The Maryland Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) Process

Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Power Plant Research Program
1. Explain the CPCN process and PPRP’s coordinating role
2. Review renewable energy goals and land use impacts
3. Introduce the DNR/MEA SmartDG+ product
To construct and operate a new power plant in Maryland (>2 MW) or a transmission line (>69 kV) a person must obtain:

- PJM Interconnection Agreement
- Public Service Commission Certificate of Public Need and Necessity (CPCN)
- Other State and Federal Permits
- County Permits
CPCN Adjudicatory Parties

- The Applicant
- Power Plant Research Program
- Office of People’s Counsel
- PSC Technical Staff
- Others
CPCN Process

Application → PSC Admin Mtg; Judge Assigned to Case → Prehearing Conference

Discovery (Data Requests) → Filing of Testimony and Recommended Licensing Conditions → Evidentiary and Public Hearings; Legal Briefs

PSC Proposed Order incl. Permit Conditions → Order Becomes Final in 30 Days Unless Appealed
PPRP Coordinates With 7 State Agencies

Coordinated review concludes with a joint secretarial letter to the Public Service Commission, transmitting

• Project Assessment Report
• Recommended Licensing Conditions for the CPCN
• Testimony
How does the design, construction and operation of power plants and transmission lines impact Maryland’s environmental, socioeconomic and cultural resources?
Impact Assessment

- Biological impacts to water quality, wetlands, forests, wildlife and aquatic resources
- Economic and fiscal impacts, including job creation and protecting prime farmland
- Transportation impacts during construction, and after construction to passing cars and planes
- Visual impacts to neighboring properties
- Impacts to cultural, historical and aesthetic sites
- Water and sewer utility impacts
- Fire safety considerations
Public Utilities Articles § 7-207(e): The PSC must give due consideration to the following:

(1) The recommendation of the governing body of the county or municipal corporation

(2) The effect of the generating station on:
   (i) Stability & reliability of the grid;
   (ii) Economics;
   (iii) Esthetics and historic sites;
   (iv) Environmental;
   (v) Safety (e.g., aviation safety)

(3) Consistency with comprehensive plan / zoning; efforts to resolve any issues presented by a county.
2019 Clean Energy Jobs
Act: Renewable Goals (%)
## Anticipating Solar Development

### Land Required to Fulfill 14.5% Solar Carve-Out Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solar capacity required to meet generation requirement (MW)</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land requirements at five acres per MW (acres)</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Smart Siting

- Infrastructure Proximity
- Renewable Resource Availability
- Land Suitability
Renewable Resource Availability - Wind
Renewable Resource Availability - Solar
SmartDG+
Purpose

- SmartDG+ is a free, online, GIS-based screening tool sponsored by MEA and PPRP.
- It is intended to help developers and officials identify areas for the location of new wind and solar projects in Maryland.
- Focus is for projects greater than 2 MW—i.e., bigger than rooftop solar.
SmartDG+
Development Process

• Met with county and utility officials to discuss local priorities and policies of relevance

• Evaluated electrical lines throughout Maryland

• Gathered publicly available data on barriers to project construction
SmartDG+
Data Layers

Infrastructure
Proximity
• Electricity lines

Renewable Resource
Availability
• Viable wind speeds
• Solar

Land Suitability
• Protected areas
• Flood zones
• Land cover/land use
• Airports
• DOD no-go zones
• County zoning
SmartDG+
Additional Screens

- County-level zoning
- County-level protected areas
- NAS Patuxent River Protected Areas
- MALPF easements
- Forested lands
SmartDG+
Example Product
• The County Zoning Guide is a compilation of all relevant county zoning language that addresses renewable energy projects that are 2 MW or above.
• A link to the guide is found on SmartDG+ homepage.
• The document is currently being updated to maximize user-friendliness.
SmartDG+
Example Product
More information available at the Power Plant Research Program website:

www.dnr.maryland.gov/pprp

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