



5/22/2020

Planning Board
Board of Supervisors
Southampton County
Newsoms District
31251 Sands Road
Newsoms, VA 23874

Dear,

As an active solar developer in Virginia, NCRE is pleased to inform you of our intention to develop two more solar facilities in Southampton County. Notwithstanding our current disagreement on the zoning denials for our solar facility at Flaggy Run Road in Courtland, we believe that solar energy continues to offer landowners and the County an opportunity to attract investment activity and add diversity to the local tax base.

We have listened to the reasonable concerns that were raised from the various stakeholders at previous planning board meetings of previous proposals and believe the new projects are an improved proposition for the County and its residents.

At a time when we are all learning that a diverse local tax base is important to every Town and County, I would urge you to balance the ability to permit solar projects with the concerns of some local residents. Solar projects bring in new money in the form of lease payments to the local landowner, increased taxes on rezoned property and commercial property taxes to the County.

Covid19 has taught us that in times of uncertainty having an income stream that is as reliable as the rising of the sun should be a consideration when planning for the long term financial health of the local economy. These solar developments create financial benefits for the landowners who are residents in the County and turn their land into economically active parcels with a higher tax contribution than their current use.

We recently published an opinion on this which I have enclosed.

We recognize the importance of listening to the local residents in forming policy and making planning and zoning decisions. At the same time we caution against accepting points of view based on misinformation or fear of change. Emotion is rarely a solid basis for sound decisions and as Chairman of the Planning Board we appreciate you have to balance this every day. We know that these projects are safe for the community, healthy for the environment



and deliver financial benefits to both residents and the County.

In the interest of the economic health and diverse income sources for Southampton County, we would welcome an opportunity to continue the dialogue with you about solar development in the County. Our experience working with more than 100 other municipalities and their processes may offer some insight, and we may be able to bring a balanced view to the discussion.

I would be pleased to have a more detailed conversation, either via covid19 safe video conference or in person as restrictions on travel and congregating are lifted. I believe a professional and factual discussion will help you secure the best outcome for the County and all of its residents.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Dekker", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Frank Dekker
Managing Partner

frank@ncre.solar