Renewable Energy Development and Siting Task Force
Oct. 31, 2019
2:00 p.m.

Minutes
- Welcome
  - Welcome and attendance taken by Chair Greg Snook at 2:00 p.m.

- From the Chair
  - Snook thanked members for providing input
  - Snook noted that our next meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of Nov. 15, which will be a site visit to three solar facilities
  - Snook introduced John Finnerty

- Presentation by John Finnerty, solar energy industry representative
  - David Murray, Executive Director of MDV-SEIA joined Finnerty during the presentation
  - Key takeaways
    - Finnerty noted that their discussion will be based on seeking responsible ways and recommendations for improving the development and siting process for towns, counties, the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC), the industry, as well as various stakeholders.
    - Statewide, we are generating about 60% and importing about 40%.
    - To date, U.S. has deployed about 69 gigawatts (GW), and Maryland has about 1.2 GW
    - As we reached the 14.5% target, Finnerty said we can expect an equivalent of 20,000 positions in Maryland
    - It was explained that the 14.5% target is in-line with national goals
      - This summer SEIA announced its "Solar Plus Decade" where the solar industry in the next decade can provide 20% of electric load
    - Murray said our results are visible and accountable. Last year the PSC published a report 'Value of Solar', with a conclusion that solar delivers economic benefits at a rate of 1:4
    - Murray explained that on a per megawatt basis, the residential sector creates the greatest number of local jobs.
      - Most of the money goes into labor, which provides a great deal of benefit to the distribution level.
    - Murray said that community solar is the way that residential customers can access the benefits of solar energy.
      - These projects are usually small in size - no more than 20 acres or under 2 megawatts (MW).
      - This type of solar is appropriate for central Maryland, where there is a high demand for energy.
    - The commercial solar industry ensures that businesses and industrial companies are able to offset their energy savings.
      - This includes aggregate net metering, greater incentives for solar canopies and brownfield sites.

- Murray explained that there are a number of misconceptions of what goes into siting utility scale solar.
- Murray said that 150,000 acres have been zoned in counties' comprehensive plans for commercial and real estate development. If we soley build out the amount of utility scale solar in the clean energy jobs act (CEJA), it will be less than 10% of that.
- Murray noted that it is important to Improve upon our existing infrastructure.
  - Snook opened the call up to questions and comments from task force members
    - Jason Dubow, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) asked for clarification on why mapping is not a good practice and gave Queen Anne's County as an example.
      - Murray explained that we need to look at the injection capacity to determine which sites are best for project deployment. Proximity to transmission lines is important, but not the single most important factor. If you can site a project close to transmission lines, it does not mean the project is always feasible from a transmission injection capacity perspective.
        - Snook asked if there is a way for power companies to identify where these projects can be injected into the grid.
          - Murray noted that he has heard you have to go to both PJM and the utility (facility or interconnection studies). It is such a dynamic process, so it takes the power company a couple years to identify where the transmission injection capacity is.
    - Janet Christensen-Lewis said that cropland is not equated to prime farmland. Depending on where you are, less than 50% of the cropland in Maryland is considered prime.
      - Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), Joe Bartenfelder noted that it depends on what your definition of prime farmland is. You can have grazing land as prime farmland. You can have prime and productive soils and still have prime farmland.
    - Lewis pointed out that the acres of agricultural land we have in preservation is below what our target is, and that is due to the amount of money available.
    - Lewis asked what the conditions are for someone to return a solar facility back to productive farmland instead of just turning over a lease to a new leaseholder or upgrading the solar facility with better technology.
      - Murray said that it is a case-by-case basis and it is the choice of the landowner. In terms of decommissioning, solar can be taken out and the land can be returned to farmland.
      - Finnerty added that with existing plants and facilities (conventional generators) that are coming offline, they could be potential interconnection points in the future. The industry does not have many ground arrays that have been in service for more than 10 or 15 years that would be candidates for removal at this point.
    - Lewis does not believe 25% is a reasonable capacity factor.
      - Murray said rooftop solar does have a lower capacity factor, but utility scale solar projects in this region do have a capacity factor around 25%, which has to do with the tracking factors and the types of modules used.

