting the small-scale nature of much of the county's agriculture⁴. Montgomery County's farmland is overwhelmingly used for commodity grain production, primarily feeding into the livestock industry. However, with a market value of \$26,725,000, the Montgomery County horticultural industry still ranks fourth in the State⁵. The County's agricultural economy has remained resilient, with net farm income increasing and the number of farms holding steady since 2017, even amid reduced government support. This reflects a strong and diversified agricultural community, providing the foundation to support successful agrivoltaics projects.⁶

Agricultural Reserve⁷

Both sites are in the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve. The Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, created in 1980, protects 93,000 acres of farmland and open space by limiting development to one house per 25 acres through the Rural Density Transfer Zone and the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) program. These measures, alongside the Building Lot Termination (BLT) program, have preserved over 63,000 acres for farming, supporting 540 farms. However, rising land values, limited diversification options, and reliance on fluctuating TDR markets create financial challenges for farmers, potentially impacting the Reserve's long-term sustainability as land-use demands shift.

Climate

The climate in Montgomery County, Maryland, plays a significant role in shaping the agricultural potential and the feasibility of agrivoltaic systems at the Sugarloaf and Ramiere sites. The region experiences a temperate climate characterized by moderate rainfall and warm summers, making it conducive for both crop cultivation (mainly soybeans, corn, hay, and wheat) and livestock grazing.

With an annual rainfall of approximately 1,028 mm, the region generally provides sufficient moisture for agricultural activities. However, the evapotranspiration rate of 1,115 mm suggests that, during warmer months, there can be a slight water deficit. This is where agrivoltaics offers a potential

⁴ United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). *2022 Census of Agriculture County Profile: Montgomery County, Maryland* (Publication No. cp24031). https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Maryland/cp24031.pdf

⁵ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/ag-facts.html>

⁶

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Maryland/cp24031.pdf

⁷ Montgomery County Planning. (n.d.). *Agricultural Reserve Award*. Retrieved from <https://montgomeryplanning.org/awards/ag-reserve-award/>

advantage over traditional farming. The partial shading from solar panels can reduce the water needs of crops by minimizing evapotranspiration, helping to conserve water during drier periods.

Sugarloaf

Project Sugarloaf presents strong potential for agrivoltaic systems thanks to its well-drained sandy loam soil. Although the pH level of 4.6⁸ is slightly lower than optimal, indicating that some soil treatment might be necessary to support production, the site benefits from excellent drainage, reducing the risk of waterlogging. The soil's erosion risk (K factor) is low, which supports long-term land stability, but wind erosion is a moderate concern, highlighting the importance of maintaining vegetative cover. The water holding capacity is somewhat limited at 0.13 cm/cm, increasing the need for irrigation during drier crop seasons. Given these conditions, grazing is more suitable than intensive crop production, as it requires fewer inputs and is less affected by the site's susceptibility to drought and wind erosion.

Table 1: Sugarloaf environmental parameters⁹

Category	Value	Score
Soil Type	Sandy Loam	6.5
pH Level	4.6	5
Erosion Risk (K Factor)	0.28	10
Wind Erosion Risk	Moderate	7
Drainage	Well Drained	8
Water Capacity (cm/cm)	0.13	7

Ramiere

Project Ramiere offers promising conditions for agrivoltaic systems, particularly due to its well-drained silt loam soil, which provides better fertility and water retention compared to sandy loam soils. The site's pH level of 5.5¹⁰ is closer to the optimal range for most crops, reducing the need for soil treatment. However, the higher erosion risk (K factor of 0.49) and susceptibility to soil compaction highlight potential challenges for intensive crop production, necessitating careful land management practices. Wind erosion is also a moderate concern, reinforcing the importance of maintaining good ground cover. With a strong water-holding capacity of 0.16 cm/cm, irrigation demands are less pronounced than in other sites, making this location more flexible for agricultural u

⁸ USDA Web Soil Survey: <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

⁹ USDA Web Soil Survey: <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

¹⁰ USDA Web Soil Survey

se. Nonetheless, the susceptibility to erosion and compaction makes grazing a more sustainable than crop farming, ensuring the land remains productive over time with fewer inputs.

Table 2: Ramiere Environmental Parameters¹¹

Category	Value	Score
Soil Type	Silt Loam	7.5
pH Level	5.5	7
Erosion Risk (K Factor)	0.49	4
Wind Erosion Risk	Moderate	7
Drainage	Well Drained	9
Water Capacity (cm/cm)	0.16	10

Agronomic Assessment

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the agrivoltaic potential for crops and grazing at the Chaberton Ramiere and Sugarloaf sites, including financial analyses. The crop modeling evaluates the performance of different crops under solar panels, examining yield variations and the financial impact of reduced production. The grazing section outlines sheep stocking densities, management strategies, and economic viability assessments.

Based on the ground coverage ratio of around 40% in the designs, we calculated the tillable in-between-row acreage at Sugarloaf to be around 10 acres and around 5 acres at Ramiere. Combined for both sites there is an additional 5 acres outside the solar array but within the project boundary, that could be used for agricultural activities. However, these 5 acres are only included in the grazing assessment, as straight rows required for crop farming are not feasible in this area. These numbers were used to calculate the total yields since the area directly under the solar panels will be less productive. Due to the proximity of both sites and the total acreage of the plots, the total tillable land will be around 20 acres, allowing for a wide range of agricultural activities. In our assessment, we model the yields and profits for farmers under agrivoltaics and, for comparison, calculate the same metrics for conventional agriculture at the same site. For conventional agriculture (without solar) we assumed a land lease of \$250 for cropland and \$50 for pasture and for agrivoltaics we use a \$250 vegetation management subsidy. Final rate decisions will be up to Chaberton.

¹¹ USDA Web Soil Survey: <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

Crop Modelling

We modeled a variety of common Maryland crops to evaluate their performance, profitability and feasibility in an agrivoltaics design. We combined all results in the table below. Further information on sources and assumptions for this analysis can be found in the table in Annex 1. The risk score is based on crop vulnerability and market vulnerabilities. The APV feasibility score is based on the physical limitations of crop production in the proposed designs, it deals mainly with equipment access and plant height. In both categories, a high score indicates optimal conditions for agrivoltaics: a high-risk score signifies low risk, while a high feasibility score means the crop is highly feasible.

Since both locations are so similar, and closely located we modeled Ramiere and utilized the results for Sugarloaf as well. The results for crops show that for all cases, the crop profits are lower than without agrivoltaics. However, when considering the additional income from solar leases, the total economic output of the land is significantly higher. Important to note is that for this analysis we used a \$250/ acre cash rent for conventional agriculture, and a \$250/acre payment to the farmer for the agrivoltaics analysis.

The best performing crops were watermelon, summer squash and carrots.

We modeled for different designs. Interestingly, elevating the panels resulted in an insignificant increase in irradiance but negatively impacted crop yields. This occurs because, with the same row spacing, the shading effect remains almost consistent, while the micro-climate benefits diminish as panel height increases.

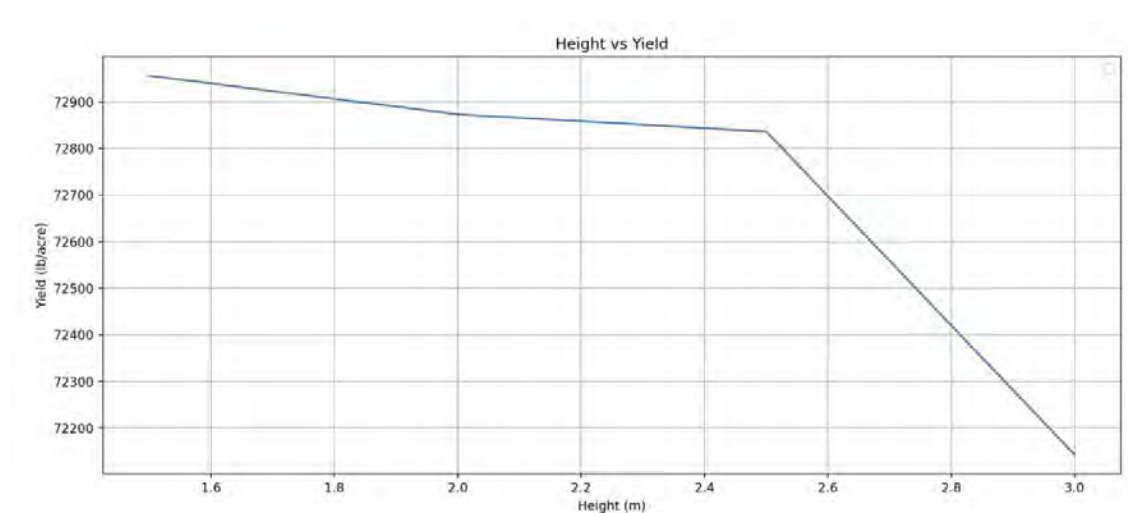


Figure 4: Panel height and tomato yield at Ramiere

Table 3: Crop analysis results for Ramiere and Sugarloaf I. Annex II for references.

