

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Commissioners of St. Mary's County will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 23rd at 9:00 a.m. in the Chesapeake Building located at 41770 Baldrige Street in Leonardtown, Maryland, to consider public input on an ordinance to impose a one year moratorium on reviewing and approving utility-scale solar projects to allow the Solar Task Force and County staff to submit recommendations on an amendment to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance for regulations on utility-scale solar projects. The proposed ordinance can be viewed at <http://www.stmarysmd.com/publichearing.asp>.

In accordance with the Public Health Advisory on public gathering sizes, the public hearing participation is limited to teleconferencing, email, written correspondence, or prerecorded video submissions. The public hearing may be viewed on SMCG Channel 95 or on SMCG YouTube Channel.

In lieu of appearance, comments may be submitted by:

- a. Call 301-475-4200 x 1234 to speak via telephone during the public hearing
- b. Email: csmc@stmarysmd.com
- c. US Mail: PO Box 653 Leonardtown, Maryland 20650
- d. Submit a 3-minute video clip to publicmtgs@stmarysmd.com no later than 5:00 pm March 2, 2021.

Citizens may listen to the Public Hearing by calling 301-579-7236; Access code: 963443#

All submissions will be considered by the Commissioners at the Public Hearing and/or seven (7) days following the Public Hearing.

The press may attend. Public Hearing Guidelines are subject to change.

Appropriate accommodations for individuals with special needs will be provided upon request. In order to meet these requirements, we respectfully ask for one week's prior notice. Please contact the County Commissioners Office at 301-475-4200, Ext. 1340. Proceedings are televised live and/or recorded for later broadcast on television. All content of these proceedings is subject to disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act. Photographic and electronic audio and visual broadcasting and recording devices are used during the Commissioners' meetings. These are public meetings and attendance at these meetings automatically grants St. Mary's County Government permission to broadcast your audio and visual image.

COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

By: William B. Hunt, Director, Department of Land Use and Growth Management

ORDINANCE

**UTILITY-SCALE SOLAR PROJECTS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR PENDING
CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF SUCH LEGISLATION AS THE
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY MAY CONSIDER ADVISABLE
TO PROMOTE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE**

WHEREAS, Title 4 of the *Land Use Article* of the *Annotated Code of Maryland* empowers local jurisdictions to enact and administer a zoning ordinance, which ordinance is Chapter 285 of the Code of St. Mary's County; and

WHEREAS, a utility-scale solar project had been, and others are likely to be proposed to be constructed on land in St. Mary's County; and

WHEREAS, utility-scale solar projects raise a number of concerns to the Commissioners, including ensuring that the solar industry is managed in a fashion that reduces conflicts and is done in harmony with St. Mary's County land use planning efforts, and consistency with the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of St. Mary's County; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County have formed a Solar Task Force to seek community input, further investigate community needs, learn about solar regulations, identify potential site locations, discuss potential strengths/challenges with solar facilities and make recommendations, June of 2021, to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County; and

WHEREAS, the Solar Task Force, at their December 9, 2020 meeting, voted to recommend that the Commissioners of St. Mary's County adopt a temporary moratorium on reviewing and approving of utility-scale solar projects for a period of one year from December 9, 2020; and

WHEREAS, St. Mary's County is reviewing existing zoning requirements that are related to utility-scale solar projects and desires to impose a one year moratorium to allow the Solar Task Force and County staff to study these matters, finalize their recommendations and propose changes to the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to better achieve the goals expressed in the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, a notice of a public hearing was advertised on _____ and _____ in *Southern Maryland News*, a newspaper of general circulation in St. Mary's County, and a public hearing was held on _____ to receive public comment and consider adopting this Ordinance; and

Subject: One Year Moratorium on Utility-Scale Solar Projects

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County believe that one year is a reasonable length of time for completion of the study and that a moratorium upon the reviewing and approving of utility-scale solar projects for that length of time is necessary and in the best interests to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of St. Mary's County,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, pursuant to §4-201 of the *Land Use Article* of the *Annotated Code of Maryland*, that:

SECTION I. Direct County staff to study these matters, finalize their recommendations and propose any changes to the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan and St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance;

SECTION II. A moratorium on reviewing and approving of utility-scale solar projects shall be, and hereby is, imposed for a period of one year from and after adoption of this Ordinance.

SECTION III. This Ordinance shall apply to any new utility-scale solar projects applied for on or after the effective date of this Ordinance.

SECTION IV: This Ordinance shall be effective as of the date set forth below.

Those voting Aye: _____

Those voting Nay: _____

Those Abstaining: _____

Date of Adoption: _____

Effective Date: _____

ATTEST:

COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

Rebecca B. Bridgett
County Administrator

James R. Guy, Commissioner President

Subject: One Year Moratorium on
Utility-Scale Solar Projects

APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

David A. Weiskopf
County Attorney

Eric Colvin, Commissioner

Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner

Todd B. Morgan, Commissioner

John E. O'Connor, Commissioner