

LANDOWNERS CHALLENGE SOLAR EXCEPTION

*Quitman, Georgia— August 29, 2019*

— On Monday of this week, Brooks County Superior Court Judge Richard Cowart signed a Sanction for a Writ of Certiorari allowing a group of landowners in Brooks County to file a petition in the Superior Court of the County challenging the granting of a Special Exception Zoning permit by the Brooks County Board of Commissioners to Quitman II Solar, LLC to construct a 1,700 acre solar site in the an Agricultural Zoned area of the County. Quitman II Solar, LLC, is a wholly owned subsidiary of NextEra Energy, of Juno Beach, Florida.

The landowners challenge the Board's decision on several grounds, including: due process claims arising out of how the public hearing was held, violations of the local ordinances related to the "spot" zoning of the site, and violations of adhering to the Comprehensive Growth plan previously passed by the Board as it's Official position on Growth.

As stated in the Petition, "The Board's decision was contrary to the State of Georgia Proposed Model Solar Ordinance; which specifically states, "First and foremost, site solar energy systems to avoid clearcutting forests entirely." This project as approved by the Board will result in clearcutting large portions of upland forests on the 1,700 Acre Miami Plantation.,".

“The Special Exception approval constitutes “spot zoning.” This Special Exception zoning decision is invalid because it is not in accordance with the County’s officially adopted Comprehensive Plan. It is a land use classification totally different from that of the surrounding area (Agricultural), for the benefit of the owner of such property and to the detriment of other neighboring owners in Brooks County”.

The Attorney for the Landowners, Jonathan Perry Waters of Macon, Georgia states that, “Quitman II Solar, LLC’s industrial solar project is not compatible with this Agricultural Zoning District. The Brooks County vote was a Manifest abuse of zoning power to the oppression of the neighboring landowners. This poor site selection will destroy an upland forest, change the rustic setting of the neighborhood and replace both with an industrial eyesore”.

**For more information, press only:**

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