



PURSUANT TO THE GOVERNOR'S LATEST EXECUTIVE ORDER, IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE IS NOT PERMITTED MEETING WILL BE LIVE STREAMED ON YOU TUBE: [Page County, Virginia - YouTube](#)

THE MEETING WILL ALSO BE STREAMED ON ZOOM (AUDIO ONLY):  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81914926291?pwd=YnNxV2FhZ1JkY2FXcDlkdEV0OU9VQT09>

DIAL: (646) 558-8656; MEETING ID: 819 1492 6291; PASSCODE: 77435

Agenda  
Page County Board of Supervisors  
Work Session  
Board of Supervisors Room – County Government Center  
103 South Court Street, Luray, VA  
February 2, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

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6:30 Call to Order

Closed Session

- Personnel Matters, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia
- Legal Matters, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(8) of the Code of Virginia

Exit Closed Session/Certification of Closed Session

Recess

7:00 Reconvene

- Moment of Silence (District 4)
- Pledge of Allegiance

Dispatcher of the Year Award

Kayla Riley

Broadband Authority Discussion

Supervisor Louderback

Solar Facilities Ordinance

Amity Moler (p. 2)

Adjourn

## ARTICLE X

### SOLAR FACILITIES

#### § 125-70 Statement of intent.

The purpose of this section is to establish requirements for construction, operation, and decommissioning of solar facilities; to provide standards for the placement, design, construction, monitoring, modification, and removal of solar facilities; address public safety, minimize impacts on scenic, natural, and historic resources; and provide adequate financial assurance for decommissioning.

#### § 125-71 Applicability.

This article shall apply to all solar facilities constructed after the effective date of this article, including any physical modifications to any existing solar facilities that materially alter the type, configuration, or size of such facilities or other equipment.

#### § 125-72 Zoning districts.

- A. Small-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right in all zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- B. Medium-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right roof-mounted or ground-mounted in agricultural, commercial, and industrial zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- C. Any commercial or industrial solar facility installed upon a roof top shall submit a site plan and an engineering study to Page County for review.
- D. ~~Utility scale solar facilities shall be permitted by Special Use Permit (SUP) only, and only in the A-1 zoning district.~~ Utility-scale solar facilities shall be permitted in the Agriculture, Commercial, and Industrial zoning districts by Special Use Permit (SUP) only.

#### § 125-73 Small-scale and medium-scale requirements and standards.

- A. The design and installation of all solar energy facilities shall conform to applicable industry standards, including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), or other similar certifying organizations and shall comply with all fire and safety requirements.
- B. Small and medium-scale energy facilities shall comply with all applicable federal, state and county regulations, ordinances and codes.
- C. A medium-scale solar facility shall submit a site plan to the zoning administrator and any medium-scale facility installed upon a roof top shall also submit an engineering study to the building official's office for review.
- D. All small or medium-scale solar energy facilities shall comply with the following performance standards:

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- (1) The ground mounted solar energy facility shall setback a minimum of 50 feet when the adjacent parcel has an existing residence, all other ground mounted solar energy facilities shall setback as required by the zoning district. ~~and no small or medium scale facility shall be located in the front of the primary structure.~~
  - (2) If the solar energy facility is ground-mounted or not flush-mounted on a principal or accessory building, the panel height ~~and any accessory structures~~ shall not exceed 15 feet.
  - (3) The lowest surface of any ground mounted panel shall be a maximum of ten (10) feet above the finished grade.
  - (4) All wiring not on the solar arrays shall be underground except where necessary to connect to the public utility.
  - (5) All broken or waste solar modules shall be removed from the site within 60 days of being taken out of service. Panels or pieces thereof from the property shall be disposed of outside of Page County and through a viable recycling method and in accordance with federal and state law.
- E. Medium-scale solar energy facilities when adjacent to a parcel with an existing residence shall be screened from the ground-level view of adjacent properties by a buffer zone at least 25 feet wide that shall be landscaped with native and non-invasive plant materials, except to the extent that existing vegetation or natural land forms on the site provide such screening as determined by Page County. Trees shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height at time of planting and in staggered rows of ten (10) foot on center. In the event, existing vegetation or landforms providing the screening are disturbed, new plantings shall be provided which accomplish the same. The effectiveness of screening shall be maintained as the plant materials mature. Unhealthy and dead plants shall be replaced within one (1) year of being provided written notice by the County of the violation. Opaque architectural fencing may be used to supplement other screening methods but shall not be the primary method.
- F. Removal of abandoned medium-scale solar generating equipment.
- (1) ~~A bond, whose amount shall be approved by the zoning administrator, shall be required to assure the removal of an abandoned medium scale solar energy facility.~~ A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated removal shall be posted and maintained to assure the removal of an abandoned medium-scale solar energy facility.
  - (2) Any medium-scale solar energy facility that has not operated for a period of 12 months shall be considered unused and abandoned. The owner of an unused facility shall remove the entire system within six months of receipt of notice from the zoning administrator notifying the owner of the equipment removal requirement. Removal includes removing any underground structures or supports and electrical transmission wire and disposing in accordance with local, state, and federal codes and regulations.

### § 125-74 Applications and procedures.

- A. In addition to other requirements of the Page County Zoning Ordinance and Special Use Permit requirements, applications for a utility-scale solar facility shall include the following information:
- (1) Pre-application meeting. Schedule a pre-application meeting with Page County to discuss the location, scale, and nature of the proposed use and what will be expected during the process.
  - (2) Comprehensive Plan Review. A 2232 review by the County is required by the *Code of Virginia* (§15.2-2232) for utility-scale solar facilities. This Code provision provides for a review by the Planning Commission of public utility facility proposals to determine if their general or

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approximate location, character and extent are substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan or part thereof.

- (3) Special Use Permit (SUP) application. A complete SUP application including:
- (a) Documents demonstrating the ownership of the subject parcel(s).
  - (b) Proof that the applicant has authorization to act upon the owner's behalf.
  - (c) A letter of commitment from the utility company who will interconnect to the facility and a statement of line capacity before and after interconnection.
  - (d) List of all adjacent property owners, their tax map numbers, and addresses.
  - (e) A description of the current use and physical characteristics of the subject parcels.
  - (f) A description of the existing uses of nearby properties.
  - (g) A narrative identifying the applicant, owner and operator, and describing the proposed solar facility project, including an overview of the project and its location, approximate rated capacity of the solar facility project, the approximate number of panels, representative types, expected footprint of solar equipment to be constructed, and type and location of interconnection to electrical grid.
  - (h) Aerial imagery which shows the proposed location of the solar facility, fenced area, driveways, and interconnection to electrical grid with the closest distance to all adjacent property lines and dwellings along with main points of ingress/egress.
  - (i) Payment of the application fee and any additional review costs, advertising, or other required staff time.
  - (j) The applicant shall consult with the Department of Wildlife Resources and provide a written recommendation regarding wildlife corridors.
- (4) Site plan. A site plan prepared by a Virginia licensed engineer, that shall include the following:
- (a) A description of the subject parcels.
  - (b) Property lines and setback lines. A land survey by a Virginia licensed surveyor is required.
  - (c) Existing and proposed buildings and structures; including preliminary locations of the proposed solar panels and related equipment; the location of proposed fencing, driveways, internal roads, and structures; and the location of points of ingress/egress.
  - (d) The location and nature of proposed buffers and screening elements, including vegetative and constructed buffers.
  - (e) A grading plan.
  - (f) A landscaping maintenance plan.
  - (g) Existing and proposed access roads, drives, turnout locations, and parking.
  - (h) Location of substations, electrical cabling from the solar facility systems to the substations, ancillary equipment, buildings, and structures including those within any applicable setback.
  - (i) Fencing or other methods of ensuring public safety.
  - (j) Twenty sets (11"× 17" or larger), one reduced copy (8½"× 11") and one electronic copy of the site plan, including elevations and landscape plans as required.

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- (k) Provide an inventory of all solar facilities – existing or proposed – within a four (4) mile radius.
- (l) Additional information may be required as determined by Page County such as a scaled elevation view of the property and other supporting drawings, photographs of the proposed site, photo or other realistic simulations or modeling of the proposed project from potentially sensitive locations as deemed necessary by Page County to assess the visual impact of the project, landscaping and screening plan, coverage map, and additional information that may be necessary for a technical review of the proposal.
- (5) Site plan compliance. The facility shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the approved Site Plan, with allowances for changes required by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Permit by Rule (PBR) process.
- (6) Decommissioning plan. A detailed decommissioning plan, certified by an engineer, which shall include the following:
  - (a) The anticipated life of the project;
  - (b) The estimated decommissioning cost in current dollars;
  - (c) How the estimate was determined;
  - (d) The method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and removal;
  - (e) The method that the estimated decommissioning cost will be kept current; and
  - (f) The manner in which the project will be decommissioned and the site restored.
- The applicant shall provide a cost estimate for the decommissioning of the facility that shall be prepared by a Virginia licensed professional engineer or contractor who has expertise in the removal of solar facilities. The decommissioning cost estimate shall explicitly detail the cost and shall include a mechanism for calculating increased removal costs due to inflation and without any reduction for salvage value. This cost estimate shall be recalculated every five (5) years and the surety shall be updated accordingly.
- (7) A proposed method of providing appropriate escrow, surety or security for grounds maintenance, fencing, landscaping, and the cost of the decommissioning plan.
- (8) Traffic study submitted with application modeling the construction and decommissioning processes. The Virginia Department of Transportation will be responsible for reviewing the study.
- (9) An estimated construction schedule.
- (10) Wetlands, waterways, and floodplains shall be inventoried, delineated, and avoided.
- (11) Environmental inventory and impact statement regarding any site and viewshed impacts, including direct and indirect impacts to national and state forests, national or state parks, wildlife management areas, conservation easements, recreational areas, or any known historic or cultural resources within three (3) miles of the proposed project.

