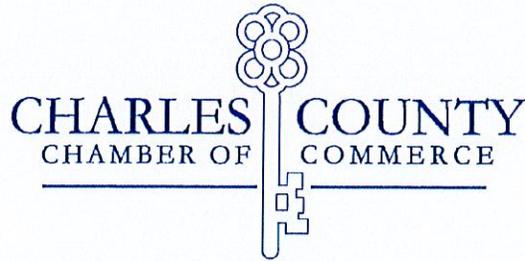


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February 25, 2019

Ben Grumbles, Secretary  
Maryland Department of the Environment  
1800 Washington Blvd.  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

***Re: MD Solar 1, LLC; Wetlands Permit; 4850 Shugart Valley Place, La Plata, Maryland***

Dear Secretary Grumbles:

On behalf of the Charles County Chamber of Commerce, I am pleased to express our support for the MD Solar 1 Solar Power Project proposed for Shugart Valley Place, La Plata, Maryland. The Shugart Solar Power Project is an innovative renewable energy project that demonstrates how business and the environment can coexist in a mutually beneficial manner. The Chamber recommends MDE approve the issuance of the wetlands permits for this project.

In making its assessment, the Chamber reviewed the needs of the Charles County community as set forth in the Charles County Comprehensive Plan, the benefits to the Charles County community, the strict regulatory controls and reviews associated with this type of project, the conditions imposed upon the project by both the State and Charles County, the steps this project has taken to offset and mitigate any impacts and the environmentally sensitive design of the project.

The Chamber also reviewed the November 2018 Report commissioned by the Public Service Commission ("PSC") to study the impact of Solar Energy in Maryland. After such review, the Chamber believes the projects strikes the appropriate balance between a green economic development project, individual property rights and the requisite environmental protections. The Chamber is particularly pleased to see this opportunity in the western side of Charles County, as the Chamber has been particularly focused on opportunities for redevelopment and business investment in this area of the County.

The November 2018 Report to the PSC concluded that that solar energy generates over 23,468 job-years, over \$1.39 billion in labor income and tax revenue for the State of Maryland. In Charles County, the Shugart Solar Power Project is estimated to generate capital investment of approximately \$31 million to \$34 million dollars and creation of over 200 design, management and construction jobs. The project will also connect to the power grid via the SMECO utility structure. Such an interconnection will provide reliability and sustainability to the power grid within Charles County. More importantly, the project's clean solar energy will avoid up to 49,000 metric tons of carbon emissions per year.

*"The Charles County Chamber of Commerce provides leadership in supporting and promoting the free enterprise system through business development, education and sound ethical values for the benefit of our members and our communities."*

This project furthers Charles County's 2016 Comprehensive Plan goal of "Grow[ing] a green economy with an increased number of jobs in the clean energy and energy efficiency sector." By proposing to preserve, in perpetuity, over 296 acres of trees which are currently unprotected, the project also advances the 2016 Comprehensive Plan goal of protecting large forested areas. The Project's use of pollinators provides an additional benefit of keeping the property supportive of agricultural production via planting of natural plants and grasses under and around the solar panels in accordance with a County approved pollinator plan to enhance needed habitat and the County's farming base.

The implementation of green infrastructure that provides economic, energy, health and environmental benefits is of the utmost importance to the Chamber. The Chamber is confident that, so long as the project continues to meet the strict regulatory controls imposed, it will be a long term asset to Charles County and its citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel S. Michael". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Daniel S. Michael, Chair of the Board  
Charles County Chamber of Commerce