- David Tancabel said for newly installed, 25% is generally the capacity factor used in Maryland, but numbers are adjusted as they look at the issue.
- Presentation by Andrew Gohn, wind energy industry representative
  - Key takeaways
    - Gohn noted that there are four major utility scale projects in the state, which are all in Garrett County: Roth Rock, Fair Wind, Criterion, and Fourmile Ridge.
      - Garrett County does not have local zoning control, but instead was able to establish setbacks and other stipulations regarding conditions for permitting wind projects in Maryland state law.
    - He said there are three manufacturing facilities serving the wind industry in Maryland.
      - Offshore wind would be expected to greatly expand that manufacturing base.
    - Gohn explained in some cases, projects are merchant, where it sells into PJM Interconnection directly. Others have long-term power purchase agreements with offtakers.
    - Gohn said that there are two community projects in the state: Crisfield wastewater treatment and the Talbot County Department of Public Works.
    - He noted that land based wind permitting does go through the certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) process.
    - Gohn said that in offshore wind permitting, federal waters begin 3 nautical miles offshore.
    - He explained that, after securing leases and the ability to do site assessment activities, there is a secondary process that leads to the ability to deploy actual wind turbines, under construction operations plans.
      - This requires a full national environmental policy act (NEPA) review. This is when interested stakeholders should weigh-in. Once the environmental impact statement is complete, they can proceed to actually deploy projects.
    - He also said that the wind energy industry brings tremendous developer interest, and it is expected to develop into a trillion dollar industry.
    - Gohn explained that the U.S. Wind project is now proposing to build 269MW versus the 248MW that they have an offshore wind renewable energy certificate (OREC) order for.
    - He said project developers are aiming to have 12 projects operational by 2026, totaling 7,470MW.
    - Gohn recommends that Maryland continues the process with The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) of citing additional offshore wind areas further out to sea to continue having space to deploy new projects.
  - Snook opened the call up to questions and comments from task force members
    - Joey Chen with the PSC noted that the last federal auction in Maryland for a wind energy area offshore was held in 2014, and he cannot see where on BOEM's website there are plans to have another auction for additional areas. Chen asked how often this happens and how long it would take to get the process moving of identifying additional areas.
      - Gohn explained that a BOEM report indicates that Marland officials have expressed interest in establishing additional lease areas. It does take

significant time, and given the timelines under the clean energy jobs act, it is important to proceed as quickly as possible.
- ■ Snook asked how many miles offshore are the Maryland wind farms located.
  - ● Gohn said that the closest lease area is sited 10 nautical miles from Ocean City, but that the nearest proposed project is 17 miles from shore.
- ■ Terry McGean asked if the Virginia projects are considered commercially viable.
  - ● Gohn said he has no reason to think that the project wouldn't happen. Dominion is not a member of the American Wind Energy Association though, so he doesn't know the definite answer.
- ■ Lewis asked if the announcement by Orsted in terms of downgrading the amount of energy coming from offshore wind through the blockage and weight has an impact on the industry.
  - ● Gohn said he doesn't think it has been long enough since that announcement to see if it has had an impact on the industry, so he is not sure of the answer.
- ○ Snook opened the call up to questions and comments from interested stakeholders
  - ■ No interested stakeholders had questions or comments.

- ● Snook adjourned the call at 2:59 p.m.

Attendees
- ● Allison Cordell, Governor 's Office
- ● Andrew Gohn, Wind energy representative
- ● April King, Maryland Environmental Service (MES)
- ● Billy Bishoff, Maryland Farm Bureau representative
- ● Cassie Shirk, MDA
- ● David Comis, Maryland Energy Administration (MEA)
- ● David Tancabel, PPRP, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- ● Devon Dodson, Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)
- ● Earl Lewis, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- ● Eddie Lukemire, MDOT
- ● Eric Hoffman, (MEA)
- ● Ewing McDowell, Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce)
- ● Greg Snook, Chair
- ● Hannah Schaeffer, Governor's Office
- ● Interested Stakeholders
- ● James McKitrick, DNR
- ● Janet Christensen-Lewis, Maryland Farm Bureau representative
- ● Jason Dubow, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)
- ● Joe Bartenfelder, MDA
- ● Joey Chen, PSC
- ● John Finnerty, Solar Energy representative
- ● Les Knapp, MACo
- ● Nimisha Sharma, MDOT
- ● Roy McGrath, MES
- ● Ryan Opsal, MEA
- ● Stephen Schatz, Governor's Office
- ● Terry McGean, MML representative