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- (12) Community impact assessment by a County approved third party, including but not limited to, a comprehensive economic impact, agricultural and tourism revenue, employment and taxation, shall be required and shall assess the various project tax and revenue options, including but not limited to, Code of Virginia §58.1-2636, §58.1-3660, §15.2-2288.8, and §15.2-2316.6 through 2316.9.
- (13) A visual impact analysis demonstrating project siting and proposed mitigation, if necessary, so that the solar facility minimizes impact on the visual character of the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall provide accurate, to scale, photographic simulations showing the relationship of the solar facility and its associated amenities and development to its surroundings. The photographic simulations shall show such views of solar structures from locations such as property lines and roadways, as deemed necessary by the County in order to assess the visual impact of the solar facility.
  - (b) The total number of simulations and the perspectives from which they are prepared shall be established by Page County after the pre-application meeting.

### ~~§ 125-75 Neighborhood meeting.~~ **MOVED TO 125-78(11) (CONDITIONS)**

~~A. A public meeting shall be held prior to the public hearing with the Planning Commission to give the community an opportunity to hear from the applicant and ask questions regarding the proposed project.~~

- ~~(1) The applicant shall inform Page County and adjacent property owners in writing of the date, time and location of the meeting, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.~~
- ~~(2) The date, time and location of the meeting shall be advertised in the County's newspaper of record by the applicant, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.~~
- ~~(3) The meeting shall be held within the County, at a location open to the general public with adequate parking and seating facilities which may accommodate persons with disabilities.~~
- ~~(4) The meeting shall give members of the public the opportunity to review application materials, ask questions of the applicant and provide feedback.~~
- ~~(5) The applicant shall provide to Page County a summary of any input received from members of the public at the meeting.~~

### **§ 125-75 Minimum development standards.**

- A. The design and installation of solar energy facilities shall conform to applicable industry standards, including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), or other similar certifying organizations and shall comply with all fire and safety requirements.
- B. ~~Location standards for utility scale solar facilities. The location standards stated below for utility scale solar facilities are intended to mitigate the adverse effects of such uses on adjoining property owners, the area, and the County.~~ **MOVED ALL OF "B" TO 125-78 (12) (CONDITIONS)**
  - ~~(1) The acreage coverage of a utility scale solar facility shall be a maximum of 200 acres.~~

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- ~~(2) The layout of equipment, improvements, structures, substation, and battery storage, along with the calculated percent of acreage coverage shall be shown on the approved site plan. The percent of acreage coverage for a facility shall not exceed 65% of the total solar facility site (i.e. a site with 200 acres of coverage area must include a minimum of 308 acres of total solar facility site area and a project that totals 250 acres would be allowed 162.5 acres or less of coverage).~~
  - ~~(3) Utility scale solar facility shall be located:
    - ~~(a) At least one (1) mile from a town boundary;~~
    - ~~(b) Outside of the primary or secondary service areas around a town, as delineated in the Comprehensive Plan;~~
    - ~~(c) Not adjacent to residential districts or subdivisions.~~~~
  - ~~(4) No utility scale solar facility shall be located within two (2) miles of another existing or permitted utility scale solar facility unless the combined acreage coverage is 200 acres or less.~~
  - ~~(5) Utility scale solar facilities shall be within one (1) mile of electric transmission lines.~~
  - ~~(6) Battery energy storage systems, if required, shall be installed with industry best practices including a Battery Management System (BMS) with 24/7 monitoring and automated fire suppression.~~
  - ~~(7) Utility scale solar facilities shall minimize and avoid locating on farmland with soils categorized as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. No site shall have more than 50% of soils identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.~~
  - ~~(8) To preserve forest resources, Utility scale solar facilities shall be located outside forested areas as identified and defined in the Comprehensive Plan and by a Virginia State certified forester. In order to protect scenic corridors and view sheds, utility scale solar facilities shall not be located within a ¼ mile of Federal Highways US 340 and 211, US 340 Business and US 211 Business, except where natural topography shields the entire facility from view.~~
  - ~~(9) Utility scale solar facilities shall not be located within 200 feet of historic and cultural resources as defined and listed in the Comprehensive Plan.~~
- B. A utility-scale solar facility shall be constructed and maintained in substantial compliance with the approved site plan.
- C. ~~The minimum setback of all panels, equipment, substations, switchyards, and other ancillary structures, of the project to the edge of Shenandoah River, Hawksbill Creek, Pass Run Stream, and property lines of parcels with existing dwellings shall be 200 feet. The minimum setback to all other property lines shall be 150 feet. All substations and utility switchyards and any other associated equipment must also comply with these minimum setbacks. These setbacks do not apply to internal lot lines that are included in the project.~~ **MOVED TO 125-78 (13) (CONDITIONS)**

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- C. The maximum height of the lowest edge of the photovoltaic panels shall be 10 feet as measured from the finished grade. The maximum height of photovoltaic panels, primary structures, battery storage facilities and accessory buildings shall be 15 feet as measured from the finished grade at the base of the structure to its highest point, including appurtenances. The Board of Supervisors may approve a greater height based upon the demonstration of a significant need where the impacts of increased height are mitigated.
- D. PV solar panels and any associated equipment shall not be located on slopes ~~10~~ 15 percent or greater and no site shall be graded more than 50 percent of the site surface area.
- E. The facilities, including fencing, shall be significantly screened from the ground-level view of adjacent properties by a buffer zone at least 100 feet wide that shall be landscaped with native and non-invasive plant materials consisting of an evergreen and deciduous mix (as approved by County staff), except to the extent that existing vegetation or natural land forms on the site provide such screening as determined by Page County. Trees shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height at time of planting and in staggered rows of ten (10) foot on center. In the event, existing vegetation or landforms providing the screening are disturbed, new plantings shall be provided which accomplish the same. The effectiveness of screening shall be maintained as the plant materials mature. Unhealthy and dead plants shall be replaced within one (1) year of being provided written notice by the County of the violation. Opaque architectural fencing may be used to supplement other screening methods but shall not be the primary method.
- F. The facilities shall be enclosed by security fencing on the interior of the buffer area (not to be seen by other properties) not less than nine (9) feet in height. The fence shall not be topped with razor/barbed wire. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated fence maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the security fencing shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning.
- G. Ground cover on the site shall be pollinator-friendly native and non-invasive vegetation and maintained in accordance with the Landscaping Maintenance Plan in accordance with established performance measures. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated landscaping maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the landscaping shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning. Incorporation of non-invasive plant species that require no pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers or the use of pesticides and fertilizers with low toxicity, persistence, and bioavailability is recommended. The operator shall notify the County prior to application of pesticides and fertilizers. The County reserves the right to request soil and water testing.
- H. The facility shall provide at least one access corridor for wildlife to navigate through the Solar Facility per 50 acres of acreage coverage. Proposed wildlife corridor(s) shall be shown on the site plan submitted to the County and shall be a minimum of 25 feet in width. Areas between fencing shall be kept open to allow for the movement of migratory animals and other wildlife.
- I. The design of support buildings and related structures shall use materials, colors, textures, screening and landscaping that will blend the facilities to the natural setting and surrounding structures.
- J. The owner or operator shall maintain the solar facility in good condition. Such maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, painting, structural integrity of the equipment and structures, as applicable, and maintenance of the buffer areas and landscaping. Site access shall be maintained to a level acceptable to the County. The project owner shall be responsible for the cost of maintaining the solar facility and access roads, and the cost of repairing damage to private roads occurring as a result of construction and operation. The applicant shall be required to submit an incident response plan to Page County.



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- K. A utility-scale solar facility shall be designed and maintained in compliance with standards contained in applicable local, state and federal building codes and regulations that were in force at the time of the permit approval.
- L. A utility-scale solar facility shall comply with all permitting and other requirements of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.
- M. The applicant shall provide proof of adequate liability insurance for a solar facility prior to beginning construction and before the issuance of a zoning or building permit from Page County.
- N. Lighting fixtures as approved by the County shall be the minimum necessary for safety and/or security purposes to protect the night sky by facing downward and to minimize off-site glare. No facility shall produce glare that would constitute a nuisance to the public. Any exceptions shall be enumerated on the Site Plan and approved by Page County.
- O. No signage of any type may be placed on the facility other than notices, warnings, and identification information required by law.
- P. All facilities must meet or exceed the standards and regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”), State Corporation Commission (“SCC”) or equivalent, and any other agency of the local, state or federal government with the authority to regulate such facilities that are in force at the time of the application.
- Q. Any other condition approved by the added ~~by the Planning Commission and/or~~ Page County Board of Supervisors as part of a SUP approval.

