



Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

September 15, 2025

Council Resolution 167-2025

Good Evening Members of the County Council

My name is Paul Verchinski. I am testifying for the nonprofit Howard County Citizens Association (HCCA). Founded in 1961, HCCA testifies regarding proposed legislation affecting the residents of Howard County and the State of Maryland. This written testimony has been authorized by the HCCA Board. Our website can be found at <https://howardcountyhcca.org>.

CR167 states:

A RESOLUTION approving the terms and conditions of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes Agreement by and among Howard County and CIR Vineyard 2 LLC, CIR Vineyard 3 LLC, CIR Vineyard 4 LLC, CIR Vineyard 5 LLC (collectively the “Facility Owner”), and John Lee Carroll Jr. and Genevive Anne Carroll (the “Landowner”) for the construction and operation of a solar array located on property located at 3855 Manor Lane, Ellicott City, Howard County, Maryland.

The Howard County Citizens Association requests CR167 not be passed for the following reasons:

1. Haste makes waste. In the Audit Report it states: “A request for the project proforma or other document showing the project’s financial projections has been submitted to the Office of Community Sustainability.” Therefore, the financial documents for this solar project have not been posted. Assertions are made that this tax subsidy is needed but not substantiated
2. In the Audit Report it states there is a loss of \$293,378.18 in tax revenue to Howard County
3. Howard County provided a subsidy to residential property owners to install rooftop solar in the late aughts and early teens. It was subsequently terminated in the early teens. The reason given at that time was that solar no longer needed a subsidy incentive. Today, after a decade a subsidy is being requested when solar installation and hardware costs have dropped by over 50%. We would state that this subsidy is not needed since solar is now mainstream.
4. There is a Power Purchase Agreement with the University of Maryland that makes this project very financeable. The remaining 50% will easily become a Community Solar project for those that do not have roofs suitable for solar.
5. This would become a partial Community Solar (CS) project. Solar projects such as CS receive preferential treatment and must have participants in the same utility area so this will include Howard County residents without any incentives.

6. What exactly is the Public Benefit? There appears to be none other than adding a solar array.
7. Has the lower cost of electricity that will be produced been factored into the project financials? Electric bills may be reduced to zero after the solar array is paid for and during the payback period for the solar array capital expenditures.
8. If we remember correctly, this is a historical property that already receives favorable county tax treatment.
9. We would like to know if this property is currently in Agricultural Preservation?
10. This subsidy is being proposed as a PILOT. What exactly is the nature of this PILOT and what metrics will be used to assess success or failure?

For the reasons noted above, we request that CR167 not be passed.

Paul Verchinski HCCA
Board Member
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