Crop System	Conventional agriculture	Agrivoltaics	Agrivoltaics + subsidy	Risk Score	APV Feasibility
Sweet Corn				4	2
Yield (lb/acre)	12,000	10,560	10,560		
Revenue (\$/acre)	4,020	3,538	3,538		
Costs (\$/acre)	3,200	2,950	2,700		
Profit (\$/acre)	820	588	838		
Soy				3	3
Yield (lb/acre)	2,820	3,187	3,187		
Revenue (\$/acre)	556	628	628		
Costs (\$/acre)	549	299	49		
Profit (\$/acre)	7	329	579		
Lettuce				1	5
Yield (lb/acre)	23,100	16,586	16,586		
Revenue (\$/acre)	16,586	11,909	11,909		
Costs (\$/acre)	13,780	13,280	13,030		
Profit (\$/acre)	2,806	-1,371	-1,121		
Tomato				3	3
Yield (lb/acre)	13,000	11,440	11,440		
Revenue (\$/acre)	6,370	5,606	5,606		
Costs (\$/acre)	14,587	14,337	14,087		
Profit (\$/acre)	-1,587	-2,897	-2,647		
Carrot				3	4
Yield (lb/acre)	27,500	34,375	34,375		
Revenue (\$/acre)	10,340	12,925	12,925		
Costs (\$/acre)	8,820	12,820	12,570		
Profit (\$/acre)	1,520	105	355		
Potato				3	2
Yield (lb/acre)	25,500	18,870	18,870		
Revenue (\$/acre)	3,698	2,736	2,736		
Costs (\$/acre)	2,698	2,948	2,698		
Profit (\$/acre)	1,000	-212	38		
Watermelons				3	4
Yield (lb/acre)	13,300	7,980	7,980		
Revenue (\$/acre)	7,730	4,788	4,788		
Costs (\$/acre)	4,700	4,450	4,200		
Profit (\$/acre)	3,030	338	588		
Summer Squash				5	5
Yield (lb/acre)	25,000	15,000	15,000		
Revenue (\$/acre)	15,000	9,000	9,000		
Costs (\$/acre)	8,438	7,938	7,688		
Profit (\$/acre)	6,562	1,062	1,312		

Crop analysis results

Our assessment indicates that certain crops are better suited for growth under solar panels in agrivoltaic (APV) systems at the Sugarloaf and Ramiere sites. Summer squash, watermelons, and carrots performed best in our analysis, with carrots expected to yield 25% more under agrivoltaics.

Although sweet corn and soy also showed positive results, these crops are less feasible at these sites due to plant height requirements (sweet corn) and the need for large equipment (soy). While soy is anticipated to yield 13% more in agrivoltaic systems, limited equipment access would likely render its cultivation impractical, as harvesting soy by hand is not feasible.

Crops such as lettuce, tomatoes, and potatoes are not suitable for these sites due to their high light requirements and sensitivity to humidity in the soil (which increases disease pressure).

An important consideration for all crops grown at these sites is the challenge of establishing reliable market access. Many crops are perishable, and supply chain logistics heavily influence their viability. For specialty crops, farmers often depend on local markets, such as farmer's markets or co-ops, due to challenges in transporting them over long distances.

Additionally, although our analysis indicates that squash and watermelon can generate substantial profits, these crops cannot be grown in the same soil year after year. Crop rotation is essential to prevent disease build-up and allow the soils to rest. Using a rotation of carrots, squash, and watermelon, the average profit per acre is \$500 without a solar subsidy and \$750 with it. For the total tillable acreage (15 acres), total profits would range from \$7,500 to \$11,250 per year, respectively. This demonstrates that, for these sites, crop production may not be feasible unless a nearby farmer is found that can easily extend their operations to these sites.

Crop-Specific Analysis

Sweet Corn

Sweet corn demonstrates reasonable adaptability to agrivoltaic systems, but its taller plant structure can interfere with solar panel layout.

Soy

Significant marketing challenges exist for small-scale soy production, which traditionally benefits from economies of scale. Additionally, specialized equipment requirements increase the complexity of production under agrivoltaics. For the row spacing at these solar sites, this likely means that equipment needs to be important from countries where these small-scale systems are more prevalent, like China.

Lettuce

Lettuce is a high-risk crop due to its sensitivity to environmental conditions and high spoilage potential. Its perishability makes it vulnerable to fluctuating temperatures, a concern in partial shade environments that may not provide consistent microclimate conditions ideal for lettuce production. Lettuce can be grown in small-scale systems, and its production doesn't interfere with solar yield. However, the modeling analysis shows that lettuce can be expected to have a yield reduction of 40%. This makes the crop unprofitable.

Tomato

Tomato production is impacted by high price volatility. Shade conditions can increase the risk of diseases like blight because of the more humid environment. Plant height complicates integration with agrivoltaics. However, the models show that the reduction of tomatoes is only reduced by 12% under the agrivoltaic setup. Still, due to the high production costs, tomatoes are not expected to be profitable on these sites.

Carrot

Carrots are moderately compatible with agrivoltaic systems, as they can tolerate partial shading and perform well in cooler, stable conditions. though labor requirements and limited availability of small-scale equipment pose production challenges. Carrots are moderately sensitive to diseases such as alternaria leaf blight and bacterial blight, which thrive in moist, shaded conditions often created by APV. They require good soil quality and consistent moisture levels, which APV systems help maintain. This also shows from our modeling where carrots yield up to 25% more in the APV system. However, in the cost analysis, we added 300 hours of labor for the agrivoltaics cost calculation because traditional harvesting equipment can't access the crops with the current row spacing.

Potato

Potatoes show moderate suitability for agrivoltaics. They are highly sensitive to certain pests and diseases and the soil often needs to 'rest' several years in the crop rotation before potatoes can be planted again. Factors such as soil type and irrigation practices play a significant role in maximizing yield potential under partial shade systems. Potatoes will likely need to be hand-harvested in an APV system adding to the production costs.

Watermelons¹²

Watermelons are highly susceptible to pests like cucumber beetles and diseases such as fusarium wilt, which is soil-borne and requires a crop rotation of 5-6 years for control. Watermelons have a stable market demand but are hindered by high spoilage risks and considerable water requirements. Agrivoltaic shading can aid in moisture retention, potentially reducing irrigation needs and helping maintain crop quality. However, the crop also has high light requirements, and yield reductions might be significant under partial shade. We estimated a yield reduction of 40% which still allows for some profits, but the long crop rotation reduces long-term profitability.

Summer Squash¹³

Summer squash aligns well with agrivoltaic conditions, showing low spoilage risk and strong market demand. Most varieties are relatively resilient to pests and diseases, but crop rotation is important to avoid the build-up of soil-borne pathogens. We estimate a 40% yield reduction for summer squash under APV and the crop still remains profitable. Squash is highly dependent on pollination,

¹² University of Maryland Extension. (1999). *Crop Profile for Watermelons in Maryland*. University of Maryland Extension.

¹³ University of Kentucky Center for Crop Diversification. (n.d.). *Summer squash* (CCD-CP-121). University of Kentucky. Retrieved October 27, 2024, from <https://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/summersquash.pdf>

which could pose an additional risk which could potentially be mitigated by pairing with an apiary and pollinator friendly plantings.

Modeling Methods

For the expected control yields, USDA data was sourced (unless otherwise specified) from the USDA/NASS Quickstats Ad-hoc Query Tool.¹⁴ For each crop, the most specific location available was used (Maryland in most cases), and the most recent year available for that location was used. For crop budgeting, we strived to find the most accurate budgeting tool. This meant that the tools needed to be locally relevant, with up-to-date costs and prices. We accounted for inflation when budget tools were from before 2022. Unskilled labor cost was estimated at \$15/hr. Finally, for all crops, a land lease of \$250/acre was assumed, and for all agrivoltaic budgets, a subsidy of \$250/acre was assumed.

One of the most critical factors for plant growth is irradiance. To assess the agrivoltaic potential of a site, we first evaluate the light available for crops in the spaces between solar panel rows. Modeling analysis by Fundusol indicates that the current setup results in an approximate 36% reduction in between-row irradiance. While raising the panels slightly increased light availability, the effect was minimal. Additionally, we observed that irradiance is slightly lower for single axis tracker systems. Consequently, the irradiance at Sugarloaf is about 5% lower than at Ramiere. However, given the similarities between the sites and the small scale of this difference relative to other modeling factors, we consider the two sites as comparable. For our estimates, we use a conservative irradiance reduction value of 40%.

Table 4: Daily Light Integral figures between rows (Ramiere)

	DLI	Reduction
Control (same site, no panels)	83055 Wh/m ²	
With panels at the listed height (2.46m):	53594 Wh/m ²	35.7%
With panels at 2.7m	54448 Wh/m ²	34.44%

With the irradiance results the modeling simulations were done using Fundusol's in-house agrivoltaic modeling suite (described below) with crop growth modeled over the growing seasons described in the University of Maryland Extension Planting Calendar.¹⁵ The model was run twice for each crop: once as a control and once with the solar panel setup. This produced the following changes in crop yield for each crop. Since both sites have a very similar design (differences in crop yield between both sites are <5%), we only modeled for Ramiere.

Table 5: Modeled Crop Yield Changes Under Agrivoltaics System

Crop	Change (Ramiere site)
Corn	-12%
Soy	+13%
Lettuce	-39%

¹⁴ <https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/results/5B142C1E-343F-3ADB-B746-531600CB1811>

¹⁵ <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/vegetable-planting-calendar>

Tomato (fresh market)	-12%
Carrot	+25%
Potato	-26%
Watermelon	-40% (based on estimate, no modeling data available)
Summer Squash	-40% (based on estimate, no modeling data available)

Table 6: Model Assumptions

	Sugarloaf	Ramire
Panel height	5'2" panel height	8' maximum panel height
Row spacing	8.08' interrow row spacing	8' interrow row spacing
Tilt	Single-axis tracking system	Fixed-tilt system

Fundusol's modeling suite consists of proprietary thermal and irradiance models, which are then fed into publicly available research-based biomass models. For soybeans, the WOFOST model was used, and for the remaining crops, the SIMPLE model was used.