### **§ 125-76 Decommissioning.**

- A. The following requirements shall be met:
  - (1) Solar facilities which have reached the end of the term of the special use permit or their useful life or have not been in active and continuous service for a period of one (1) year shall be removed at the owner’s or operator’s expense, except if the project is being re-powered or a force majeure event has or is occurring requiring longer repairs; however, the County may require evidentiary support that a longer repair period is necessary.
  - (2) The owner or operator shall notify Page County by certified mail and in person of the proposed date of discontinued operations and plans for removal.
  - (3) Decommissioning shall include removal of all solar electric systems, buildings, cabling, electrical components, security barriers, roads, foundations, pilings, and any other associated facilities, so that any agricultural ground upon which the facility and/or system was located is again tillable and suitable for agricultural or forestial uses. The site shall be graded and re-seeded to restore it to as natural a pre-development condition as possible or replanted with pine seedlings to stimulate pre-timber pre-development conditions as indicated on the Preliminary Site Plan. Any exception to site restoration, such as leaving access roads in place or seeding instead of planting seedlings must be requested by the land owner in writing, and this request must be approved by the Board of Supervisors (other conditions might be more beneficial or desirable at that time).

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- (4) Land disturbance activities as a result of removal of solar facilities shall adhere to all local, state, and federal requirements.
- (5) Decommissioning shall be performed in compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The Board of Supervisors may approve any appropriate amendments to or modifications of the decommissioning plan.
- (6) Hazardous material, panels or pieces thereof from the property shall be disposed of through a viable recycling method and in accordance with federal and state law and not in Page County. A receipt of disposal shall be required.
- (7) The estimated cost of decommissioning shall be guaranteed by the deposit of funds in an amount equal to the estimated cost in an escrow account at a federally insured financial institution approved by the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall deposit the required amount into the approved escrow account before any building permit is issued to allow construction of the solar facility.
  - (b) The escrow account agreement shall prohibit the release of the escrow funds without the written consent of the County. The County shall consent to the release of the escrow funds upon the owner's or occupant's compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The County may approve the partial release of escrow funds as portions of the approved decommissioning plan are performed.
  - (c) The amount of funds required to be deposited in the escrow account shall be the full amount of the estimated decommissioning cost without regard to the possibility of salvage value.
  - (d) A Virginia licensed Engineer shall recalculate the estimated cost of decommissioning every five years. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning exceeds the original estimated cost of decommissioning by ten percent (10%), then the owner or occupant shall deposit additional funds into the escrow account to meet the new cost estimate. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning is less than ninety percent (90%) of the original estimated cost of decommissioning, then the County may approve reducing the amount of the escrow account to the recalculated estimate of decommissioning cost.
  - (e) The County may approve alternative methods to secure the availability of funds to pay for the decommissioning of a utility-scale solar facility, such as a performance bond, letter of credit, or other security approved by the County.
- (8) If the owner or operator of the solar facility fails to remove the installation in accordance with the requirements of this permit or within the proposed date of decommissioning, the County may collect the surety and the County or hired third party may enter the property to physically remove the installation.

### **§ 125-77 Coordination of local emergency services.**

Applicants for new solar facilities shall coordinate with the County's emergency services staff to provide annual materials, education and/or training to the departments serving the property with emergency services in how to safely respond to on-site emergencies.

**§ 125-78 Conditions.**

- A. The Board of Supervisors shall consider conditions addressing a proposed utility-scale solar facility, including, but not limited to, the following:
- (1) A condition(s) that requires (i) dedication of real property of substantial value or (ii) substantial cash payments for or construction of substantial public improvements, the need for which is not generated solely by the granting of a special use permit, so long as such conditions are reasonably related to the project.
  - (2) A solar facility shall be constructed, maintained, and operated in compliance with:
    - (1) The development standards under this article.
    - (2) The approved site plan.
    - (3) Any other conditions imposed pursuant to a Special Use Permit.
  - (3) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Erosion and Sediment Control.
  - (4) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Stormwater Management.
  - (5) The applicant shall obtain county-approved qualified third parties to conduct all inspections as required by the Virginia Erosion & Sediment Control Regulations (9VAC25-840-60) and the Virginia Stormwater Management Program Regulations (9VAC25-870-114). The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs associated with these inspections. After completion of land-disturbing activities and permanent control measures are operable, inspections shall revert back to the County (Virginia Stormwater Management Program Authority). This third party must hold a certificate of competence in the area of Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia State Water Control Board. All inspection reports must be submitted to the County's program administrator within 24 hours of the inspection via email.
  - (6) It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the decommissioning plan and they shall be responsible for any fees associated with the expense of the plan.
  - (7) If the solar facility does not receive a building permit within twenty-four 24 months of approval of the Special Use Permit, the Permit shall be terminated.
  - (8) If the solar facility is declared to be unsafe by Page County, the facility must be in compliance within fourteen (14) days or the Special Use Permit shall be terminated, and system removed from the property.
  - (9) The owner and operator shall give the County written notice of any change in ownership, operator, or Power Purchase Agreement within thirty (30) days.
  - (10) Any third-party assessment shall be paid for by the applicant but the third-party assessor must be approved by Page County.

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- (11) ~~A public meeting shall be held prior to the public hearing with the Planning Commission to give the community an opportunity to hear from the applicant and ask questions regarding the proposed project.~~ A neighborhood meeting (held by the applicant) is recommended to be held prior to the scheduled public hearing with the Planning Commission to give the community an opportunity to hear from the applicant and ask questions regarding the proposed project.
- (1) The applicant ~~shall~~ **should** inform Page County **in writing**, ~~and~~ adjacent property owners in writing, **and advertise in the County's newspaper of record** of the date, time and location of the meeting, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.
  - ~~(2) The date, time and location of the meeting shall be advertised in the County's newspaper of record by the applicant, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.~~
  - ~~(3) The meeting shall be held within the County, at a location open to the general public with adequate parking and seating facilities which may accommodate persons with disabilities.~~
  - (2) The meeting ~~shall~~ **should** give members of the public the opportunity to review application materials, ask questions of the applicant and provide feedback.
  - (3) The applicant ~~shall~~ **should** provide to Page County a summary of any input received from members of the public at the meeting.
- (12) Location standards for utility-scale solar facilities. The location standards stated below for utility-scale solar facilities are intended to mitigate the adverse effects of such uses on adjoining property owners, the area, and the County. **Consideration shall be given to the following:**
- (1) ~~The acreage coverage of a utility scale solar facility shall be a maximum of 200 acres.~~ **Limiting the maximum acreage coverage of a utility-scale solar facility.**
  - (2) ~~The layout of equipment, improvements, structures, substation, and battery storage, along with the calculated percent of acreage coverage shall be shown on the approved site plan. The percent of acreage coverage for a facility shall not exceed 65% of the total solar facility site (i.e. a site with 200 acres of coverage area must include a minimum of 308 acres of total solar facility site area and a project that totals 250 acres would be allowed 162.5 acres or less of coverage).~~ **Limiting the percent of acreage coverage. The layout of equipment, improvements, structures, substation, and battery storage, along with the maximum calculated percent of acreage coverage shall be shown on the approved site plan.**
  - (3) ~~Utility scale solar facility shall be located:~~ **Considerations should be given to the following:**
    - ~~(1) At least one (1) mile from a town boundary;~~ **Proximity from a town boundary;**
    - ~~(2) Outside of the primary or secondary service areas around a town, as delineated in the Comprehensive Plan;~~ **Proximity of the primary or secondary service areas around a town, as delineated in the Comprehensive Plan;**

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- ~~(3) Not adjacent to residential districts or subdivisions.~~ Proximity to residential districts or subdivisions.
- (4) ~~No utility scale solar facility shall be located within two (2) miles of another existing or permitted utility scale solar facility unless the combined acreage coverage is 200 acres or less.~~ Proximity of another existing or permitted utility-scale solar facility.
- (5) ~~Utility scale solar facilities shall be within one (1) mile of electric transmission lines.~~ Proximity of electric transmission lines.
- (6) Battery energy storage systems, if required, shall be installed with industry best practices including a Battery Management System (BMS) with 24/7 monitoring and automated fire suppression.
- (7) ~~Utility scale solar facilities shall minimize and avoid locating on farmland with soils categorized as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. No site shall have more than 50% of soils identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.~~ Limitations on sites of soils categorized as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.
- (8) ~~To preserve forest resources, Utility scale solar facilities shall be located outside forested areas as identified and defined in the Comprehensive Plan and by a Virginia State certified forester. In order to protect scenic corridors and view sheds, utility scale solar facilities shall not be located within a ¼ mile of Federal Highways US 340 and 211, US 340 Business and US 211 Business, except where natural topography shields the entire facility from view.~~ To preserve forest resources, consideration should be given to forested areas as identified and defined in the Comprehensive Plan and by a Virginia State certified forester. In order to protect scenic corridors and view sheds, consideration should be given to federal highways US 340 and 211, US 340 Business and US 211 Business.
- (9) ~~Utility scale solar facilities shall not be located within 200 feet of historic and cultural resources as defined and listed in the Comprehensive Plan.~~ Proximity to historic and cultural resources as defined and listed in the Comprehensive Plan.
- (10) ~~The minimum setback of all panels, equipment, substations, switchyards, and other ancillary structures, of the project to the edge of Shenandoah River, Hawksbill Creek, Pass Run Stream, and property lines of parcels with existing dwellings shall be 200 feet. The minimum setback to all other property lines shall be 150 feet. All substations and utility switchyards and any other associated equipment must also comply with these minimum setbacks. These setbacks do not apply to internal lot lines that are included in the project.~~ The Board shall determine minimum setbacks required of all panels, equipment, substations, switchyards, and other ancillary structures, any rivers, creeks, and streams, property lines of parcels with existing dwellings, and property lines of all other property without existing dwellings. These setbacks established by the Board do not apply to internal lot lines that are included in the project.

