

# SOLAR ARRAY SITING IN CAROLINE COUNTY, MD

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## Caroline County, MD Land Use

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Agricultural	154,785.06	77.46%
Commercial	2,562.01	1.28%
Exempt	11,187.46	5.6%
Industrial	507.64	0.25%
Residential	27,372.87	13.7%
Unknown	3,416.98	1.71%

Land Use

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Exempt
- Industrial
- Residential
- Unknown

Municipal  
Roads  
Water  
Tidal Wetland

2 Miles

Caroline County  
Department of Planning, Codes, and Engineering  
December, 2008



Nick Chamberlain  
Caroline County Department of Planning,  
Codes, and Engineering

# LAND USE IN CAROLINE COUNTY

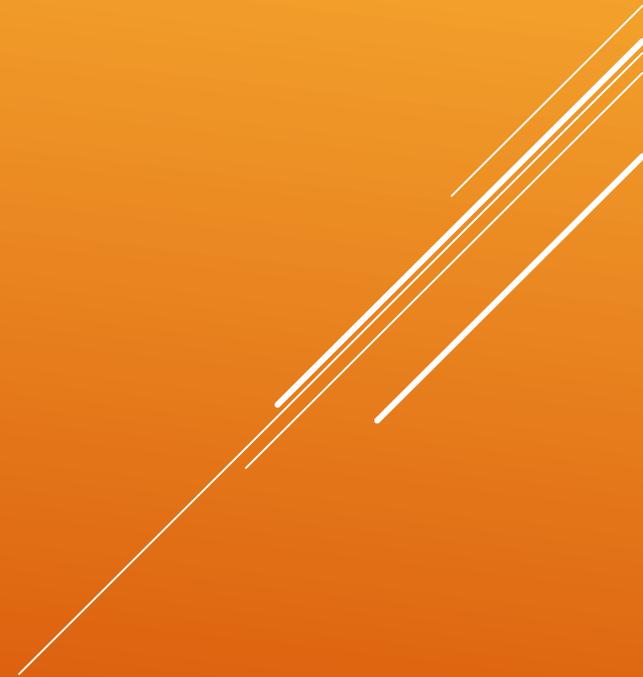
- Primarily Agricultural, 77.46%
- 326 Square Miles
- Population ~32,500
- 10 Incorporated Municipalities
- 10 Zoning Districts

# WAIT...WHAT'S GOING ON WITH ALL THESE SOLAR PROJECTS???

- Rumors of large scale solar coming to Caroline County
  - Concern over the Aesthetics of the Rte. 404/50 Project
  - What about farming? Property Rights? Property Tax?
  - Moratorium on Commercial Solar Array projects adopted May, 2017
- 
- A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted diagonally from the bottom right towards the top right, set against the orange background.

- ▶ Property Rights
- ▶ Size and Scale of Solar Arrays
- ▶ Agricultural Preservation
- ▶ Protecting the Scenic Views in Caroline County
- ▶ Property Tax
- ▶ Decommissioning

## CONCERNS OF ELECTED OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS



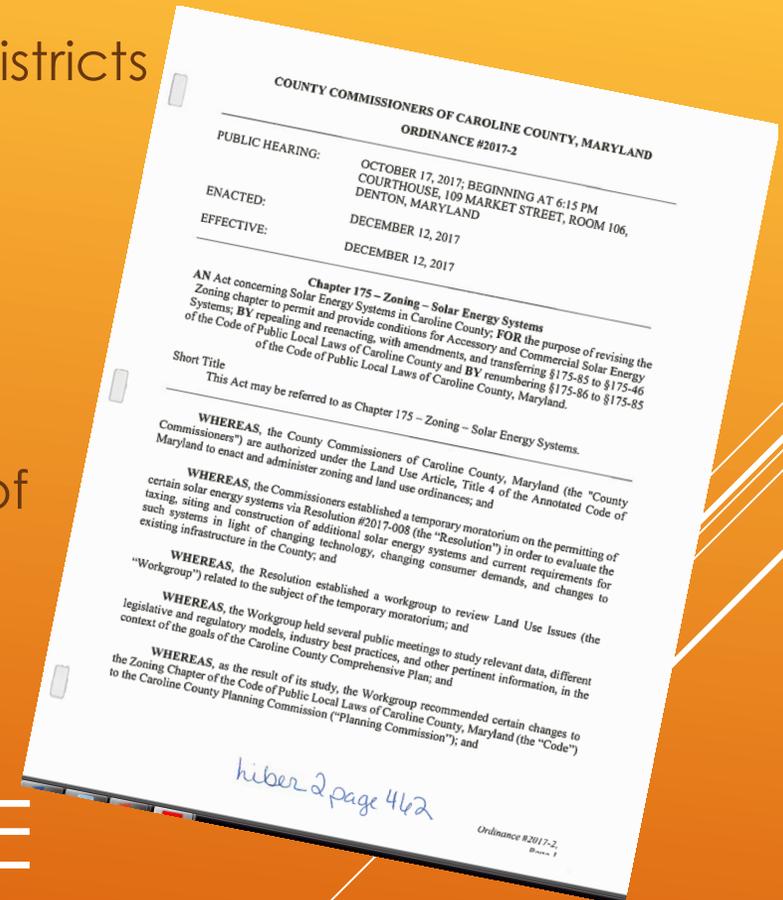
- ▶ Solar Workgroup #1 – Address Land Use
  - ▶ Planning Commission
  - ▶ Caroline County Farm Bureau
  - ▶ Land Conservation – Eastern Shore Land Conservancy
  - ▶ Solar Industry – Open Road Renewables
  - ▶ Utility Company – Choptank Electric
  - ▶ Landowner
- ▶ Solar Workgroup #2 – Internal Workgroup focused on Taxation
  - ▶ County Administrator
  - ▶ County Attorney
  - ▶ County Comptroller
  - ▶ County Chief of Staff
  - ▶ State Department of Assessment & Taxation for Caroline County

2 SOLAR WORKGROUPS FORMED

- ▶ What Authority does the County really have?
- ▶ Property Rights
- ▶ Agricultural Preservation
- ▶ Decommissioning
- ▶ Size and Scale of Solar Projects
  - ▶ Private Solar vs. Commercial Solar

## KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY LAND USE WORKGROUP

- ▶ The Commercial Solar Array Cap – 2000 Acres, ~1-2% Agricultural land in the County)
- ▶ Permitted in the R-Rural, Commercial, & Industrial Zoning Districts
- ▶ Personal Use Solar Array Exempt from Cap
- ▶ Screening must be provided
- ▶ 200' Setback from residential properties
- ▶ Decommissioning Plan & Safeguards must be in place
- ▶ Approvals by both the Planning Commission & The Board of Zoning Appeals Required



# KEY PIECES OF A NEW ORDINANCE

- ▶ Smaller scale projects have moved forward (~10-20 Acres)
- ▶ How do we count the 2000 Acres?
- ▶ 2 Projects will use the bulk of the commercial solar array cap (~1500-1800 acres)
- ▶ Forest Conservation Issues
- ▶ Lingering Citizen Concerns (e.g. property values & aesthetics)

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

QUESTIONS?

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