Thermal Model

Fundusol's thermal model provides a detailed, climate-responsive prediction of microclimate temperature distributions at both the panel and crop level, along with relative humidity. Temperature predictions integrate environmental and system-specific variables like array height, using energy conservation and computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) principles to predict thermodynamics. The projections also factor in the influence of crops, especially through evapotranspiration, on humidity and temperature. The model then calculates relative humidity beneath the panels and supplies this data to Fundusol's crop biomass models.

Irradiance Model

Fundusol's irradiance model leverages PV system geometry to assess solar projects' impact on ground-level irradiance. Using local irradiance data and matrix-based ray tracing, the model evaluates irradiance over hundreds of field points hourly, aggregating to daily light integrals (DLI). To ensure DLI aligns with crop growth, it applies a Light Saturation Point (LSP) cap tailored to each crop's light saturation limit, refining inputs for Fundusol's biomass models.

WOFOST Model

The WOFOST model, a mechanistic and dynamic system, calculates daily crop growth by examining processes such as photosynthesis and respiration and how they are influenced by environmental conditions. Crop-specific parameters include initial dry weight, life span of leaves, rate of phenological development, death rates, fractions of assimilates partitioned to plant organs, and the minimum and maximum nutrient concentrations per plant organ. Climate data inputs required include minimum, average, and maximum air temperature (°C), irradiation (W/m²), humidity (relative humidity in %), windspeed (m/s), monthly rainfall (mm), and number of rainy days (count). WOFOST has been utilized by researchers worldwide and applied to many crops across various climatic and management conditions. For further information, reference [Wit, et. Al. 2019](#).¹⁶

¹⁶ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agry.2018.06.018>

SIMPLE Model¹⁷

The simple generic crop model (SIMPLE) model was calibrated and evaluated for the simulated crops using observations for biomass growth, solar radiation interception, and yield from 25 detailed field experiments for a total of 70 treatments from 17 sites, resulting in an RRMSE of 25.4% for final yield. The paper has been cited 125 times. The parameters involved include the cumulative temperature requirement from sowing to maturity ($^{\circ}\text{C d}$), potential harvest index, cumulative temperature requirement for leaf area development to intercept 50% of radiation ($^{\circ}\text{C d}$), maximum daily reductions in leaf area index due to heat stress and drought stress ($^{\circ}\text{C d}$), the threshold temperature to start accelerating senescence from heat stress ($^{\circ}\text{C}$), the relative increase in radiation use efficiency per ppm elevated CO_2 above 350 ppm, and the sensitivity of radiation use efficiency (or harvest index) to drought stress measured by the ARID index, which is calculated based on water scarcity. Environmental variables required to run the SIMPLE model include daily maximum temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$), rainfall (mm), irrigation (mm), solar radiation (MJ m^{-2}), atmospheric CO_2 concentration (Ppm), sowing date, and harvesting date.

All simulations were conducted (apart from where otherwise noted) using the data listed for the Ramiere site. Environmental data fed into all models was based on ten-year averages of local data.

¹⁷ Please read the full formulation in the paper “A SIMPLE crop model” by Zhao et. al.

Animal System Modeling

Grazing modelling

This section covers our modeling and resulting recommendations regarding grazing density, pasture species selection, and grazing management strategies to protect both animals and solar panels. Additionally, we provide a financial scenario analysis to better understand the costs and benefits of grazing-integrated agrivoltaics. For successful grazing at these sites, we recommend raising the ground clearance to at least 3.5 feet. This will ensure animal safety and allow for easier access to farming activities. In Appendix B, an overview can be found of Fundusol's construction cost estimates. While we focus on sheep grazing given the high level of compatibility with solar, a discussion of other potential grazing options is included as well.

Grazing Management Strategies

Across the two projects, which would ideally be farmed by the same tenant, the total pasture acreage will be around 170 acres of which 30 acres will be on the solar array. To manage the land effectively, a grazing plan needs to be designed to optimize sheep production, pasture health, compliance with vegetation management obligations, and the logistics of co-location with a PV site. Below we summarize several grazing strategies that can be employed. Typically, the more intensive management strategies lead to higher revenues but also increase costs. We recommend rotational grazing, but the decision will be up to the tenant farmer, which may also be impacted by additional sites the farmer has under contract

- **Continuous grazing:** Sheep have unrestricted access to the entire pasture, reducing fencing costs and maintenance. However, this can result in uneven grazing, overgrazing of preferred plants, weed growth, and long-term issues like parasites. An unknown of this system is that sheep can access the solar array for shelter when they like, which could mean they don't fulfill their proper vegetation management role around the panels, but it can also lead to overgrazing and soil degradation on those sites if they prefer them more.
- **Rotational grazing:** Sheep rotate through multiple paddocks with shorter grazing periods, typically lasting a few days to a week. This promotes better pasture recovery, more even grazing, improved forage, and better weed control, but it requires higher upfront costs for fencing and water infrastructure. To reduce the labor intensity of this grazing strategy, the farmer could use geofencing; this technology uses geo-located collars and warns the sheep when they leave their virtual paddock.
- **Intensive rotational grazing:** Pastures are divided into numerous small paddocks, with sheep moved every 1-3 days. This system maximizes pasture productivity and soil health but demands significant investment in fencing, water infrastructure, and frequent management.¹⁸

¹⁸ <https://www.sheep101.info/201/grazingsystems.html>

Pasture Species

Solar grazing can easily be combined with pollinator-friendly habitat. Sheep are selective grazers meaning that they favor the more digestible forage, which allows for more biodiversity in the species mix. We recommend the Fuzz and Buzz seed mix from the American Solar Grazing Association¹⁹.

For the estimation of the appropriate stocking rate below, we simplified the pasture mix and use ryegrass for the purpose of our calculations and assumed that other pasture species in the mix have similar yields. The dry matter (DM) yield for perennial ryegrass on well-managed pastures in Maryland typically ranges from 2.5 to 5 tons/acre/year, depending on the intensity of management and environmental conditions. Lower yields around 1 to 2 tons/acre/year are observed in unimproved or less intensively managed pastures²⁰.

Stocking Density

For an Agrivoltaic site, the number of sheep per acre will differ from a typical sheep grazing operation. The stocking density is a management decision based on the expected pasture yield. The pasture yield is influenced by the following factors:

- Pasture improvement: liming, fertilization, weed removal, a healthy mix of grasses and legumes, appropriate shading, and water.
- Correct level of nutrition available for the sheep depending on their production stage.
- Appropriate grazing management strategy (continuous grazing, low rotational grazing, moderate rotational grazing, intensive rotational grazing).²¹

As can be seen from this list, pasture growth rates are highly variable and largely determined by environmental and management conditions, with irradiance (Photosynthetically Active Radiation - PAR) being one of the most significant drivers²². To make an estimate of the pasture yield under solar, at both sites, we assume a directly proportional relationship between the yield and PAR irradiance. Based on our irradiance studies, we estimate an in-row PAR reduction of around 40% at both sites. This would mean that the range for ryegrass production would be reduced to a DM yield of 1.5 – 3 tons/acre/year with a mid-point of 2.25. For this analysis, we use the Katahdin sheep breed, one of the most common breeds for solar grazing²³. They are very docile and have little complications with lambing. A mature ewe weighs between 120 to 160 pounds, with a midpoint of 140 pounds²⁴. The recommended dry matter (DM) intake is 3% of body weight, amounting to 4.2 lbs./day of DM per sheep²⁵. This means that for pasture in the solar array, the stocking rate is estimated at 2.7 to 4.1 ewes per acre, with a midpoint of 3.4 ewes/acre. And for the pasture outside the

¹⁹ <https://solargrazing.org/fuzz-and-buzz-solar-seed-mix/>

²⁰: Barrett, P. D., Laidlaw, A. S., & Mayne, C. S. (2005). Giria, K., Chia, K., & Chandra, S. (2019). USDA NRCS Idaho State Office. (2008). University of New Hampshire, College of Life Sciences and Agriculture. (2021). Smith, R. G., Atwood, L. W., & Warren, N. D. (2014).

²¹ <https://extension.wvu.edu/files/d/38c2e0b8-0c0c-4f1e-8dd8-68c3496a9690/stocking-rate.pdf>

²² Barrett, P. D., Laidlaw, A. S., & Mayne, C. S. (2005).

²³ American Solar Grazing Association. (2019). *Solar Grazing: A New Farm Income*. Retrieved from <https://solargrazing.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Solar-Grazing-Brochure.pdf>

²⁴ Oklahoma State University. (n.d.). *Katahdin Sheep*. Breeds of Livestock. Retrieved from <https://breeds.okstate.edu/sheep/katahdin-sheep.html>

²⁵ University of Maryland Extension. (n.d.). *Determining Your Pasture Stocking Rate*. Retrieved from <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/determining-your-pasture-stocking-rate/>

array, with a full yield of 2.5–5 tons/acre/year, the stocking rate increases to 4.6 to 6.9 ewes per acre, with a midpoint of 5.7 ewes/acre. For simplicity, we continue the calculations with 3 ewes/acre in the solar array and 7 ewes/acre on the rest of the land. It will again be up to the farmer to select an appropriate stocking rate and this calculation is mainly to support the broader analysis contained in this report to understand the options. Improved pastures can reach stocking rates of 10 sheep per acre.²⁶ Our estimates for the total stocking rates for the acreage of the two sites are around 80 ewes. It is important to note that we conservatively assume zero productivity on the land under the solar panels. In reality there will be grass growth under the panels as well so the total stocking rate will likely be slightly higher. But we chose to exclude this for conservatism against overgrazing.