**ARTICLE X**  
**SOLAR FACILITIES**

**§ 125-70 Statement of intent.**

The purpose of this section is to establish requirements for construction, and operation, and decommissioning of solar facilities; and to provide standards for the placement, design, construction, monitoring, modification, and removal of solar facilities; address public safety, minimize impacts on scenic, natural, and historic resources; and provide adequate financial assurance for decommissioning.

**§ 125-71 Applicability.**

This article shall apply to all solar facilities for which a Special Use Permit Application has not been filed prior to constructed after the effective date of this article, ~~including any physical modifications to any existing solar facilities that materially alter the type, configuration, or size of such facilities or other equipment.~~

**§ 125-72 Zoning districts.**

- A. Small-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right in all zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- B. Medium-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right roof-mounted or ground-mounted in commercial and industrial zoning districts and roof-mounted only in agricultural zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- C. Any commercial or industrial solar facility installed upon a roof top shall submit a site plan and an engineering study to Page County for review.
- D. Utility-scale solar facilities shall be permitted by Special Use Permit (SUP) only, and only in the A-1 zoning district.

**§ 125-73 Applications and procedures.**

- A. In addition to other requirements of the Page County Zoning Ordinance and Special Use Permit requirements, applications for a utility-scale solar facility shall include the following information:

- (1) Pre-application meeting. Schedule a pre-application meeting with Page County to discuss the location, scale, and nature of the proposed use and what will be expected during that process.
- (2) Comprehensive Plan Review. A 2232 review by the County is required by the Code of Virginia (§15.2-2232) for utility-scale solar facilities. This Code provision provides for a review by the Planning Commission of public utility facility proposals to determine if their general or approximate location, character and extent are substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan or part thereof.
- (3) Special Use Permit (SUP) application. A complete SUP application including:
  - (a) Documents demonstrating the ownership of the subject parcel(s).
  - (b) Proof that the applicant has authorization to act upon the owner's behalf.
  - (c) A letter of commitment from the utility company who will interconnect to the facility and a statement of line capacity before and after interconnection.
  - (d) List of all adjacent property owners, their tax map numbers, and addresses.
  - (e) A description of the current use and physical characteristics of the subject parcels.
  - (f) A description of the existing uses of nearby properties.
  - (g) A narrative identifying the applicant, owner or operator, and describing the proposed solar facility project, including an overview of the project and its location, approximate rated capacity of the solar facility project, the approximate number of panels, representative types, expected footprint of solar equipment to be constructed, and type and location of interconnection to electrical grid.
  - (h) Aerial imagery which shows the proposed location of the solar facility, fenced area, driveways, and interconnection to electrical grid with the closest distance to all adjacent property lines and dwellings along with main points of ingress/egress.
  - (i) Payment of the application fee and any additional review costs, advertising, or other required staff time.
  - (j) The applicant shall consult with the Department of Wildlife Resources

and provide a written recommendation regarding wildlife corridors.

- (4) Site plan. A site plan prepared by a Virginia licensed engineer, that shall include the following:
  - (a) A description of the subject parcels.
  - (b) Property lines and setback lines. A land survey by a Virginia licensed surveyor is required.
  - (c) Existing and proposed buildings and structures; including preliminary locations of the proposed solar panels and related equipment; the location of proposed fencing, driveways, internal roads, and structures; and the location of points of ingress/egress.
  - (d) The location and nature of proposed buffers and screening elements, including vegetative and constructed buffers.
  - (e) A grading plan.
  - (f) A landscaping maintenance plan.
  - (g) Existing and proposed access roads, drives, turnout locations, and parking.
  - (h) Location of substations, electrical cabling from the solar facility systems to the substations, ancillary equipment, buildings, and structures including those within any applicable setback.
  - (i) Fencing or other methods of ensuring public safety.
  - (j) Twenty sets (11"× 17" or larger), one reduced copy (8½"× 11") and one electronic copy of the site plan, including elevations and landscape plans as required.
  - (k) Provide an inventory of all solar facilities – existing or proposed – within a four (4) mile radius.
  - (l) Additional information may be required as determined by Page County such as a scaled elevation view of the property and other supporting drawings, photographs of the proposed site, photo or other realistic simulations or modeling of the proposed project from potentially sensitive locations as deemed necessary by Page County to assess the visual impact of the project, landscaping and screening plan, coverage map, and additional information that may be necessary for a technical review of the proposal.



- (5) Site plan compliance. The facility shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the approved Site Plan, with allowances for changes required by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Permit by Rule (PBR) process.
- (6) Decommissioning plan. A detailed decommissioning plan, certified by an engineer, which shall include the following:
  - (a) The anticipated life of the project;
  - (b) The estimated decommissioning cost in current dollars;
  - (c) How the estimate was determined;
  - (d) The method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and removal;
  - (e) The method that the estimated decommissioning cost will be kept current; and
  - (f) The manner in which the project will be decommissioned and the site restored.

Prior to receiving site plan approval, tThe applicant shall provide a cost estimate for the decommissioning of the facility that shall be prepared by a Virginia licensed professional engineer or contractor who has expertise in the removal of solar facilities. The decommissioning cost estimate shall explicitly detail the cost and shall include a mechanism for calculating increased removal costs due to inflation and allow the removal cost to be reduced by the estimated ~~without any reduction for~~ salvage value. This cost estimate shall be recalculated every five (5) years and the surety shall be updated accordingly.

- (7) A proposed method of providing appropriate escrow, surety or security for ground maintenance, fencing, landscaping, and the cost of the decommissioning plan.
- (8) ~~Traffic study~~ A road use analysis submitted with application modelling the construction and decommissioning processes. The Virginia Department Of Transportation will be responsible for reviewing the study.
- (9) An estimated construction schedule.
- (10) Wetlands, waterways, and floodplains shall be inventoried, delineated, and avoided, with the exception of cable crossings, access road crossings, and other encroachments which are permitted by state code and regulations.-

- (11) Environmental inventory and impact ~~statement~~assessment regarding any site and viewshed impacts, including direct and indirect impacts to national and state forests, national or state parks, wildlife management areas, conservation easements, recreational areas, or any known historic or cultural resources within ~~three-one~~ (31) miles of the proposed project.
- (12) Community impact assessment by a County approved third party, including but not limited to, a comprehensive economic impact, agricultural and tourism revenue, employment and taxation, shall be required and shall assess the various project tax and revenue options, including but not limited to, Code of Virginia §58.1-2636, §58.1-3660, §15.2-2288.8, and §15.2-2316.6 through 2316.9.
- (13) A visual impact analysis demonstrating project siting and proposed mitigation, if necessary, so that the solar facility minimizes impact on the visual character of the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall provide accurate, to scale, photographic simulations showing the relationship of the solar facility and its associated amenities and development to its surroundings. The photographic simulations shall show such views of solar structures from locations such as property lines and roadways, as deemed necessary by the County in order to assess the visual impact of the solar facility.
  - (b) The total number of simulations and the perspectives from which they are prepared shall be established by Page County after the pre-application meeting.

#### **§ 125-74 Neighborhood meeting.**

- A. A public meeting shall be held prior to the public hearing with the Planning Commission to give the community an opportunity to hear from the applicant and ask questions regarding the proposed project.
  - (1) The applicant shall inform Page County and adjacent property owners in writing of the date, time and location of the meeting, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.
  - (2) The date, time and location of the meeting shall be advertised in the County's newspaper of record by the applicant, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.
  - (3) The meeting shall be held within the County, at a location open to the general public with adequate parking and seating facilities which may accommodate

persons with disabilities.

- (4) The meeting shall give members of the public the opportunity to review application materials, ask questions of the applicant and provide feedback.
- (5) The applicant shall provide to Page County a summary of any input received from members of the public at the meeting.

### § 125-75 Minimum development standards.

A. Location standards for utility-scale solar facilities. The location standards stated below for utility-scale solar facilities are intended to mitigate the adverse effects of such uses on adjoining property owners, the area, and the County.

