



# Community Solar Zoning Text Amendment

## Proposed Concepts

- ⚙ **Definition:** Definition given in Maryland Public Utilities Code § 7-306.2 as of July 1, 2020.
- ⚙ **Location:**
  - Principal permitted in “A” Agricultural District.
  - Remaining portions 5 acres to <20 acres are eligible. No variance.
  - Existing remaining portions at date of ordinance. Cannot create non-residential lot/tract for purpose of solar development.
- ⚙ **Land:**
  - Requires permanent easement on entire parcel to be granted to County upon abandonment & decommissioning.
    - Extinguishes any additional residential and non-agricultural development.
    - Agreement recorded with restrictions until easement is recorded.
  - No topsoil or productive agricultural land to be removed from the site for installation of the facility. All soils retained to be reused in landscaping/ vegetative plan.
- ⚙ **Site Plan:** Requires Planning & Zoning Commission review and approval.
- ⚙ **Environmental Resources:**
  - No clearing of forested areas.
  - Not located within or impede stream buffer, floodplain, or wetland. No variance.
- ⚙ **Ag Co-Location:** Requires...
  - Maryland’s [Solar Generation Facilities Pollinator-Friendly Designation](#), &/or
  - Planted, managed, and maintained for grazing of farm animals, apiaries, or crops.
  - Property owner responsible to control and suppress noxious weeds and invasive plants on site and prevent spread to surrounding farmland.
- ⚙ **Landscaped Buffer:**
  - Screened from street and/or contiguous properties.
  - Class A detailed landscaping plan, consistent with the Carroll County Landscape Manual, to be submitted with the site plan. Should include type of plantings, location, and spacing to result in year-round screening from time of installation.
  - Landscaping requirements for solar facilities to be added to Landscape Manual.
  - Landscaping should be hedgerow, native vegetation, and/or earth berm (using existing topography).
  - Can be located within setback.



☀ **Installation:** Ground-mounted only.

☀ **Bulk & Height Requirements:**

- Setback 35 feet from centerline and adjoining property lines.
- Maximum height 15 feet above existing grade.
- No variance.

☀ **Project Infrastructure and Utility Lines:**

- Must be underground on site, except main service connection at utility company ROW and any new interconnection equipment, including poles.
- Associated infrastructure placed to avoid visual impacts to public ROW and adjoining properties.

☀ **Abandonment & Decommissioning:** Decommissioning plan required.

- Ensure owner or operator properly removes equipment / facilities at end of project life or after useful life.
- Decommission solar panels if not in use for 180 consecutive days.
- Plan to include provisions for:
  - Removal of all structures, foundations, and electrical transmission components,
  - Restoration of soil and vegetation, and
  - Plan ensuring financial resources will be available to fully decommission the site.
- Owner or operator to enter into public works agreement (PWA) with County to ensure proper decommissioning.
  - To include satisfactory bond or guaranty to County Commissioners to ensure compliance with this chapter and provision of related public improvements, adequate landscaping, screening, site access, or other treatment required
  - PWA prepared by County Attorney.
  - Bond or guaranty to be satisfactory to County Commissioners