Table 7: Stocking rate calculation

	Solar array	Outside array	Total
Total acreage	15	5	20
Stocking rate / acre	3	7	4
Total sheep	45	35	80

Sheep Farmer Budget and Profits

To understand the expected profit a sheep farmer can make, a budget from The University of Maryland is shown below.²⁷ This is a typical commercial sheep budget that sells live lambs (hair or woolled) as its main source of income. It assumes that lambs are replaced annually. All costs in the model were increased by 20%, accounting for inflation since 2016. The selling prices were updated using the USDA *Centennial livestock sheep and goat auction prices* (October 23, 2024). Selling weights were adapted to the smaller Katahdin sheep. Current prices are: Male lambs at \$1.91/pound, ewe lambs at 1.80, cull rams at 0.80, and cull ewes at \$0.88/pound. We assumed no income from wool because Katahdin sheep don't grow enough fleece.

From our analysis (table 6), we find that a farmer could earn a yearly profit of \$14,700 from sheep farming at both sites. This includes a payment to the farmer for vegetation management services around the solar array (including the areas directly below the panels). If we exclude this payment (\$250/acre), total annual profit would be \$7200. For comparison with a conventional grazing operation at this site, we assumed a \$50 lease payment, total annual profit for both sites would be \$17,200.

Table 8: Sheep farming budget (based on the University of Maryland Ag. Extension Excel Tool)

	Solar Array	Outside Array	Total	Conventional	unit
Stocking density	3	7	3	7	Ewes/acre
grazable area	15	5	30	30	Acres
Ewes	45	35	80	210	
Relative sheep revenue	294	294	294	294	\$/ewe
Total relative income	882	2058	784	2058	\$/acre

²⁶ <https://www.raisingssheep.net/how-many-sheep-per-acre>

²⁷ <https://solargrazing.org/resources/solar-grazing-budgets/>

PV subsidy	250	250	250		\$/acre
Lease	-	-		50 ²⁸	\$/acre
Total income	16980	11540	31020	60240	\$
Relative annual expenses	204	204	204	204	\$/ewe
Total annual expenses	9180	7140	16320	42840	\$
Total profit	7800	4400	14700	17400	\$
Relative profit	520	880	490	580	\$/acre
Relative profit	173	126	184	83	\$/ewe

Wire Management

Effective wire management is crucial for the success of agrivoltaic projects, especially when integrating sheep grazing. To minimize interference with sheep movement and grazing, cables and conduits should be elevated to a height that allows sheep to pass comfortably underneath. This can be achieved through various methods, including:

- **Raised cable trays:** Installing cable trays suspended above grazing height.
- **Underground conduit:** Burying conduit below the grazing surface to protect cables and eliminate obstacles for sheep.
- **Pole-mounted wiring:** Using existing or dedicated poles to elevate cables above the grazing area.

These strategies are incorporated into Chaberton's design and installation considerations and will prevent sheep from becoming entangled in wires, reduce the potential for damage to the wiring system, and maintain a safe grazing environment.

Other Animal Grazing Options

Other livestock options may be available such as miniature (e.g. Dexter) cows and certain types of pigs. The analysis of suitability for these animals is similar to those for sheep as discussed above.

However, the subset of animals suitable for grazing alongside solar projects is not very long. Animals like pigs, which dig, or goats, which climb and chew on cables/etc, pose risks to the system. Larger livestock might damage the panels or face electric shock hazards.

The integration of poultry with agrivoltaic systems presents another possible model for sustainable farming. For pasture-raised poultry, small-scale farmers can report gross profits of \$2–3 per bird,

²⁸ <https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/2023-10/2022Maryland%20Cash%20Rental%20Rates.pdf>

depending on the management level and inputs²⁹. Stocking rates for poultry typically range from 500 to 1,000 chickens per acre³⁰. To avoid damaging the pasture, the chickens must be moved frequently, using mobile coops or chicken tractors. Combining poultry with agrivoltaic systems could be a viable and profitable option. However, it will likely be much more labor intensive than normal pasture poultry because the mobile coops must be small enough to fit in between the solar panels.

Combining Poultry, particularly when raised on pasture, contributes to soil fertility through manure deposition. However, challenges such as predator management, labor intensity, and maintaining pasture quality need to be addressed. Additionally, poultry operations are usually more limited by labor availability and disease pressure than space and are not common in Montgomery County, making this a less likely option for these projects.

Apiary Solution

Introduction

The concept of co-locating beehives with solar farms is gaining traction nationwide. Studies have shown that solar sites can provide suitable habitats for honeybees, with the panels offering shade and shelter while the surrounding vegetation provides foraging resources.

According to the USDA, U.S. honey production has declined over the last several decades, while honey imports have only continued to grow³¹. In the U.S., over 70% of the honey we consume is imported. However, solar farms offer an opportunity to support and grow our U.S. honey industry.

By planting pollinator-friendly habitats, solar farms can serve as safe, stable homes for honeybees. In place of or in addition to the other options presented in this report, the project may opt to work directly with local beekeepers and private beekeeping businesses to locate hives at the solar farm.

Examples of Apiary-integrated solar in the U.S. include:

- Dominion Energy's 1.6 MW Black Bear Solar project in Buckingham County, VA³²
- Pine Gate Renewable's 13 MW Eagle Point Solar Farm in Medford, OR³³

²⁹ University of Minnesota. (n.d.). Operating Costs and Revenues of Pastured Poultry Systems: A Comparative Analysis. University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy. <https://conservancy.umn.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/36b16705-a53d-47ca-89e0-e1d27673d93e/content>

³⁰ Salatin, J. (2016). Pastured Poultry Profits: How to Net \$25,000 in 6 Months on 20 Acres. Polyface Farms.

³¹ USDA (2022), Honey imports continue to rise, offsetting declining U.S. production, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=104135>

³² Paullin, C. (2024). Dominion Energy pairs solar with honey bees to preserve agricultural land, <https://virginiamercury.com/2024/10/18/dominion-energy-pairs-solar-with-honey-bees-to-preserve-agricultural-land/>

³³ Peters, A. (2018). This new solar farm combines clean energy and beehives, <https://www.fastcompany.com/40588875/this-new-solar-farm-combines-clean-energy-and-beehives>

- Lightsource BP's 153 MW Briar Creek Solar project outside of Dallas, TX³⁴
- Lightsource BP's 173 MW Bellflower Solar project near Indianapolis, IN³⁵

Dominion's Black Bear Solar Project is a prime example of a distributed generation, small-scale solar project that integrates an apiary system. The array hosts 4 beehives (3.5/acre) that are home to about 180,000 bees in total. Mountain House Apiaries manages the beehives and are responsible for installation and maintenance costs but get to benefit from the free pollinator and natural grass production on the site. This is a model that can be replicated at Sugarloaf and Ramiere, integrated with sheep grazing.

Projects	Array Acreage	# of Hives	Beekeeper Installation Costs	Hive Population	Honey Production (pounds)	Honey Revenue (65% of production)	Profitable in Year 1?
Sugarloaf Bees w/o PV	17.9	6	\$4800	270,000	210	\$1,841	No
Sugarloaf Bees w/APV	17.9	6	\$0	270,000	300	\$2,630	Yes
Ramiere Bees w/o PV	10.6	4	\$3200	180,000	140	\$1,227	No
Ramiere Bees w/APV	10.6	4	\$0	180,000	200	\$1,753	Yes

Table 6: Cost model for Beekeeping with Agrivoltaics

Hive Density

Determining the appropriate number of beehives per acre involves considering the availability of floral resources within and around the solar farms. A common guideline suggests 2-3 hives per acre, but this can be adjusted based on the diversity and abundance of flowering plants³⁶. For instance, the Minnesota Native Landscapes project discovered that solar sites with diverse native plantings supported larger bee populations and increased honey production. A careful assessment of the existing vegetation at Sugarloaf and Ramiere, along with a pollen analysis, will inform the optimal hive density for these specific locations. Chaberton can engage local beekeepers in an RFP to receive a proposed apiary layout, given their expertise.