- (1) The coverage area of a utility-scale solar facility, including the panels, ancillary infrastructure, and access roads, but not including buffers, setbacks, and stormwater management areas shall be a maximum of 200-450 acres.
- (2) ~~The layout of equipment, improvements, structures, substation, and battery storage, along with the calculated percent of acreage coverage shall be shown on the approved site plan. The percent of acreage coverage for a facility shall not exceed 65% of the total solar facility site (i.e. a site with 200 acres of coverage area must include a minimum of 308 acres of total solar facility site area and a project that totals 250 acres would be allowed 162.5 acres or less of coverage).~~
- (3) Utility-scale solar facility shall be located:
  - (a) ~~At least one (1) mile from a town boundary;~~
  - (b) ~~Outside of the primary or secondary service areas around a town, as delineated in the Comprehensive Plan;~~
  - (c) ~~Not adjacent to residential districts or subdivisions.~~
- (4) No utility-scale solar facility shall be located within two (2) miles of another existing or permitted utility-scale solar facility unless the combined acreage coverage is 200-400 acres or less.
- (5) Utility-scale solar facilities shall be within one (1) mile of electric transmission lines.
- (6) Battery energy storage systems, if required, shall be installed with industry best practices including a Battery Management System (BMS) with 24/7 monitoring and automated fire suppression.

- (7) ~~Utility-scale solar facilities shall minimize and avoid locating on farmland with soils categorized as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. No site shall have more than 50% of soils identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.~~
- (8) ~~To preserve forest resources, Utility-scale solar facilities shall be located outside forested areas as identified and defined in the Comprehensive Plan and by a Virginia State certified forester. In order to protect scenic corridors and view sheds, utility-scale solar facilities shall not be located within a ¼ mile of Federal Highways US 340 and 211, US 340 Business and US 211 Business, except where natural topography shields the entire facility from view.~~
- (9) ~~Utility-scale solar facilities shall not be located within 200 feet of ~~h~~Historic and cultural resources identified as part of a Phase 1a survey shall be mitigated as required by DEQ and the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. as defined and listed in the Comprehensive Plan.~~

- B. A utility-scale solar facility shall be constructed and maintained in substantial compliance with the approved site plan.

The minimum setback of all panels, equipment, substations, switchyards, and other ancillary structures, of the project to property lines of parcels with existing dwellings shall be ~~200-100~~ feet. The minimum setback to all other property lines shall be ~~1~~50 feet. All substations and utility switchyards and any other associated equipment must also comply with these minimum setbacks.

- C. These setbacks do not apply to internal lot lines that are included in the project.
- D. The maximum height of the lowest edge of the photovoltaic panels shall be 10 feet as measured from the finished grade. The maximum height of photovoltaic panels, primary structures, battery storage facilities and accessory buildings shall be 15 feet as measured from the finished grade at the base of the structure to its highest point, including appurtenances. This limit does not apply to equipment associated with the project substation or overhead electric lines and poles. The Board of Supervisors may approve a greater height based upon the demonstration of a significant need where the impacts of increased height are mitigated.
- E. PV solar panels and any associated equipment shall not be located on slopes ~~10-15~~ percent or greater. Grading shall be limited to an approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) permitted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality ~~and no site shall be graded more~~

~~than 50 percent of the site surface area.~~

- F. The facilities, including fencing, shall be significantly screened from the ground-level view of adjacent properties by a buffer zone at least ~~100-25~~ feet wide that shall be landscaped with native and non-invasive plant materials consisting of an evergreen and deciduous mix (as approved by County staff), except to the extent that existing vegetation or natural land forms on the site provide such screening as determined by Page County. Trees shall be a minimum of ~~6-3~~ feet in height at time of planting and in staggered rows of ten (10) foot on center. In the event, existing vegetation or landforms providing the screening are disturbed, new plantings shall be provided which accomplish the same. The effectiveness of screening shall be maintained as the plant materials mature. Unhealthy and dead plants shall be replaced within one (1) year of being provided written notice by the County of the violation. Opaque architectural fencing may be used to supplement other screening methods but shall not be the primary method.
- G. The facilities shall be enclosed by security fencing on the interior of the buffer area (~~not to be seen by other properties~~) not less than ~~nine-six (96)~~ feet in height. The fence ~~shall not~~can be topped with ~~razor~~/barbed wire as required by utility-code. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated fence maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the security fencing shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning.
- H. Ground cover ~~in the buffer zone on the site~~ shall be a combination of native and non-invasive vegetation including pollinator-friendly ~~native and non-invasive~~ vegetation and maintained in accordance with the Landscaping Maintenance Plan in accordance with established performance measures. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated landscaping maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the landscaping shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning. To the extent practical, the landscaping plan should incorporate ~~incorporation of~~ non-invasive plant species that require no pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers or the use of pesticides and fertilizers with low toxicity, persistence, and bioavailability is recommended. The operator shall notify the County prior to application of pesticides and fertilizers. The County reserves the right to request soil and water testing.
- I. Proposed wildlife corridor(s) shall be shown on the site plan submitted to the County if recommended by DEQ. Areas between fencing shall be kept open to allow for the movement of migratory animals and other wildlife.
- J. To the extent practical, ~~t~~The design of support buildings and related structures shall use materials, colors, textures, screening and landscaping that will blend the facilities to the natural setting and surrounding structures.

- K. The owner or operator shall maintain the solar facility in good condition. Such maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, painting, structural integrity of the equipment and structures, as applicable, and maintenance of the buffer areas and landscaping. Site access shall be maintained to a level acceptable to the County. The project owner shall be responsible for the cost of maintaining the solar facility and access roads, and the cost of repairing damage to private roads occurring as a result of construction and operation. The applicant shall be required to submit an incident response plan to Page County.
- L. A utility-scale solar facility shall be designed and maintained in compliance with standards contained in applicable local, state and federal building codes and regulations that were in force at the time of the permit approval.
- M. A utility-scale solar facility shall comply with all permitting and other requirements of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.
- N. The applicant shall provide proof of adequate liability insurance for a solar facility prior to beginning construction and before the issuance of a zoning or building permit from to Page County.
- O. Lighting fixtures as approved by the County shall be the minimum necessary for safety and/or security purposes to protect the night sky by facing downward and to minimize off-site glare.  
No facility shall produce night time glare that would constitute a nuisance to the public. Any exceptions shall be enumerated on the Site Plan and approved by Page County.
- P. No signage of any type may be placed on the facility other than notices, warnings, and identification information required by law or utility-code.
- Q. All facilities must meet or exceed the standards and regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”), State Corporation Commission (“SCC”) or equivalent, and any other agency of the local, state or federal government with the authority to regulate such facilities that are in force at the time of the application.
- R. Any other condition added by the Planning Commission and/or Page County Board of Supervisors as part of a SUP approval.

**§ 125-76 Decommissioning.**

- A. The following requirements shall be met:
  - (1) Solar facilities which have reached the end of the term of the special use permit or their useful life or have not been in active and continuous service

for a period of one (1) year shall be removed at the owner's or operator's expense, except if the project is being re-powered or a force majeure event has or is occurring requiring longer repairs; however, the County may require evidentiary support that a longer repair period is necessary.

- (2) The owner or operator shall notify Page County by certified mail and in person of the proposed date of discontinued operations and plans for removal.
- (3) Decommissioning shall include removal of all solar electric systems, buildings, cabling, electrical components, security barriers, roads, foundations, pilings, and any other associated facilities, so that any agricultural ground upon which the facility and/or system was located is again tillable and suitable for agricultural or forest~~all~~ uses. The site shall be ~~graded and~~ re-seeded to restore it to as natural a pre-development condition as possible, or if desired by the landowner, replanted with pine seedlings to stimulate pre-timber pre-development conditions as indicated on the Preliminary Site Plan. Any exception to site restoration, such as leaving access roads in place or seeding instead of planting seedlings must be requested by the land owner in writing, and this request must be approved by the Board of Supervisors (other conditions might be more beneficial or desirable at that time).
- (4) Land disturbance activities as a result of removal of solar facilities shall adhere to all local, state, and federal requirements.
- (5) Decommissioning shall be performed in compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The Board of Supervisors may approve any appropriate amendments to or modifications of the decommissioning plan.
- (6) Hazardous material from the property shall be disposed of through a viable recycling method and in accordance with federal and state law and not in Page County. A receipt of disposal shall be required.
- (7) The estimated cost of decommissioning shall be guaranteed by the deposit of funds in an amount equal to the estimated cost in an escrow account at a federally insured financial institution approved by the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall deposit the required amount into the approved escrow account before any building permit is issued to allow construction of the solar facility.
  - (b) The escrow account agreement shall prohibit the release of the escrow funds without the written consent of the County. The County shall consent to the release of the escrow funds upon the owner's or occupant's compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The

County may approve the partial release of escrow funds as portions of the approved decommissioning plan are performed.

- (c) The amount of funds required to be deposited in the escrow account shall be the full-net amount of the estimated decommissioning cost ~~without regard to the possibility of~~ after being adjusted to account for salvage value.
  - (d) A Virginia licensed Engineer shall recalculate the estimated cost of decommissioning every five years. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning exceeds the original estimated cost of decommissioning by ten percent (10%), then the owner or occupant shall deposit additional funds into the escrow account to meet the new cost estimate. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning is less than ninety percent (90%) of the original estimated cost of decommissioning, then the County may approve reducing the amount of the escrow account to the recalculated estimate of decommissioning cost.
  - (e) The County may approve alternative methods to secure the availability of funds to pay for the decommissioning of a utility-scale solar facility, such as a performance bond, letter of credit, or other security approved by the County.
- (8) If the owner or operator of the solar facility fails to remove the installation in accordance with the requirements of this permit or within the proposed date of decommissioning, the County may collect the surety and the County or hired third party may enter the property to physically remove the installation.

