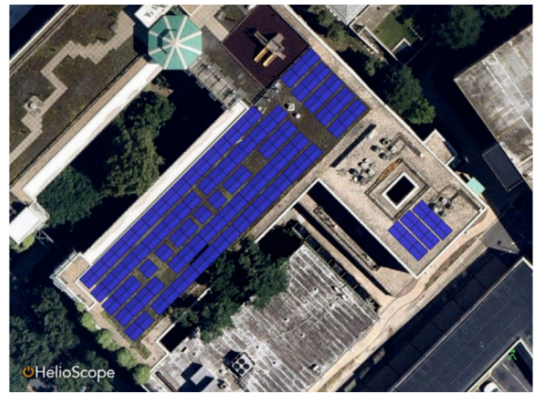


SB0593- SUPPORT  
Joelle Novey, joelle.novey@gmail.com

**Condominiums - Common Elements - Clean Energy Equipment  
Judicial Proceedings Committee**

March 7, 2023

I live in the Chair's district, at Eastern Village Cohousing in Silver Spring, where we're in the process of getting 216 solar panels on the east side of our roof. But it almost wasn't so.



Tom Deyo at Montgomery County Green Bank sees countywide how many solar projects are getting delayed or killed by the Maryland Condo Act.

**I'm here to share what it was like to have my community's solar project almost derailed by the current law.**

Our volunteer solar committee secured proposals through which developers would put up solar panels at no cost to us and sell us power at a discount. To move forward in cohousing, which operates by consensus decision-making, we then undertook five months of conversations with every neighbor in 55 households to explain solar financing and address every concern. Last May, the Membership Circle came to consensus, and a task force selected a proposal to send to our board.

That's when we encountered the Maryland Condo Act – perhaps our board *wouldn't* have the authority to sign the Power Purchase Agreement after all. We might need every residential owner and **every mortgage holder** of every unit in our building to be notified and then two-thirds would have to affirmatively approve it.

We were motivated volunteers, but my heart sank.

Notifying every residential owner was more doable for us than many others, because we're an owner-occupied building and everyone had already agreed to go solar.

**But figuring out who held every mortgage of every unit, figuring out how to notify those mortgage-holders in writing, and then securing two-thirds affirmative approval was going to be a bear.**

I can see why this requirement kills solar projects in other condos.

Eventually, after more expensive legal advice and several months delay, our board signed a Power Purchase Agreement, and we're on our way to powering our building with sun.

Senators, you should be making clean energy easier, not harder, for Marylanders who live in condos. Without this bill, condo solar projects will continue to be scuttled by the Condo Act, by provisions that were never intended to interfere with solar leasing.

I request your favorable report for SB 593.