³⁴ <https://lightsourcebp.com/us/project/briar-creek-solar/>

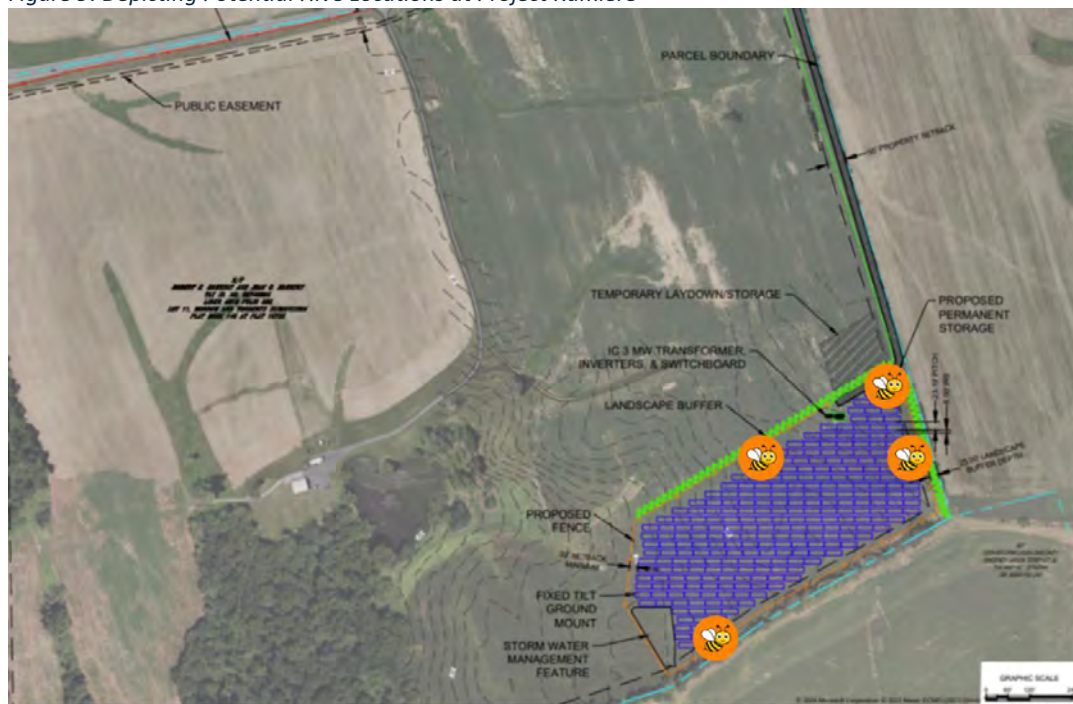
³⁵ Ludt, B. (2023). Lightsource bp completes 152 MW pollinator-friendly solar project in Indiana, <https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2023/05/lightsource-bp-completes-pollinator-friendly-solar-project-in-indiana/>

³⁶ College of Agriculture, Purdue University, Whitford, F. (et. al), The Complex Life of the Honey Bee, <https://ag.purdue.edu/departments/extension/ppp/resources/ppp-publications/ppp-116-pol-9.html>

Figure 8: Depicting Potential Hive Locations at Project Sugarloaf



Figure 9: Depicting Potential Hive Locations at Project Ramiere



Hive Population

A single healthy beehive can house a population of 40,000 to 60,000 bees at its peak. This number naturally fluctuates throughout the year, influenced by factors such as weather patterns, the availability of nectar and pollen, and the overall health and productivity of the colony. The solar panels at the two sites create unique microclimates that can be beneficial for bees. The panels provide shade, reducing harsh temperatures and water evaporation, which can be especially important during hot Maryland summers. This moderated environment can help flowering plants thrive beneath the panels, providing a consistent and diverse source of nectar and pollen for bees. Additionally, the panels can offer shelter from wind and rain, further enhancing the habitat's suitability for pollinators. These stable microclimates, coupled with abundant forage, can lead to increased bee activity, stronger colonies, and potentially higher honey yields.

Honey Production

Honey yields vary significantly based on the richness of floral resources in the surrounding landscape, weather conditions throughout the season, and beekeeping management practices. In Maryland, a typical hive can produce 30-60 pounds of honey annually. However, research by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) indicates that hives located on solar farms with pollinator-friendly plantings can often exceed these averages³⁷. Cultivating a diverse mix of flowering plants at Sugarloaf and Ramiere, Chaberton, partnered with local beekeepers, can create a thriving environment for bees and potentially boost honey yields compared to standard apiaries. The APV-case used in Figure 6 is 50 pounds of honey produced at each beehive in the APV scenario, hosting pollinator-friendly vegetation for sheep. The base case in which the site is farmed for soy, hay, and corn rotations, uses 35 pounds per beehive production given the lower number of resources for bees.

Honey Consumption and Winter Survival

A crucial aspect of managing apiaries, especially in temperate climates like Maryland, is ensuring that honeybee colonies have adequate food stores to survive the winter. This involves understanding the colony's consumption patterns and conserving a sufficient percentage of honey within the hive. Honeybees rely on honey stores as their primary energy source during the winter when foraging opportunities are limited. The amount of honey a colony needs to survive depends on factors such as colony size, winter length and severity, and the availability of alternative food sources like pollen. Research and beekeeping practices suggest that a colony should retain approximately 30-45% of the total honey produced during the active season.

- **Northern climates:** In colder regions with longer winters, colonies may require the higher end of this range (45% of honey retained).
- **Southern climates:** In milder regions with shorter winters, colonies may survive with less honey (30% of honey retained).

³⁷ National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Dreves, H., Beneath Solar Panels, the Seeds of Opportunity Sprout <https://www.nrel.gov/news/features/2019/beneath-solar-panels-the-seeds-of-opportunity-sprout.html>

The local beekeeper chosen by Chaberton shall be responsible for proper hive management, including disease control, swarm prevention, and providing adequate space for honey storage, which can optimize honey production. To understand how much honey is produced and how much to conserve, the beekeeper may need to weigh the hives and the bees from season to season. For the purposes of this report, we will assume 35% of honey is retained for the bees to survive Maryland winters.

Native Grasses, Sheep Grazing, and Bees

Integrating native grasses with sheep grazing can further enhance the ecological value of solar farms. The grasses provide additional foraging resources for bees, while the sheep help manage vegetation growth, reducing competition for resources and promoting plant diversity. This managed grazing can also create open areas within the grasslands, which are essential nesting sites for many native bee species. The combination of native grasses, sheep grazing, and pollinator-friendly plantings creates a dynamic and resilient ecosystem that supports a wide range of pollinators, including honeybees.

Installation Costs

Establishing a new beehive involves costs for the hive itself, essential equipment, and the initial colony of bees. These can be up to \$800 per hive.³⁸ Additional costs include smokers, protective gear for beekeepers, hive tools, and ongoing maintenance expenses such as varroa mite treatments and supplemental feeding during lean periods. Careful budgeting and planning can help manage these costs and ensure the long-term sustainability of the apiary. Chaberton can choose to offset the costs of beehive installation to make beekeeping more attractive to farmers on both sites. This is evidenced by the Beekeeper incurring no installation costs in the “w/o APV” scenarios in Table 6.

Honey Revenue

Locally produced, raw honey is a sought-after commodity, often commanding a premium price in the market. Farmers in Maryland can generally sell their honey for \$10-\$20 per pound, with the final price influenced by the honey variety, packaging, and marketing strategy.

Apiary	Cost per 1b of Raw Honey	Locality
Chesapeake Queen Company	\$16.50 ³⁹	Frederick, MD
McDaniel Honey Farm	\$15.00 ⁴⁰	Manchester, MD
John Newman Honeybee Co.	\$18.99 ⁴¹	Baltimore, MD
Cybee’s Honey	\$13.49 ⁴²	Jarrettsville, MD

³⁸ Anderson, C. (2023), Beekeeping Costs, <https://carolinahoneybees.com/cost-of-beekeeping/>

³⁹ <https://www.chesapeakequeencompany.com/product-page/1-pound-jar-of-raw-honey>

⁴⁰ <https://thefarmstore.com/products/pure-natural-honey-1lb-bottle?srsId=AfmBOor92CmKvVRmwe-tBxKPhtNi6ZRDnksDjD82rryxDr-6NgE5IxaZ>

⁴¹ <https://www.thejohnnewmanhoneybeeco.com/>

⁴² <https://freedomvalleyfarmmd.com/shop/honey-and-produce/maryland-raw-honey/>

Furthermore, exploring value-added products like beeswax candles, lip balms, and lotions can diversify income streams and enhance the economic viability of the apiary. Replicating the Dominion Black Bear Solar project model, a local apiary will be selected through an RFP process to install and manage the apiary integration for the project's life. We have used the lowest price from Figure 7 (\$13.49) to calculate the potential revenue from selling solely raw honey from the two sites. Chaberton would not be responsible for selling or marketing apiary products.

By thoughtfully integrating apiaries into the Sugarloaf and Ramiere agrivoltaic projects, Montgomery County can demonstrate a commitment to sustainable land use that benefits both the environment and the local agricultural economy. Though beekeeper(s) will be solely responsible for the economics of the apiary-integration, Figure 6 shows that they can see profitability in Year 1 if combined with solar and nominal hive installation costs are covered by Chaberton.

Farmer Sourcing Plan

Introduction

By transferring vegetation management contracts from landscaping companies to farmers, solar developers can create mutually beneficial relationships. In this arrangement, the solar developer essentially pays the farmer a fee for his services as a contractor.

A **Scope of Work** (SOW) would be advertised, inviting farmers to submit crop or grazing management strategies that meet the specific criteria outlined by the solar developer, including maintaining appropriate plant height, effective weed management, and navigating solar infrastructure. These strategies would be thoroughly evaluated to ensure they align with the required vegetation management standards. Upon agreement, the responsibilities of both parties would be clearly defined, including the site manager's duty to provide compensation and maintain perimeter fencing, while the farmer manages interior fencing and ensures the health and welfare of the sheep or crops.

This collaborative approach allows both the solar developer and the farmer to establish a tailored agreement that meets the operational needs of the solar facility while supporting the farmer's agricultural practices. The following **Services Agreement** outlines some of the most important terms and conditions that govern this partnership.

Services Agreement

This agreement outlines the terms between the site manager and the sheep farmer for grazing services as a method of vegetation management.

The sheep farmer agrees to manage grazing to control vegetation, ensuring it does not interfere with solar panel function. In return, the site manager will compensate the sheep farmer for these services. In cases where sheep cannot access certain areas or during times outside the grazing season, in accordance with the vegetation management plan filed with Case No 9726 and 9733.