### **§ 125-77 Coordination of local emergency services.**

Applicants for new solar facilities shall coordinate with the County's emergency services staff to provide ~~annual~~ materials, education and/or training to the departments serving the property with emergency services in how to safely respond to on-site emergencies. These materials and training will be provided as requested by the County's emergency services, but no more than one (1) time per year.

### **§ 125-78 Conditions.**

- A. The Board of Supervisors shall consider conditions addressing a proposed utility-scale solar facility, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - (1) A condition(s) that requires (i) dedication of real property of substantial value or (ii) substantial cash payments for or construction of substantial public improvements, the need for which is not generated solely by the



granting of a special use permit, so long as such conditions are reasonably related to the project.

- (2) A solar facility shall be constructed, maintained, and operated in compliance with:
  - (a) The development standards under this article.
  - (b) The approved site plan.
  - (c) Any other conditions imposed pursuant to a Special Use Permit.
- (3) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Erosion and Sediment Control.
- (4) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Stormwater Management.
- (5) The applicant shall obtain county- approved qualified third parties to conduct all inspections as required by the Virginia Erosion & Sediment Control Regulations (9VAC25-840-60) and the Virginia Stormwater Management Program Regulations (9VAC25-870-114). The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs associated with these inspections. After completion of land-disturbing activities and permanent control measures are operable, inspections shall revert back to the County (Virginia Stormwater Management Program Authority). This third party must hold a certificate of competence in the area of Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia State Water Control Board. All inspection reports must be submitted to the County's program administrator within 24 hours of the inspection via email.
- (6) It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the decommissioning plan and they shall be responsible for any fees associated with the expense of the plan.
- (7) If the solar facility does not receive a building permit within ~~twenty-four~~thirty-six (24~~36~~) months of approval of the Special Use Permit, the Permit shall be terminated.
- (8) ~~If the solar facility is declared to be unsafe by Page County, the facility must be in compliance within fourteen (14) days or the Special Use Permit shall be terminated, and system removed from the property.~~
- (9) The owner and operator shall give the County written notice of any change in ownership, operator, or Power Purchase Agreement within thirty (30) days.
- (10) Any third-party assessment shall be paid for by the applicant but the

third-party assessor must be approved by Page County.

**§ 125-79 - 125-85 Reserved**

## ARTICLE II

### § 125-4 Definitions. *(add these definitions)*

***Acreage coverage*** means the total acres covered by blocks of photovoltaic panels including spaces between panels, buildings, inverters, substation, battery storage, ancillary equipment, and fencing around these items but excluding wildlife corridors, mandated setbacks, wetlands, and other avoided natural or cultural features outside of the security fencing on the project site.

***Applicant*** means the person or entity who submits an application to the locality for a permit under this ordinance.

***Battery energy storage system*** means a physical container or structure providing secondary containment to battery cells that is equipped with cooling, ventilation, fire suppression, and a battery management system.

***Battery management system*** means an electronic regulator that manages a battery energy storage system by monitoring individual battery module voltages and temperatures, container temperature and humidity, off-gassing of combustible gas, fire ground fault and DC surge, and door access and providing controls to prevent operation outside safe limits.

***Brownfield*** means former industrial or commercial sites typically containing low levels of environmental pollution such as hazardous waste or industrial byproducts.

***Decommissioning plan*** means a plan to disconnect, remove and properly dispose of equipment, facilities, or devices.

***Integrated PV*** means photovoltaics incorporated into building materials, such as shingles.

***Operator*** means the person responsible for the overall operation and management of a facility.

***Owner*** means the person or entity who owns all or a portion of a facility.

***Photovoltaic or "PV"*** means materials and devices that absorb sunlight and convert it directly into electricity.

***Rated capacity*** means the maximum capacity of a solar facility based on the sum total of each photovoltaic system's nameplate capacity.

***Site plan*** means a plan prepared by a professional engineer or land surveyor licensed by the State of Virginia showing all proposed improvements to the site. The site plan shall include all covenants, grants, or easements and other conditions relating to use, location, and bulk of buildings, density of development, open space, public facilities, and such other information as is required in applicable sections of this ordinance such as with conditional use, rezoning, or variance applications.

***Site, solar facility*** means the entire area, including acreage coverage, setbacks, access roads, wildlife corridors, wetlands, and other natural features of a facility that generates electricity from sunlight.

***Solar facility, small-scale*** means a facility that either: (a) generates less than 20 kilowatts (kW) electricity

from sunlight, consisting of one or more Photovoltaic (PV) systems and other appurtenant structures and facilities within the boundaries of the site; or (b) utilizes sunlight as an energy source to heat or cool buildings, heat or cool water, or produce electrical or mechanical power by means of any combination of collecting, transferring, or converting solar-generated energy; and (c) meets at least one of the following criteria: has a disturbance zone equal to or less than an acre; is mounted on or over a building, parking lot, or other previously disturbed area; or utilizes integrated PV only (excluding passive solar homes).

*Solar facility, medium-scale* means a facility that generates electricity from sunlight primarily to reduce onsite consumption of utility power for agricultural, commercial and industrial applications. Sites are between one to three acres with a maximum capacity of 999 kW.

*Solar facility, utility-scale* means a facility that generates electricity from sunlight which will be used to provide electricity to a utility provider. Sites are generally over two acres and have a capacity in excess of one megawatt (1 MW).

## ARTICLE X

### SOLAR FACILITIES

#### § 125-70 Statement of intent.

The purpose of this section is to establish requirements for construction, operation, and decommissioning of solar facilities; to provide standards for the placement, design, construction, monitoring, modification, and removal of solar facilities; address public safety, minimize impacts on scenic, natural, and historic resources; and provide adequate financial assurance for decommissioning.

#### § 125-71 Applicability.

This article shall apply to all solar facilities constructed after the effective date of this article, including any physical modifications to any existing solar facilities that materially alter the type, configuration, or size of such facilities or other equipment.

#### § 125-72 Zoning districts.

- A. Small-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right in all zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- B. Medium-scale solar facilities may be installed by-right roof-mounted or ground-mounted in agricultural, commercial, and industrial zoning districts to provide electricity to individual structures; provided a site plan (as applicable) has been submitted to Page County for review and approval; all Federal, State and Local regulations have been followed; and the system is located upon the property or structure being served.
- C. Any commercial or industrial solar facility installed upon a roof top shall submit a site plan and an engineering study to Page County for review.
- D. Utility-scale solar facilities shall be permitted by Special Use Permit (SUP) only, and only in the A-1 zoning district.

**§ 125-73 Small-scale and medium-scale requirements and standards.**

- A. The design and installation of all solar energy facilities shall conform to applicable industry standards, including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), or other similar certifying organizations and shall comply with all fire and safety requirements.
- B. Small and medium-scale energy facilities shall comply with all applicable federal, state and county regulations, ordinances and codes.
- C. A medium-scale solar facility shall submit a site plan to the zoning administrator and any medium-scale facility installed upon a roof top shall also submit an engineering study to the building official's office for review.
- D. All small or medium-scale solar energy facilities shall comply with the following performance standards:
  - (1) The ground mounted solar energy facility shall setback a minimum of 50 feet when the adjacent parcel has an existing residence, all other ground mounted solar energy facilities shall setback as required by the zoning district and no small or medium scale facility shall be located in the front of the primary structure.
  - (2) If the solar energy facility is ground-mounted or not flush-mounted on a principal or accessory building, the panel height and any accessory structures shall not exceed 15 feet.
  - (3) The lowest surface of any ground mounted panel shall be a maximum of ten (10) feet above the finished grade.
  - (4) All wiring not on the solar arrays shall be underground except where necessary to connect to the public utility.
  - (5) All broken or waste solar modules shall be removed from the site within 60 days of being taken out of service. Panels or pieces thereof from the property shall be disposed of outside of Page County and through a viable recycling method and in accordance with federal and state law.
- E. Medium-scale solar energy facilities when adjacent to a parcel with an existing residence shall be screened from the ground-level view of adjacent properties by a buffer zone at least 25 feet wide that shall be landscaped with native and non-invasive plant materials, except to the extent that existing vegetation or natural land forms on the site provide such screening as determined by Page County. Trees shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height at time of planting and in staggered rows of ten (10) foot on center. In the event, existing vegetation or landforms providing the screening are disturbed, new plantings shall be provided which accomplish the same. The effectiveness of screening shall be maintained as the plant materials mature. Unhealthy and dead plants shall be replaced within one (1) year of being provided written notice by the County of the violation. Opaque architectural fencing may be used to supplement other screening methods but shall not be the primary method.
- F. Removal of abandoned medium-scale solar generating equipment.
  - (1) A bond, whose amount shall be approved by the zoning administrator, shall be required to assure the removal of an abandoned medium-scale solar energy facility.

- (2) Any medium-scale solar energy facility that has not operated for a period of 12 months shall be considered unused and abandoned. The owner of an unused facility shall remove the entire system within six months of receipt of notice from the zoning administrator notifying the owner of the equipment removal requirement. Removal includes removing any underground structures or supports and electrical transmission wire and disposing in accordance with local, state, and federal codes and regulations.

