

Randolph Solar, The Facts

My name is Francis Hodsoll, and I am the co-founder and CEO of SolUnesco. We are developing Randolph Solar – a solar power plant in Charlotte County. I am writing to address both legitimate and unfounded concerns raised by citizens.

Stuart Topp and Michelle Amato claim that SolUnesco and JA Devin sued the voters of Charlotte County. SolUnesco and JA Devin did not sue the voters of Charlotte County. SolUnesco has invested more than three-quarters of a million dollars in the Randolph Solar project. SolUnesco had an obligation to the landowners, to our employees, and to ourselves to ensure we were represented in Stuart's petition of the court. We asked to intervene, and the Judge granted our request finding that we had valid interests justifying our intervention. Then, the Judge subsequently dismissed Stuart's petition.

Virginia law mandates that the Judge ruled to deny Stuart Topp's petition. We are not California, and Virginia's laws protect all of us from being overwhelmed by Referendums at our elections.

More importantly, the time-tested Conditional Use permitting process allows all citizens to provide their input, whether that's on a proposed solar project, on a proposed bed and breakfast, on a proposed dealership for farm equipment, and so on. Commercial land use has always been a balance of competing priorities. The Conditional Use Permit process is flexible and allows counties to assess each project based on its unique merits and to determine appropriate requirements based on the specifics of each project.

We understand that the scale of Randolph Solar – a \$700 million, plus investment – will raise legitimate questions. Unfortunately, a few opponents have made false accusations regarding solar energy and Randolph Solar in particular. We created a website to address the concerns raised. Please visit randolphsolar.solunesco.com. If you would prefer to receive a mailed information packet, please call us at 703-672-5097. We can also schedule a phone call, and we plan to hold community meetings.

Solar is one of the cleanest, safest forms of electricity generation – no pollution or toxic by-products. Our country first deployed solar technology in the 1950s. Solar is placed on homes, schools, hospitals, etc. Studies (visit randolphsolar.solunesco.com) demonstrate that Utility-scale solar facilities will improve soil conditions. Randolph Solar will be a good neighbor to local wildlife. The facility will provide significant corridors for animals to move through and will preserve undisturbed acres. The Charlotte County Ordinance requires setbacks and buffers to both maintain and enhance the existing rural landscape. (We have provided renderings of the vegetative buffers on the Randolph website.)

Randolph Solar would broaden the county's tax base without adding costs for infrastructure or services, bringing in more than \$700,000 yearly in new revenue for Charlotte County. Randolph Solar would create or support more than 700 hundred construction jobs for at least two years (hundred million-plus in labor spending), provide millions in additional revenues for local businesses, and increase educational funding. Technology and Fortune 500 companies require access to renewable energy when deciding to locate new facilities in a region. The deployment of solar energy throughout Southside Virginia creates opportunities for high skill, high pay jobs in the solar industry and industries that insist on clean, non-polluting energy.

Nearly sixty Charlotte County landowners decided to be part of the Randolph Solar project. I have sat with many of these landowners, and I know they have done their research. These families go back generations and care deeply about their land. For some landowners and future generations, solar will allow them to hold onto their land and to maintain a way of life. Not only has solar technology proven to be safe to the environment and the community, but it is also one of the few land uses that returns the land to its original state after the project's useful life.

As an example of what can be achieved with the Randolph Solar project, on the Moody Creek project, we worked closely with the county to create conditions in the zoning permit that maximize the value to all Charlotte County residents. Over its life, Moody Creek will pay Charlotte County 2X the payments required by law. Charlotte County Board, Planning Commissioners, and staff achieved a set of conditions ensuring Moody Creek is a good neighbor: buffers and setbacks, requirements on construction, decommissioning requirements to restore the land to its previous use, decommissioning financial security, and other conditions. Today, neighboring counties use the Moody Creek project as the yardstick for the fiscal benefit.

I encourage you to visit randolphsolar.solunesco.com, where you can find information supported by science and research. Also, I encourage Charlotte residents to conduct independent research. As we all know, posting something on Facebook or in an Ad does not mean it is true.