The agreement should specify the duration of the contract, including conditions for renewal or termination. The sheep farmer is responsible for the health and welfare of the sheep, while the site manager must ensure access to a reliable water source.

Both parties will agree on a communication protocol regarding sheep health issues and any potential damage to solar equipment. The site manager is responsible for informing the sheep farmer of any required sheep relocation due to site maintenance. Prohibited plants and chemical usage must be agreed upon, and no unauthorized chemicals are allowed on the site.

Fencing responsibilities are shared: the site manager finances and maintains the permanent perimeter fencing, while the sheep farmer manages any interior fencing needed for effective grazing.

Both parties are indemnified from liabilities arising from a breach of contract by the other party. The sheep farmer must carry appropriate insurance—including general liability, auto liability, and workers' compensation—while the solar site must be insured separately by the site manager.

The site manager and sheep farmer can agree on additional terms such as a system for tracking third-party access, as well as recording the presence of both the site manager and sheep farmer. They can also establish rules for vehicle access and parking for sheep transport or solar site maintenance. Additionally, both parties can agree on protocols for informing third parties about proper interaction with the sheep to ensure safety.

Application Process

In short, farmer sourcing will be conducted as a hiring search. See below for an outline of the application process, a list of places to advertise job postings and interview questions.

Job Posting

Principally, a SOW will be disseminated within the farming community. The SOW and associated job posting will have the following characteristics.

1. General Farmer Profile
 - i. Applicant's crop/livestock experience and years of experience with each
 - ii. Applicant's vegetation/landscape management experience
 - iii. Necessary access to equipment (what does the farmer need to bring to the farm site?)
2. Site Details
 - i. Site location and description (size, irrigation, soil types, infrastructure, etc.)
 - ii. Description of solar array, necessary considerations
3. Compensation structure
 - i. Access to farmland
 - ii. Annual payments. We recommend a range of \$200 to \$450 per acre per year for the tenant farmer in exchange for the contractual duties that the tenant needs to perform.
4. A contractual SOW

- i. A legal contract delineating specific duties, obligations, indemnification, term, etc. It must contain a vegetation maintenance standard. See an example contract standardized through the American Solar Grazing Association (ASGA) [here](#), and an example vegetation maintenance standard below:

Vegetation Maintenance Standard for Agrivoltaic Solar Site

Farmer shall have all vegetation on the Solar Site to be maintained as follows at substantially all times on substantially all areas specified in SOW, subject to the following standards:

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Vegetation will not shade the solar panels.
- ☐ Vegetation will not reach a height taller than approximately _____ inches.
- ☐ Vegetation will remain between approximately _____ inches and _____ inches.
- ☐ Describe other standard: _____

[Vegetation Maintenance Standard for Other Areas. Sheep Farmer shall cause all vegetation in *[describe area outside the fence line or other areas outside Solar Site itself that are subject to this SOW, if applicable]* to be maintained as follows at substantially all times on substantially all such areas, subject to the schedule set forth in Section 7 below:

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Vegetation will not reach a height taller than approximately _____ inches.
- ☐ Vegetation will remain between approximately _____ inches and _____ inches.
- ☐ Describe other standard: _____]¹

Dissemination of Job Post

This job posting will be placed on a list of job boards, organization sites, social media forums, and Maryland-specific forums aggregated by Okovate, Chaberton, and its partners:

Job boards:

- AgCareers.com - Large agricultural job site
- AgHires.com - Specialized in agriculture and food production jobs
- FarmWork.com - Focus on farm labor and management
- Indeed.com - General job site with farm category

- GoodFoodJobs.com - Sustainable food industry jobs
- Coolworks.com - Seasonal and year-round outdoor jobs including farming
- Attra.ncat.org - Sustainable agriculture network

Organization sites:

- Montgomery County Land Link⁴³
- National Farmers Union Job Board (nfu.org/careers)
- American Farm Bureau Federation (fb.org)
- Sustainable Farming Association Job Listings
- National Young Farmers Coalition (youngfarmers.org)
- Agrisolar Clearinghouse (agrisolarclearinghouse.org/)

Social media forums:

- LinkedIn - Use hashtags: #AgJobs #FarmingJobs
- Facebook Groups:
 - "Agriculture Jobs and Careers"
 - "Farmers Helping Farmers"
 - "American Farmers"

Maryland-Specific Job Resources

- Maryland Farm Bureau
- University of Maryland Extension
 - The Maryland Beginning Farmer Success Project
 - Maryland Rural Enterprise Development Center

State Organizations

- Maryland Farm Bureau (mdfarmbureau.com)
- University of Maryland Extension
 - University of Maryland Extension Job Board
 - The Maryland Beginning Farmer Success Project
 - Maryland Rural Enterprise Development Center
- Maryland Department of Agriculture Career Page
- Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC)

Regional Job Boards

- MarylandJobNetwork.com - Agriculture section
- Delmarva Farmer Classifieds
- Lancaster Farming - Maryland section (lancasterfarming.com)

⁴³ <https://www.mocolandlink.org/farm-listings/farmers-seeking-land>

Local Resources

- Future Harvest CASA (futureharvest.org)
- Maryland Organic Food & Farming Association (marylandorganic.org)

County-Level Resources

- County Extension Offices - All 23 counties
- Local Soil Conservation Districts
- County Farm Bureaus

Print Publications

- The Delmarva Farmer - Classified section
- Maryland Farmer Magazine
- Local county newspapers - Agriculture sections

Application Screening

Initial review will identify applicants that match the criteria within the job posting. This can be done manually or with machine learning recruiting tools. Applicants will be screened through an interview in accordance with the following hiring Matrix.

Applicants will be scored on the following criteria. The interviewer will rank their score within each category on a scale of 0-3 (0 = No demonstrated experience/skill, 3 = Very high level of experience/skill) based on the applicant's answers to the questions. This system identifies farmers with the most compatible farming and vegetation management plans. See below for specific interview questions within each category.

- Experience with agrivoltaics:
 - Have they worked in an agrivoltaic system before?
 - If not, are they willing to learn and adapt their practices?
- Crop selection:
 - What crops do they recommend that are well-suited for partial shade conditions?
[This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
 - How do they plan to optimize crop yield in areas with varying sunlight exposure?
[This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
- Equipment and infrastructure compatibility:
 - Is their farming equipment compatible with the solar panel layout?
 - Do they have or need specialized equipment for working around solar installations?
 - What infrastructure (fencing, roads, toolsheds, wash/pack, etc.) do they need for their operation?
- Understanding of solar infrastructure:
 - How familiar are they with solar panel systems and their maintenance needs?
[Okovate provides on-site training]

- Do they know how to work safely around the electrical components? [Okovate provides on-site training]
- Agricultural Practices:
 - How will they design the irrigation system to work with the solar array layout? [This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
 - Do they have experience with rainwater harvesting from solar panels or other structures, if applicable?
 - How do they plan to manage the unique microclimates created by the solar panels (e.g., shaded areas, heat islands)? [This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
 - What strategies will they use to maintain soil health in areas with less direct rainfall due to panel coverage? [This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
- Vegetation management:
 - How do they plan to manage vegetation growth under the panels, as determined by the solar developer? Something as simple as landscape fabric and weed-whacking as necessary.
- Adaptability / Collaboration:
 - How flexible are they in adjusting farming practices based on the performance and needs of the solar array?
 - How flexible are they with the solar company visiting the site and working on the panels, as necessary?
 - How will they coordinate their farming activities with necessary system maintenance? [This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
 - How do they envision working with solar technicians and energy managers in this integrated system?
- Long-term sustainability:
 - What ideas do they have for ensuring the long-term sustainability of their crop system, in coordination with the agrivoltaic system? [This is a resource Okovate can assist with]
- Data collection and analysis:
 - Do they have experience or willingness to participate in data collection to optimize the agrivoltaic system over time?

Final Selection

The final selection phase of the Farmer Sourcing Plan is a collaborative process, ensuring that the most suitable farmer is chosen to manage vegetation in the agrivoltaic system. After the interviews and evaluations, all relevant stakeholders—including representatives from Okovate Sustainable Energy, Chaberton Solar Sugarloaf and Chaberton Solar Ramiere, and possibly external advisors with expertise in both agriculture and solar energy—will convene to review each applicant’s scorecard, generated from the interview matrix. Stakeholders will compare notes on the highest-ranked candidates, discuss any concerns or additional considerations that arose during the interview process, and reach a consensus on the farmer who best aligns with the project’s goals. The selected farmer will not only possess the necessary technical qualifications but will also demonstrate a strong commitment to working within this integrated solar-agriculture system.

Community Benefits Plan

Okovate and Chaberton are dedicated to creating a thriving agrivoltaic project in Montgomery County that benefits both the environment and the local farming community. We recognize the value of local expertise and are committed to providing opportunities for Montgomery County farmers to participate in this innovative project.

Engaging the Agricultural Community

- **Targeted Outreach:** We will directly contact farmers in Montgomery County through the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, relevant agricultural organizations (e.g., Farm Bureau, Future Harvest CASA), and online platforms to inform them about the agrivoltaic project and the opportunity to farm the land.
- **Clear Contractual Agreements:** We will develop clear and concise lease agreements or farming contracts that outline the terms of the partnership, including land-use rights, crop selection, revenue sharing, and other relevant details.
- **Farmer Training and Support:** We will offer workshops and training sessions to familiarize interested farmers with agrivoltaic practices, including crop selection suitable for solar arrays, integrated pest management strategies, and any specialized techniques required for this type of farming.
- **Ongoing Collaboration:** We will establish a communication channel (e.g., regular meetings, online forum) to facilitate ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the project

developers and the selected farmer(s). This will ensure that both parties are informed and can address any challenges or opportunities that arise.

