



BLACK BEAR
ENERGY
A LEGENCE Company



Get to Know Drew Carney

Senior Vice President of Development

August 29, 2024: Drew Carney has been with Black Bear Energy since its founding in 2015. He leads the Development team, overseeing site planning, system design, budgeting, interconnection, and construction of solar projects coming through Black Bear Energy's software bidding platform. He brings humor and energy to the Black Bear team, as well as a wealth of knowledge from previous roles at Prologis and Stellar. On September 12, Drew will be speaking at the NAREIM Architecture, Engineering & Development Meeting in Austin, TX. Read on to learn more about Drew and his work at Black Bear Energy.

What is your role at Black Bear Energy and are some of the key responsibilities involved?

I lead our Development team, where we focus on the technical aspects of each project. We coordinate with project stakeholders for due diligence, design, permitting and construction. Black Bear uses a consistent process for each project site to track interconnection status, program awards, permit status, structural approvals, roof manufacturer's approval, and many other items that are necessary for a solar project to proceed. We lead a project kickoff meeting prior to commencement of construction, and attend regular meetings to assist with any issues that may arise during construction.

Can you walk us through your career journey and how you became involved in sustainability and renewable energy?

After graduating from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Science in Building Construction, I spent ten years with Stellar, a design-build contractor building refrigerated warehouses and food processing facilities throughout the United States. I then moved to Prologis, where I spent nine years, and was initially tasked with the entitlement, development and construction of speculative and build-to-suit warehouse facilities in the Southeastern United States. It was during this time that I had the opportunity to provide construction support for the Renewable Energy group, and thus began my career in renewable energy.

In your experience, what key factors contribute most significantly to the successful implementation of on-site solar within large real estate portfolios?

We find it important to have a development kickoff call quickly following a project award, and to open the lines of communication with local site contacts that can assist with

coordinating site visits and collecting site level information. Internal site plan review and approvals are critical, along with tenant coordination for site utilization during and after construction. Interconnection applications should always be submitted as early as possible for each project. Accurate and up to date record drawings allow solar developers to evaluate for structural capacity most efficiently. Current roof reports and roof manufacturer's warranty information is also helpful to have at an early stage, and where a new roof is proposed prior to solar installation, it is necessary to identify the proposed scope of work along with estimated procurement and construction timelines for the roofing work.

In your opinion, what are some of the biggest challenges or obstacles real estate stakeholders face in achieving their cleantech goals?

Interconnection costs, roof age and structural capacity are the three most frequent impediments that we encounter on the construction and development side. Site impact and coordination with tenants is always top of mind. Speed to market is sometimes hampered by utility interconnection timing and program awards, so setting expectations early based on project type is critical to keep the local teams engaged.

What keeps you motivated to continue doing this work even when faced with difficult projects, pushback on solar programs and incentives, all in the face of climate change?

Black Bear Energy is an amazing place to work. I love the people here and the work we accomplish is challenging and fun. I appreciate the variety of projects that we get to work on. We see all different asset types, we have a variety of project, and the work is geographically diverse. We've developed a range of projects from small rooftop arrays all the way up to some of the largest community solar and net metered projects that have been built in the country to date.

What do you see on the horizon for the next 12 months that has you excited?

More battery installations to complement PV systems. Emerging markets for community solar. We're always excited about which projects will energize in the near term.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time? Do you have any hobbies or interests that you pursue when you're not busy with work?

I enjoy spending time with my family, working out, cooking and eating, live music, college football, and occasionally reading a book. I'm currently planning a restoration / improvement project for a small fiberglass boat that I'll use in pursuit of tailing redfish during flood tides here in Northeast Florida.