

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
SMALL RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS; IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES,
REPORT. (HB 206)**

REGULATORY ADVISORY PANEL MEETING MINUTES, MEETING #3

**MEETING LOCATION:
HILLSDALE CONFERENCE CENTER
550 HILLSDALE DRIVE
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22901**

Friday, August 19th, 2022

Members (including primaries, alternates, and SMEs):

In Attendance (Last, First):

Berryhill, Aaron	Hammond, Jeff	Newton, Jacob
Binder, Cathy	Harbin, John	Orrell, Jim
Boschen, Amelia	Hawk, Chris	Piontek, Emily
Copenhaver, Brad	Hearne, Carrie	Pollard, Speaker
Crockett, Robert	Holmes, Dan	Rovner, Nikki
Daniels, Lee	Jacobs, Zach	Sanner, Peggy
Davenport, Melanie	Jamison, Dan	Seaford, Kevin
Dicks III, Chip	Kane, Stephanie	Seward, Susan
Drazenovich, Rick	Killius, Anna	Sink, Dominika
Dunscumb, Judy	Lasher, Terry	Smiley, Mitchell
Fogel, Jonah	Machiran, Jeff	Utt, Tyson
Francis, Emily	Marshall, Elizabeth	Vaughan, Evan
Green, Charles	Moore, Martha	Weber, Joe
Hammond, Drew	Murray, David	

Absent:

Allmond, Josephus	Coggeshall, Charlie	Ericson, Jason
Amores, Jon	Connors, Corey	Fanning, Patrick
Anderson, Meade	Corradi, Rob	Farrelly, Kevin
Belville-Marrion, Jenny	Crenshaw, Walter	Flavin, Andrew
Bolthouse, Julie	Crum, Katie	Flowers, Todd
Brumberg, Sam	Dodson, Chris	Forren, Kelsey
Cizenski, Michael	Dreiling, Michael	Giese, Will
Clark, Hilary	Egghart, Chris	Gordon, Chris

Guthrie, Joe
Hertz, Heidi
Higgins, Victoria
Howe, Kevin
Ignosh, John
Jesensky, Kenny
Joshipura, Neil
Lerch, Joe
Martin, James

Martin, Amy
McDonald, Christopher
Norris, Ben
Rolband, Michael
Saunders, Ben
Schmidt, Kevin
Shreve, Kyle
Sili, Jeff
Sims, Jessica

Skiffington, Michael
Sundstrom, Craig
Sydnor, Cutter
Thomas, Rick
Westcott Jr, David
Wheeler, Lauren
Wilder, Joe
Wortzel, Andrea

Facilitators, Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN), University of Virginia:

Altizer, Kelly
Cobb, Tanya Denckla
Oliva, Michelle Montserrat
Rizk, Sarah

Department of Environmental Quality:

Foster, Amber
Meyer, Elena M.
Thompson, Tamera M.
Tripp, Susan
Dowd, Michael

The meeting began at approximately 9:35 am.

Meeting Purpose: This regulatory advisory panel (RAP) has been established to advise and assist in developing a program to mitigate the impacts of small solar projects on forest cores and prime agricultural soils. This group was formed in accordance with and to satisfy the requirements put forth in HB 206. The purpose of this meeting was to begin building consensus among the workgroup members, and for workgroups to share their draft proposals with the larger group. The group then had the chance to ask clarifying questions or provide suggestions and/or potential concerns. Finally, the workgroups were given additional working time to refine their proposals.

Introductions, Logistics: The IEN facilitators introduced the process for the day, and reviewed logistics with the workgroups. The goal for the day was to engage in a “rapid scan” of issues, then answer any clarifying questions, and hear any suggestions or concerns. This was to receive feedback and share ideas, not to reach a consensus on these topics.

Workgroup Presentations: Workgroups 1, 4, and 5 presented their proposals. Workgroups 2 & 3 did not present, as they required additional time to complete proposals. They planned to work with the facilitators to have draft proposals written for

the next meeting. The workgroups presented their proposals and updates in the following order:

- Workgroup 5
- Workgroup 4
- Workgroup 1

Workgroup 5 (local control) stated their main goal was to improve the coordination and dialogue between localities, DEQ, and solar developers. A major concern among members is that localities are often the last to know details of solar installations. The group is interested in utilizing existing processes and has proposals about utilizing processes such as NOIs and siting agreements.

Workgroup 4 (Significant adverse impact <10 acres ag soil/50 acres forest) mainly focused on proposals for obtaining information and conserving high-quality forest land and ecological cores. The group was in agreement about conserving C1 ecological cores (considered the highest value), and interested in C2 cores. The larger group discussed considerations about obtaining accurate information about these ecological cores, and if C2 cores should be included.

Workgroup 1 (avoidance and minimization) stated they spent a lot of time defining what disturbance was, and how to avoid it. They also discussed what kinds of activity would be considered disturbance and should be mitigated. The workgroup discussed different ways to incorporate avoidance and minimization tactics within installations, such as keeping some land within their installations in use as either forests or farms. Another area of minimization that was discussed was how to avoid negative impacts on soils via compaction or changes to soil pH and chemistry.

Members of the larger group were all given the chance to provide feedback for the workgroups. Following these presentations, the workgroups were given the time to work on their proposals.

Future Meetings:

Meeting #4 - **Tue Aug 23:** Building Consensus (Day 2)

Location: Richmond (Workforce Development and Conference Center)

Meeting #5 - **Wed Sep 28:** Review of Final Draft Report Wrap Up

Location: Charlottesville – Hillsdale Conference Center, 550 Hillsdale Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901