Benefits for Montgomery County Farmers

- **Land Access:** Farmers gain access to land for agricultural production, which can be a significant barrier to entry in Montgomery County.
- **New Revenue Streams:** Participating in the agrivoltaic project can diversify income sources for farmers.
- **Sustainable Farming Practices:** The project promotes environmentally friendly farming methods that can benefit soil health, water quality, and biodiversity.
- **Community Partnership:** Farmers become active partners in a project that contributes to the county's renewable energy goals and agricultural sustainability.

Selection Criteria

We will use a transparent and competitive process to select the farmer(s) who will work on the project. Criteria may include:

- **Farming Experience:** Demonstrated experience in agricultural practices relevant to the project (e.g., vegetable production, livestock grazing).
- **Commitment to Sustainability:** A commitment to environmentally sound farming methods and land stewardship.
- **Local Knowledge:** Familiarity with Montgomery County's agricultural landscape and climate.
- **Business Plan:** A clear and viable business plan for the proposed agricultural activities within the agrivoltaic system.

Environmental Stewardship

The project will prioritize environmental stewardship through practices such as:

- **Improved Soil Health:** Implementing measures to enhance soil health, including organic matter accumulation, microbial activity, and reduced soil compaction.
- **Pollinator Habitat:** Creating pollinator-friendly habitats by planting native grasses and wildflowers.
- **Erosion Control:** Utilizing appropriate vegetation and soil management techniques to prevent erosion and protect water quality.
- **Carbon Sequestration:** Promoting carbon storage in the soil through healthy soil management practices.

By partnering with local farmers, Okovate and Chaberton aim to create a model agrivoltaic project that supports sustainable agriculture, strengthens the community, and contributes to a cleaner energy future for Montgomery County.

Appendix A – Crop Modeling

Table 9: Crop modeling data and resources

	Ent. budget	Unit price	USDA Yield Benchmark	Notes
Corn	University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. 2024 sweetcorn budget. https://agecon.uga.edu/extension/budgets.html	\$33.5/CWT (MD, 2018) USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.	120 CWT (MD, 2018)	Excluded marketing costs from budget
Soy	University of Maryland Extension. https://extension.umd.edu/resource/field-crop-budgets	\$11.8/BU (MD, 2023) USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.	47 Bushels (MD, 2023)	Assumed that smaller-scale equipment is available for harvests.
Lettuce	https://coststudyfiles.ucdavis.edu/uploads/cs_public/52/c9/52c99335-fcc8-44fe-9ce0-6a0bd5fbe006/2017headlettuce-final_-_5-25-2017.pdf	\$71.8/CWT (USA, 2023) USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.	231 CWT (USA, 2023)	Cost inflation of 20% added. Requires irrigation.

Tomato (fresh market)	University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. Tomato production budget. University of Arkansas System, Division of Agriculture https://www.uaex.uada.edu/farm-ranch/economics-marketing/farm-planning/budgets/Tomato.pdf	\$49/CWT (MD, 2004)	130 CWT (MD, 2004)	
Carrot	University of Georgia extension: https://agecon.uga.edu/extension/budgets.html	\$37.6/CWT (USA, 2023) USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.	275 CWT (GA, 2023)	Adding 300 hrs of labor at 15\$/hr for agrivoltaics case, since machinery can't access for harvesting. (https://www.nofavt.org/sites/default/files/files/resource/s/carrots-cop-factsheet_0.pdf). (https://extension.umd.edu/resource/custom-work-charges-maryland-and-delaware/)
Potato	https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/potatoextension/non-irrigated-red-norland-crop-budget	\$14.47 per CWT (https://tradeconomics.com/commodity/potatoes)	255 CWT (MD, 2018)	50 hrs of labor for hand harvesting added to agrivoltaics case https://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/potatoes.pdf

Summer Squash	Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute. 2020 Squash Budget. Specialty crops. University of Missouri. https://fapri.missouri.edu/specialty-crops/	We used a 0.8\$/lbs price. USDA Agricultural Marketing Service.	Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute. 2020 Squash Budget. Specialty crops. University of Missouri. https://fapri.missouri.edu/specialty-crops/	Unable to find trustworthy information. Squash prices range from 0.6 to 1.6 \$/lbs. Resulting in very high potential profits. But it is not clear if products can find a market in Maryland.
Watermelons	https://www.uaex.uada.edu/farm-ranch/economics-marketing/farm-planning/budgets/Watermelon.pdf	USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. (2023, March 1). Watermelon market prices	https://ipmwww.ncsu.edu/cipm	

Appendix B – Sheep Grazing

Table 10: Variable System Attributes

System Attribute	Base Case	Sheep Case 1	Sheep Case 2	Unit
Pole height above ground	2.5	2.7	3.0	meters
Ground clearance	0.6	0.8	1.1	meters
Pole height below ground	4.2728	4.6146	5.1274	meters
Vertical pole steel density	22.1996	23.9755	26.6395	kg/meter
Steel per pole	0.1506	0.1627	0.1807	tonnes

Table 11: Variable Costs due to Sheep

Cost Component	Base Case	Sheep Case 1	Sheep Case 2	Unit
Insurance	0.008	0.011	0.011	\$/W/year
Installation labor and equipment	0.25	0.35	0.35	\$/W
Vegetation management	Sheep	Sheep	Sheep	
Vegetation management cost	385	250	250	\$/acre/year
Steel	34,047.60	36,771.40	40,857.11	\$

Consultant C.V.

Jorrit Becking brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the field of agrivoltaics as the Chief Agricultural Officer at Okovate. His educational background reflects a strong foundation in environmental science, agriculture, and renewable energy. He holds a Master of Environmental Management degree from Yale University, where he focused on business, environment, and renewable energy. During his studies at Yale, he conducted independent research on decarbonizing the residential energy grid and ESG stakeholder materiality assessments. Prior to Yale, Jorrit earned a Master of Science degree in Agricultural Sciences from Wageningen University and Research Center in the Netherlands, specializing in natural resource management. His academic foundation also includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the same institution, where he focused on soil science, meteorology, and hydrology.

Jorrit's professional experience is equally impressive. He currently serves as an Associate in Agrivoltaics Project Development at Pacifico Energy Partners in Munich, Germany, where he develops yield estimation tools and business cases for solar-regenerative agriculture projects. He has also collaborated with research institutions on agrivoltaics pilot projects. Before joining Pacifico Energy Partners, Jorrit worked as an Agriculture Consultant at the World Bank in Washington, DC, where he secured significant grant funding, led global teams on climate-related initiatives, and developed tools for climate adaptation risk screening.

His previous roles include leading case studies on farming systems resilience with the SURE-Farm Project in Madrid, Spain, consulting on agricultural innovation for the "Countryside, The Future" exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York with the Office for Metropolitan Architecture in Rotterdam, and developing a regenerative cattle ranching pilot project in Kenya with the Osotua Foundation.

Jorrit's expertise is further demonstrated through his authorship of various publications on sustainable agriculture, climate resilience, and farming systems analysis. His work has been featured in publications by the World Bank and presented at seminars of the European Association of Agricultural Economists. He is a dedicated and knowledgeable professional with a passion for sustainable agriculture and renewable energy, making him a valuable contributor to the field of agrivoltaics.

Selected Publications

- Becking, J.B.T., Ramirez Diaz, M., Diaz Rios, L.B. (2021). *Building Pathways to Sustainable Cattle Ranching in Colombia*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- Becking, J.B. (2019). *An assessment of the sustainability and resilience of two livestock farming systems in Europe using a participatory approach*.
- Isabeau, C., Bijttebier, J., Becking, J., et al. (2019). *Stakeholder assessment of the resilience of the Flemish dairy farming system*. 173rd Seminar of the European Association of Agricultural Economists, Bucharest.



**Department of Permitting Services
Fire Department Access and Water Supply Comments**

DATE: 19-Feb-25
TO: Charles Walker - cwalker@armgroup.net
ARM Group LLC
FROM: Marie LaBaw
RE: Ramiere Solar Project (Chaberton Solar Ramiere LLC)
MR2024017

PLAN APPROVED

1. 5 HYLZ EDHGRQO XSRQIQIRUP DMRQFROMMCHGRQVHSQVXP DWG 19-Feb-25 .RHYHZDQGSSURYDOGRHVQRWFRYHU
XQVWDFWU IQVMDMRQUHYXQJ IURP HURV, RPIWMRQV, RUIDOXHWFODQ IQGFDMFRQDMRQVRQWLVSDQ
2. &RUHMRQRI XQVWDFWU IQVMDMRQZIQEHUHXIHGXSRIQASHVRQDQGVHMFHRI QRWFHRI YIROMRQWDSJW
UHSRQMEQIRUWHSURSHW.