**§ 125-74 Applications and procedures.**

- A. In addition to other requirements of the Page County Zoning Ordinance and Special Use Permit requirements, applications for a utility-scale solar facility shall include the following information:
- (1) Pre-application meeting. Schedule a pre-application meeting with Page County to discuss the location, scale, and nature of the proposed use and what will be expected during the process.
  - (2) Comprehensive Plan Review. A 2232 review by the County is required by the *Code of Virginia* (§15.2-2232) for utility-scale solar facilities. This Code provision provides for a review by the Planning Commission of public utility facility proposals to determine if their general or approximate location, character and extent are substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan or part thereof.
  - (3) Special Use Permit (SUP) application. A complete SUP application including:
    - (a) Documents demonstrating the ownership of the subject parcel(s).
    - (b) Proof that the applicant has authorization to act upon the owner's behalf.
    - (c) A letter of commitment from the utility company who will interconnect to the facility and a statement of line capacity before and after interconnection.
    - (d) List of all adjacent property owners, their tax map numbers, and addresses.
    - (e) A description of the current use and physical characteristics of the subject parcels.
    - (f) A description of the existing uses of nearby properties.
    - (g) A narrative identifying the applicant, owner and operator, and describing the proposed solar facility project, including an overview of the project and its location, approximate rated capacity of the solar facility project, the approximate number of panels, representative types, expected footprint of solar equipment to be constructed, and type and location of interconnection to electrical grid.
    - (h) Aerial imagery which shows the proposed location of the solar facility, fenced area, driveways, and interconnection to electrical grid with the closest distance to all adjacent property lines and dwellings along with main points of ingress/egress.
    - (i) Payment of the application fee and any additional review costs, advertising, or other required staff time.
    - (j) The applicant shall consult with the Department of Wildlife Resources and provide a written recommendation regarding wildlife corridors.
  - (4) Site plan. A site plan prepared by a Virginia licensed engineer, that shall include the following:
    - (a) A description of the subject parcels.
    - (b) Property lines and setback lines. A land survey by a Virginia licensed surveyor is required.

- (c) Existing and proposed buildings and structures; including preliminary locations of the proposed solar panels and related equipment; the location of proposed fencing, driveways, internal roads, and structures; and the location of points of ingress/egress.
  - (d) The location and nature of proposed buffers and screening elements, including vegetative and constructed buffers.
  - (e) A grading plan.
  - (f) A landscaping maintenance plan.
  - (g) Existing and proposed access roads, drives, turnout locations, and parking.
  - (h) Location of substations, electrical cabling from the solar facility systems to the substations, ancillary equipment, buildings, and structures including those within any applicable setback.
  - (i) Fencing or other methods of ensuring public safety.
  - (j) Twenty sets (11"× 17" or larger), one reduced copy (8½"× 11") and one electronic copy of the site plan, including elevations and landscape plans as required.
  - (k) Provide an inventory of all solar facilities – existing or proposed – within a four (4) mile radius.
  - (l) Additional information may be required as determined by Page County such as a scaled elevation view of the property and other supporting drawings, photographs of the proposed site, photo or other realistic simulations or modeling of the proposed project from potentially sensitive locations as deemed necessary by Page County to assess the visual impact of the project, landscaping and screening plan, coverage map, and additional information that may be necessary for a technical review of the proposal.
- (5) Site plan compliance. The facility shall be constructed and operated in substantial compliance with the approved Site Plan, with allowances for changes required by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Permit by Rule (PBR) process.
- (6) Decommissioning plan. A detailed decommissioning plan, certified by an engineer, which shall include the following:
- (a) The anticipated life of the project;
  - (b) The estimated decommissioning cost in current dollars;
  - (c) How the estimate was determined;
  - (d) The method of ensuring that funds will be available for decommissioning and removal;
  - (e) The method that the estimated decommissioning cost will be kept current; and
  - (f) The manner in which the project will be decommissioned and the site restored.

The applicant shall provide a cost estimate for the decommissioning of the facility that shall be prepared by a Virginia licensed professional engineer or contractor who has expertise in the removal of solar facilities. The decommissioning cost estimate shall explicitly detail the cost and shall include a mechanism for calculating increased removal costs due to inflation and without any reduction for salvage value. This cost estimate shall be recalculated every five (5) years and the surety shall be updated accordingly.



- (7) A proposed method of providing appropriate escrow, surety or security for grounds maintenance, fencing, landscaping, and the cost of the decommissioning plan.
- (8) Traffic study submitted with application modeling the construction and decommissioning processes. The Virginia Department Of Transportation will be responsible for reviewing the study.
- (9) An estimated construction schedule.
- (10) Wetlands, waterways, and floodplains shall be inventoried, delineated, and avoided.
- (11) Environmental inventory and impact statement regarding any site and viewshed impacts, including direct and indirect impacts to national and state forests, national or state parks, wildlife management areas, conservation easements, recreational areas, or any known historic or cultural resources within three (3) miles of the proposed project.
- (12) Community impact assessment by a County approved third party, including but not limited to, a comprehensive economic impact, agricultural and tourism revenue, employment and taxation, shall be required and shall assess the various project tax and revenue options, including but not limited to, Code of Virginia §58.1-2636, §58.1-3660, §15.2-2288.8, and §15.2-2316.6 through 2316.9.
- (13) A visual impact analysis demonstrating project siting and proposed mitigation, if necessary, so that the solar facility minimizes impact on the visual character of the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall provide accurate, to scale, photographic simulations showing the relationship of the solar facility and its associated amenities and development to its surroundings. The photographic simulations shall show such views of solar structures from locations such as property lines and roadways, as deemed necessary by the County in order to assess the visual impact of the solar facility.
  - (b) The total number of simulations and the perspectives from which they are prepared shall be established by Page County after the pre-application meeting.

**§ 125-75 Neighborhood meeting.**

- A. A public meeting shall be held prior to the public hearing with the Planning Commission to give the community an opportunity to hear from the applicant and ask questions regarding the proposed project.
  - (1) The applicant shall inform Page County and adjacent property owners in writing of the date, time and location of the meeting, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.
  - (2) The date, time and location of the meeting shall be advertised in the County's newspaper of record by the applicant, at least seven but no more than 14 days, in advance of the meeting date.
  - (3) The meeting shall be held within the County, at a location open to the general public with adequate parking and seating facilities which may accommodate persons with disabilities.
  - (4) The meeting shall give members of the public the opportunity to review application materials, ask questions of the applicant and provide feedback.

- (5) The applicant shall provide to Page County a summary of any input received from members of the public at the meeting.

**§ 125-76 Minimum development standards.**

- A. The design and installation of solar energy facilities shall conform to applicable industry standards, including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), or other similar certifying organizations and shall comply with all fire and safety requirements.
- B. Location standards for utility-scale solar facilities. The location standards stated below for utility-scale solar facilities are intended to mitigate the adverse effects of such uses on adjoining property owners, the area, and the County.
- (1) The acreage coverage of a utility-scale solar facility shall be a maximum of 200 acres.
  - (2) The layout of equipment, improvements, structures, substation, and battery storage, along with the calculated percent of acreage coverage shall be shown on the approved site plan. The percent of acreage coverage for a facility shall not exceed 65% of the total solar facility site (i.e. a site with 200 acres of coverage area must include a minimum of 308 acres of total solar facility site area and a project that totals 250 acres would be allowed 162.5 acres or less of coverage).
  - (3) Utility-scale solar facility shall be located:
    - (a) At least one (1) mile from a town boundary;
    - (b) Outside of the primary or secondary service areas around a town, as delineated in the Comprehensive Plan;
    - (c) Not adjacent to residential districts or subdivisions.
  - (4) No utility-scale solar facility shall be located within two (2) miles of another existing or permitted utility-scale solar facility unless the combined acreage coverage is 200 acres or less.
  - (5) Utility-scale solar facilities shall be within one (1) mile of electric transmission lines.
  - (6) Battery energy storage systems, if required, shall be installed with industry best practices including a Battery Management System (BMS) with 24/7 monitoring and automated fire suppression.
  - (7) Utility-scale solar facilities shall minimize and avoid locating on farmland with soils categorized as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. No site shall have more than 50% of soils identified as Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance.
  - (8) To preserve forest resources, Utility-scale solar facilities shall be located outside forested areas as identified and defined in the Comprehensive Plan and by a Virginia State certified forester. In order to protect scenic corridors and view sheds, utility-scale solar facilities shall not be located within a ¼ mile of Federal Highways US 340 and 211, US 340 Business and US 211 Business, except where natural topography shields the entire facility from view.
  - (9) Utility-scale solar facilities shall not be located within 200 feet of historic and cultural resources as defined and listed in the Comprehensive Plan.

