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Solar farm proposal withdrawn in New Kent

By David Macaulay Tidewater Review • Nov 22, 2022 at 11:00 am







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Located in Barhamsville, the Amazon Solar farm sits on 260 acres of land and produces 20 megawatts of energy every hour. (Em Holter)

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NEW KENT — The withdrawal of a proposal by an Arlington-based company to build a 20-megawatt solar farm in the Providence Forge area represents the latest blow to the alternative energy in New Kent County.

A public hearing for a special use permit for the solar farm proposal by Caden Energix New Kent, LLC was on the agenda for the Nov.16 Board of Supervisors meeting but the proposal was withdrawn. The solar farm had received a favorable recommendation from the planning commission on June 21.

Representatives from Energix Renewables outlined the project at the board's July 27 work session ahead of submitting a conditional use permit. Caden Energix is the U.S. subsidiary of Israel-based Energix.

New Kent is already home to Barhamsville's Amazon Solar Farm, but the board has turned against solar projects in recent months, rejecting proposals for solar facilities in Barhamsville and Quinton despite favorable recommendations from the planning commission.

In June, the board rejected plans by Borrego Solar Systems, Inc. for a 3-megawatt solar farm on 23 acres of land close to Polish Town Road near Henrico Jail East and Wahrani Park. Supervisor John Lockwood thought the facility would come into conflict with Wahrani Park.

Chaberton Solar Vinson, LLC. proposed two solar array facilities — a 3-megawatt and a 2-megawatt project — on 28 acres in northwestern New Kent County close to the Hanover County line. The board rejected the proposals.

Energix previously detailed how the solar farm operator would give money to the county via a siting agreement. The siting agreement proposed a financial contribution of \$1.53 million over 35 years, according to county documents.

People living in communities around the site received fliers from an entity calle the Virginia Accountability Project from a P.O. box in Washington. The flier

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claimed the average decline in value for residential properties close to a 20-megawatt solar farm is \$26,252.

The flier warned of the possibility of solar panels on neighboring sites creating an unsightly "solar sprawl" in bucolic New Kent."

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