



90-Day Moratorium Placed on Commercial Solar Farm Permitting

Posted on November 12, 2025 by Carey Fauscett-Anderson

TRENTON, Ga. (Nov. 6, 2025) — The Dade County Board of Commissioners approved a 90-day moratorium on commercial solar permitting while county officials study best practices and prepare a comprehensive local ordinance to guide future solar development. The temporary pause allows time for research into zoning, safety, and environmental standards before new regulations are adopted.

Commissioner Melissa Bradford introduced the proposal, explaining that she had spent several months researching how other Georgia counties manage solar installations. “I’ve made some trips to solar sites, both home versions and for-profit,” Commissioner Bradford said. “I think we need to look over this and make a good decision about what our people need. I never want to tell people what they can and can’t do on their property, but I am for setbacks — I’m just not sure how far yet.”

Commissioner Bradford said she has been working with engineers and representatives from Georgia Power who are willing to assist the county in drafting its first comprehensive solar ordinance. “I think we need to stop and make sure this is written out clearly before we proceed,” she said. “That’s why I’m calling for a moratorium.”

County Attorney Robin Rogers provided legal context, noting that most county moratoriums of this type last between 80 and 90 days and can be extended if needed. Commissioners discussed several potential approaches, including setback requirements, vegetative buffers, and the possibility of using the Special Use Permit Board for project review.

Commissioner Bob Woods said the impact of solar installations can depend on location. “If I lived in the country, I wouldn’t be so bothered,” Woods said. “If I lived in a subdivision, I probably would mind.”





Commissioner Phillip Hartline expressed support for a temporary pause. “I think a 60-day moratorium is good,” he said, later agreeing that a 90-day period would give the county more time to plan.

Commissioner Dr. Bill Pullen agreed that setbacks and screening standards are appropriate considerations for large-scale projects. “Construction isn’t going to start anytime soon,” Pullen said. “I think 90 to 180 days would be fine for a moratorium.”

Chairman Don Townsend noted the importance of balancing property rights with community standards. “What I’ve tried to envision is this — what if someone comes in and buys the side of Lookout Mountain and puts up 700 solar panels? I don’t want to look at that personally, but we have to be careful about telling people what they can do with their property,” Townsend said.

Following discussion, the Board reached a consensus to establish a 90-day moratorium on the permitting of commercial solar farms. County Attorney Rogers will prepare the formal resolution outlining the moratorium period and coordinate with Commissioner Bradford to begin drafting the county’s proposed solar ordinance.

The moratorium does not apply to residential solar installations or personal-use systems.

The Board’s decision was unanimous and added to the November consent agenda for final adoption during the regular meeting.