***** New underground water supply tank with dry hydrant *****

[illegible]

PROPERTY OWNER:
ROBERT HAWKINS
9919 WATKINS ROAD
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20882
(301) 651-7146

PROJECT SITE:

1. EXISTING ZONING: AGRICULTURAL RESERVE (AR) ZONE
2. EXISTING USE: AGRICULTURE
3. PROPOSED USE: COMMUNITY SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING SYSTEM (CSEGs)
4. TOTAL SITE AREA: 117.08 AC
5. TOTAL PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AREA (LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE): 445,725 SF (10.2 AC)
6. ASR NO. 0274560-1, LIBERTY 4919, P.O. BOX 282, LOT 11 IN THE MORROW AND TORBERTS SUBDIVISION RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 146 AT PLAT 16225.
7. SYSTEM SIZE: 3.38 MW DC / 3.00 MW AC

MISS UTILITY

CALL "MISS UTILITY" AT 1-800-257-7777, 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE START OF WORK. THE EXCAVATOR MUST NOTIFY ALL PUBLIC UTILITY COMPANIES WITH UNDER GROUND FACILITIES IN THE AREA OF PROPOSED EXCAVATION AND HAVE THOSE FACILITIES LOCATED BY THE UTILITY COMPANIES PRIOR TO COMMENCING EXCAVATION. THE EXCAVATOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS OF CHAPTER 36A OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY CODE.

LIST OF SHEETS

SHEET NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	COVER SHEET
2	PROPOSED SITE CONDITIONS PLAN (OVERALL)
3	PROPOSED SITE CONDITIONS PLAN
4	PROPOSED SITE DETAILS (SHEET 1 OF 2)
5	PROPOSED SITE DETAILS (SHEET 2 OF 2)



HEADQUARTERS:
1129 West Governor Road • Hershey, PA 17033-0797
Ph: (717) 533-8600 Fax: (717) 533-8605

FIRE CODE ENFORCEMENT

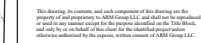
Fire Department Access Review

Review based only upon information contained on this plan. Does not cover unsatisfactory layout resulting from conditions, errors or failure to clearly indicate conditions on this plan. Correction of such unsatisfactory layout to afford required access will be required if found upon inspection after installation.

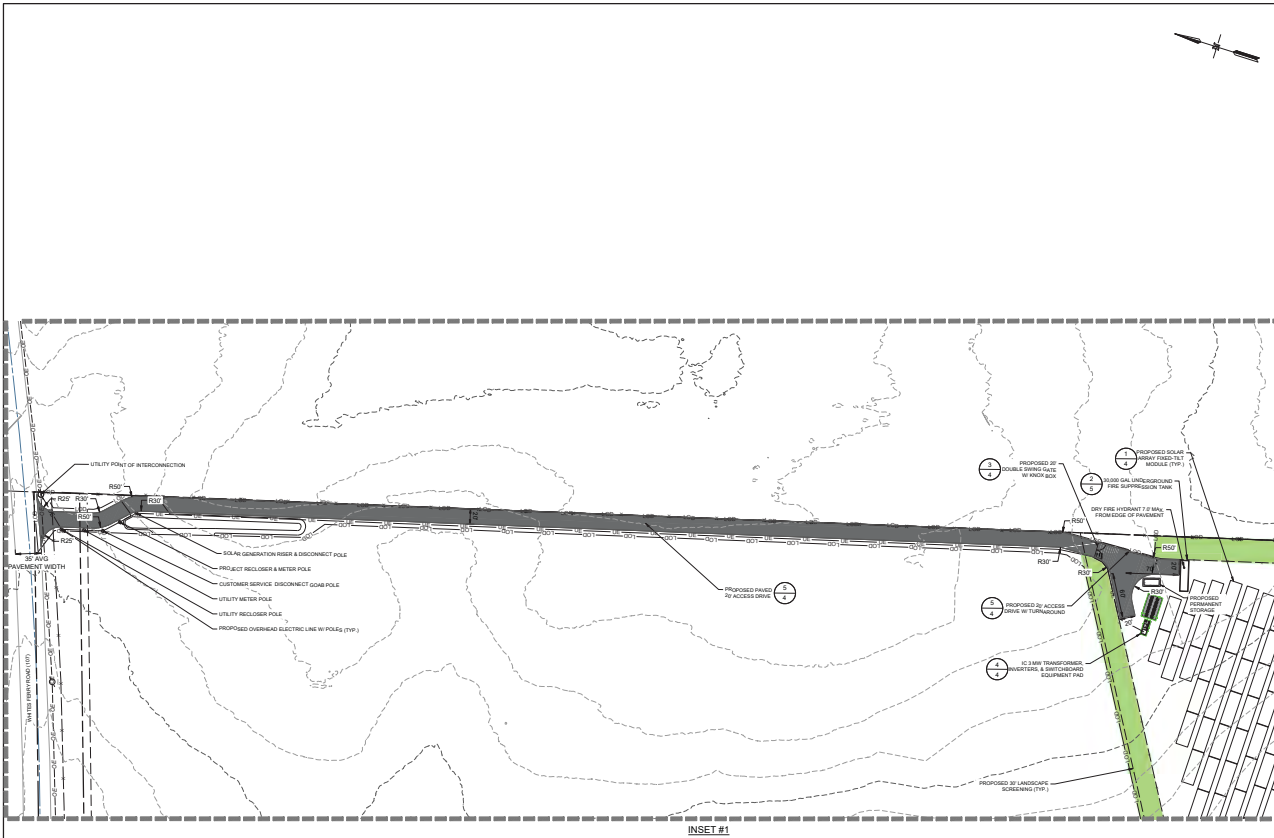
FD: SAC FD: DPS DATE: 2/19/20



PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION. I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THESE DOCUMENTS WERE PREPARED OR APPROVED BY ME, AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND. LICENSE NO. 61581 EXPIRATION DATE: 05-11



Sheet 2



INSET #1

FOR YOUR INFORMATION
The Department of Transportation
has been notified of the proposed project and has been advised of the proposed project location and the proposed project description. The Department of Transportation has been advised of the proposed project location and the proposed project description. The Department of Transportation has been advised of the proposed project location and the proposed project description.

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION: I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THESE DOCUMENTS WERE PREPARED OR APPROVED BY ME AND THAT I AM A duly licensed PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MONTGOMERY, LICENSE NO. 10000, EXPIRATION DATE: 06/30/2024.



- NOTES:**
1. THE BASE MAP HAS BEEN CREATED USING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, EXISTING TOPOGRAPHY, AND PROPERTY LINES OBTAINED FROM A LIMITED TOPOGRAPHIC AND BOUNDARY SURVEY AND ALTA. NORTH LINE THE SURVEY PREPARED BY JPM CONSULTING, DATED JULY 10, 2023.
 2. WETLANDS AND OTHER SURFACE WATERS WERE DELINEATED BY ARM GROUP LLC ON JULY 10, 2023.
 3. PHASE I ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ASSESSMENT (ESA) WAS CONDUCTED BY ARM GROUP LLC ON JULY 10, 2023.
 4. SOLAR BOUNDARIES OBTAINED FROM THE MDC WEB SOL SURVEY.
 5. ALL LOCATIONS ARE CONCEPTUAL AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE IN FUTURE ITERATIONS OF THE SITE LAYOUT.
 6. THE PLAN IS IN THE MARYLAND STATE PLANE, NORTH AMERICAN DATUM 1983 (NAD 83) COORDINATE SYSTEM.
 7. ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CONFIRMED ON-SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE INDICATED ONLY AND IN PART OR AS SHOWN. APPROXIMATE.
 8. COMMUNITY SOLAR ENERGY GENERATING SYSTEMS (CEGS) ARE SUBJECT TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE SUBSECTION 3.7.2. THEREFORE, THE PROPOSED CEGS ANTICIPATES CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONSENT AND NECESSITY (CPCN) APPROVAL BY THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT (BZA).
 9. SETBACKS AND LANDSCAPING SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE SUBSECTION 3.7.2. USE STANDARDS.
 10. SOLAR ARRAY IS AN UNMANNED FACILITY AND WILL NOT REQUIRE WATER OR SEWERAGE FACILITIES.

- LEGEND**
- NOTE: LEGEND IS TYPICAL. NOT ALL OBJECTS IN LEGEND APPEAR IN PLAN.
- EXISTING CONTOURS
 - EXISTING VERIFIED WETLANDS
 - NATIONAL WETLAND AND WATERSHED DELINEATION
 - CONSERVATION EASEMENT
 - PROPERTY LINE
 - ADJOINING PROPERTY LINE
 - PROPERTY LINE SETBACK
 - WB 25' WETLAND BUFFER
 - EXISTING OVERHEAD ELECTRIC LINE W/ UTILITY POLE
 - EXISTING STREAM/POND
 - EXISTING VERIFIED STREAM
 - EXISTING 100' FEMA FLOODPLAIN
 - EXISTING DRAINAGE FEATURE
 - EXISTING TREELINE
 - EXISTING FENCE
 - EXISTING GULLERY
 - EXISTING EDGE OF PAVED ROAD
 - EXISTING ROAD CENTERLINE
 - EXISTING EASEMENT
 - EXISTING ROCK WALL
 - PROPOSED CONTOUR
 - PROPOSED SECURITY FENCE
 - PROPOSED LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE
 - PROPOSED UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC LINE
 - PROPOSED OVERHEAD ELECTRIC LINE W/ UTILITY POLE
 - PROPOSED SOLAR MODULES
 - PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD
 - PROPOSED LANDSCAPE SCREENING

ARM Group LLC
Engineers and Scientists
www.armgroup.net

DATE	BY	APP'D BY	REVISION
02/19/2023	CDW	CDW	2010891

PROPOSED SITE CONDITIONS

FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCESS PLAN

POKESVILLE
CLARK COUNTY, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sheet **3**



Sheet 5