- C. A utility-scale solar facility shall be constructed and maintained in substantial compliance with the approved site plan.
- D. The minimum setback of all panels, equipment, substations, switchyards, and other ancillary structures, of the project to the edge of Shenandoah River, Hawksbill Creek, Pass Run Stream, and property lines of parcels with existing dwellings shall be 200 feet. The minimum setback to all other property lines shall be 150 feet. All substations and utility switchyards and any other associated equipment must also comply with these minimum setbacks. These setbacks do not apply to internal lot lines that are included in the project.
- E. The maximum height of the lowest edge of the photovoltaic panels shall be 10 feet as measured from the finished grade. The maximum height of photovoltaic panels, primary structures, battery storage facilities and accessory buildings shall be 15 feet as measured from the finished grade at the base of the structure to its highest point, including appurtenances. The Board of Supervisors may approve a greater height based upon the demonstration of a significant need where the impacts of increased height are mitigated.
- F. PV solar panels and any associated equipment shall not be located on slopes 10 percent or greater and no site shall be graded more than 50 percent of the site surface area.
- G. The facilities, including fencing, shall be significantly screened from the ground-level view of adjacent properties by a buffer zone at least 100 feet wide that shall be landscaped with native and non-invasive plant materials consisting of an evergreen and deciduous mix (as approved by County staff), except to the extent that existing vegetation or natural land forms on the site provide such screening as determined by Page County. Trees shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height at time of planting and in staggered rows of ten (10) foot on center. In the event, existing vegetation or landforms providing the screening are disturbed, new plantings shall be provided which accomplish the same. The effectiveness of screening shall be maintained as the plant materials mature. Unhealthy and dead plants shall be replaced within one (1) year of being provided written notice by the County of the violation. Opaque architectural fencing may be used to supplement other screening methods but shall not be the primary method.
- H. The facilities shall be enclosed by security fencing on the interior of the buffer area (not to be seen by other properties) not less than nine (9) feet in height. The fence shall not be topped with razor/barbed wire. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated fence maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the security fencing shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning.
- I. Ground cover on the site shall be pollinator-friendly native and non-invasive vegetation and maintained in accordance with the Landscaping Maintenance Plan in accordance with established performance measures. A performance bond reflecting the costs of anticipated landscaping maintenance shall be posted and maintained. Failure to maintain the landscaping shall result in revocation of the SUP and the facility's decommissioning. Incorporation of non-invasive plant species that require no pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers or the use of pesticides and fertilizers with low toxicity, persistence, and bioavailability is recommended. The operator shall notify the County prior to application of pesticides and fertilizers. The County reserves the right to request soil and water testing.
- J. The facility shall provide at least one access corridor for wildlife to navigate through the Solar Facility per 50 acres of acreage coverage. Proposed wildlife corridor(s) shall be shown on the site plan submitted to the County and shall be a minimum of 25 feet in width. Areas between fencing shall be kept open to allow for the movement of migratory animals and other wildlife.
- K. The design of support buildings and related structures shall use materials, colors, textures, screening

and landscaping that will blend the facilities to the natural setting and surrounding structures.

- L. The owner or operator shall maintain the solar facility in good condition. Such maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, painting, structural integrity of the equipment and structures, as applicable, and maintenance of the buffer areas and landscaping. Site access shall be maintained to a level acceptable to the County. The project owner shall be responsible for the cost of maintaining the solar facility and access roads, and the cost of repairing damage to private roads occurring as a result of construction and operation. The applicant shall be required to submit an incident response plan to Page County.
- M. A utility-scale solar facility shall be designed and maintained in compliance with standards contained in applicable local, state and federal building codes and regulations that were in force at the time of the permit approval.
- N. A utility-scale solar facility shall comply with all permitting and other requirements of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.
- O. The applicant shall provide proof of adequate liability insurance for a solar facility prior to beginning construction and before the issuance of a zoning or building permit from Page County.
- P. Lighting fixtures as approved by the County shall be the minimum necessary for safety and/or security purposes to protect the night sky by facing downward and to minimize off-site glare. No facility shall produce glare that would constitute a nuisance to the public. Any exceptions shall be enumerated on the Site Plan and approved by Page County.
- Q. No signage of any type may be placed on the facility other than notices, warnings, and identification information required by law.
- R. All facilities must meet or exceed the standards and regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”), State Corporation Commission (“SCC”) or equivalent, and any other agency of the local, state or federal government with the authority to regulate such facilities that are in force at the time of the application.
- S. Any other condition added by the Planning Commission and/or Page County Board of Supervisors as part of a SUP approval.

**§ 125-77 Decommissioning.**

A. The following requirements shall be met:

- (1) Solar facilities which have reached the end of the term of the special use permit or their useful life or have not been in active and continuous service for a period of one (1) year shall be removed at the owner's or operator's expense, except if the project is being re-powered or a force majeure event has or is occurring requiring longer repairs; however, the County may require evidentiary support that a longer repair period is necessary.
- (2) The owner or operator shall notify Page County by certified mail and in person of the proposed date of discontinued operations and plans for removal.
- (3) Decommissioning shall include removal of all solar electric systems, buildings, cabling, electrical components, security barriers, roads, foundations, pilings, and any other associated facilities, so that any agricultural ground upon which the facility and/or system was located is again tillable and suitable for agricultural or forestial uses. The site shall be graded and re-seeded to restore it to as natural a pre-development condition as possible or replanted with pine seedlings to stimulate pre-timber pre-development conditions as indicated on the Preliminary Site Plan. Any exception to site restoration, such as leaving access roads in place or seeding instead of planting seedlings must be requested by the land owner in writing, and this request must be approved by the Board of Supervisors (other conditions might be more beneficial or desirable at that time).
- (4) Land disturbance activities as a result of removal of solar facilities shall adhere to all local, state, and federal requirements.
- (5) Decommissioning shall be performed in compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The Board of Supervisors may approve any appropriate amendments to or modifications of the decommissioning plan.
- (6) Hazardous material, panels or pieces thereof from the property shall be disposed of through a viable recycling method and in accordance with federal and state law and not in Page County. A receipt of disposal shall be required.
- (7) The estimated cost of decommissioning shall be guaranteed by the deposit of funds in an amount equal to the estimated cost in an escrow account at a federally insured financial institution approved by the County.
  - (a) The applicant shall deposit the required amount into the approved escrow account before any building permit is issued to allow construction of the solar facility.
  - (b) The escrow account agreement shall prohibit the release of the escrow funds without the written consent of the County. The County shall consent to the release of the escrow funds upon the owner's or occupant's compliance with the approved decommissioning plan. The County may approve the partial release of escrow funds as portions of the approved decommissioning plan are performed.
  - (c) The amount of funds required to be deposited in the escrow account shall be the full amount of the estimated decommissioning cost without regard to the possibility of salvage value.

- (d) A Virginia licensed Engineer shall recalculate the estimated cost of decommissioning every five years. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning exceeds the original estimated cost of decommissioning by ten percent (10%), then the owner or occupant shall deposit additional funds into the escrow account to meet the new cost estimate. If the recalculated estimated cost of decommissioning is less than ninety percent (90%) of the original estimated cost of decommissioning, then the County may approve reducing the amount of the escrow account to the recalculated estimate of decommissioning cost.
  - (e) The County may approve alternative methods to secure the availability of funds to pay for the decommissioning of a utility-scale solar facility, such as a performance bond, letter of credit, or other security approved by the County.
- (8) If the owner or operator of the solar facility fails to remove the installation in accordance with the requirements of this permit or within the proposed date of decommissioning, the County may collect the surety and the County or hired third party may enter the property to physically remove the installation.

**§ 125-78 Coordination of local emergency services.**

Applicants for new solar facilities shall coordinate with the County's emergency services staff to provide annual materials, education and/or training to the departments serving the property with emergency services in how to safely respond to on-site emergencies.

**§ 125-79 Conditions.**

- A. The Board of Supervisors shall consider conditions addressing a proposed utility-scale solar facility, including, but not limited to, the following:
- (1) A condition(s) that requires (i) dedication of real property of substantial value or (ii) substantial cash payments for or construction of substantial public improvements, the need for which is not generated solely by the granting of a special use permit, so long as such conditions are reasonably related to the project.
  - (2) A solar facility shall be constructed, maintained, and operated in compliance with:
    - (a) The development standards under this article.
    - (b) The approved site plan.
    - (c) Any other conditions imposed pursuant to a Special Use Permit.
  - (3) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Erosion and Sediment Control.
  - (4) The Special Use Permit shall require the applicant to adhere to all local, state and federal requirements regarding Stormwater Management.

- (5) The applicant shall obtain county-approved qualified third parties to conduct all inspections as required by the Virginia Erosion & Sediment Control Regulations (9VAC25-840-60) and the Virginia Stormwater Management Program Regulations (9VAC25-870-114). The applicant shall be responsible for any and all costs associated with these inspections. After completion of land-disturbing activities and permanent control measures are operable, inspections shall revert back to the County (Virginia Stormwater Management Program Authority). This third party must hold a certificate of competence in the area of Erosion & Sediment Control and Stormwater Management issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia State Water Control Board. All inspection reports must be submitted to the County's program administrator within 24 hours of the inspection via email.
- (6) It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the decommissioning plan and they shall be responsible for any fees associated with the expense of the plan.
- (7) If the solar facility does not receive a building permit within twenty-four 24 months of approval of the Special Use Permit, the Permit shall be terminated.
- (8) If the solar facility is declared to be unsafe by Page County, the facility must be in compliance within fourteen (14) days or the Special Use Permit shall be terminated, and system removed from the property.
- (9) The owner and operator shall give the County written notice of any change in ownership, operator, or Power Purchase Agreement within thirty (30) days.
- (10) Any third-party assessment shall be paid for by the applicant but the third-party assessor must be approved by Page County.

§ 125-80 – 125-85      **Reserved**