



# OAK HILLS HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION

## SOLAR POLICY

**DATE OF BOARD APPROVAL: July 3, 2019**

### 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide the necessary steps to gain approval for the installation of solar energy systems while providing clear, reasonable guidelines that aim to maintain consistency with existing community aesthetics.

While the Association recognizes the benefit of solar systems to individual homeowners, it is important that these systems are installed in a manner that respects legitimate competing community interests. OR HB2111, effective January 1, 2018, makes void and unenforceable a provision in a declaration or bylaws of a planned community that prohibits homeowners from installing solar; however, a homeowners association may adopt and enforce a provision that imposes reasonable size, placement or aesthetic requirements for the installation or use of solar panels.

Furthermore, the Association recognizes that solar energy is a growing and changing industry and therefore, revisions to the regulations set out in these guidelines may be necessary or desirable.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS & SCOPE

For the purposes of this guideline, a solar energy system is a panel device or system or combination of panel devices or systems that relies on direct sunlight as an energy source for use in (a) the heating or cooling of a structure or building; (b) the heating or pumping of water; or (c) the generation of electrical energy.

This definition includes Photovoltaic (PV) panels/modules, Solar Water Heating (SWH) panels/modules, and Integrated Photovoltaic Systems (IPS), i.e., photovoltaic shingles, tiles or siding or thin-film laminates. Two distinct categories of these solar energy systems that will be considered for approval by the Architecture Review Board are:

- (1) Roof-mounted;
- (2) Ground-mounted

Building-mounted systems are not permissible.

### 3.0 STANDARDS FOR ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

#### 3.1 Technical Guidelines for roof-mounted solar energy systems

- (a) Each roof-mounted Solar Energy System must be installed on the roof of the primary residential structure or ARB approved Storage Shed.
- (b) Reverse angle or tracking platforms or mechanisms that allow devices to tilt seasonally, permanently or by time of day are not allowed on roof-mounted systems.

- (c) Installations must comply with applicable building codes; all necessary permits must be obtained. Installations should also comply with both Energy Trust of Oregon and Oregon Department of Energy guidelines and compliance codes.

### 3.2 Aesthetic Guidelines for roof-mounted solar energy systems

- (a) Solar panels must have a non-reflective surface, and the preferred panel color is black. If a roof is being replaced concurrently with solar panels being installed, it's preferred that the roof and the panels are black.
- (b) Dow Solar Shingles or other similar products will be approved provided that they match the color of the current roof shingles as much as practical.
- (c) All panels must fit within a boundary defined by the roof eaves and peak. They shall not exceed any edges or the peak of the roof.
- (d) Efforts must be made to make the solar energy system an integral and harmonious part of the architectural design of the residence. Visibility of any plumbing, wiring, or auxiliary equipment should be minimized as much as possible. All system components visible from areas open to common or public access should be designed or painted to blend with roof coloring as much as possible without significantly impacting system output. For example, the color of racking visible from areas open to common or public access should match the roof material as best possible.
- (e) Panels should completely cover the racking system unless deemed not possible for structural reasons, and visibility to the underside of panels shall also be minimized from areas open to common or public access.
- (f) To the maximum extent possible, a roof-mounted solar energy system shall be installed so as to minimize visibility to the system when viewed from ground-level in areas open to common or public access (e.g., public streets, neighboring lots, or association properties or common areas). As such, it's preferred that panels are not installed on the street facing side of the home.
- (g) Exceptions to these system design and placement requirements shall be made if compliance with one or more of these requirements will result in either a significant increase in the cost of the system or a significant decrease in its efficiency or specified performance. For purposes of this exception, "significant" means an amount exceeding 15 percent of the cost of the system, or decreasing efficiency or performance by an amount exceeding 15 percent, as originally specified and proposed. The ARB may require the applicant to provide a written statement by an independent solar energy expert, such as the Energy Trust of OR, documenting these cost or efficiency and performance impacts. In this case, the ARB may permit variances to these requirements to the minimum extent necessary to avoid significant increases in system costs or significant decreases in system efficiency or performance.
- (h) Solar panels on front-facing or side-facing roof surfaces visible from areas open to common or public access must be mounted in the plane of the roof surface with a maximum panel clearance (distance from the roof surface to the top surface of the panel) of no more than 6 inches. Panels in other locations (not visible from areas open to common or public access) may be angled to achieve optimum solar gain provided the top edge of the panel does not extend above the roof peak.

### 3.3 Maintenance and re-applying for roof-mounted solar energy systems with roof replacement

- (a) It is understood by the homeowner that the solar devices will be kept clean and maintained for aesthetic and performance reasons.
- (b) Upon replacement of a roof on which solar panels are installed, the homeowner must re-apply for the existing solar system or a new solar system when applying for the new roof.

## 4.0 STANDARDS FOR GROUND-MOUNTED SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

- (a) Ground-mounted systems are permissible, provided such a system is located in the back or side yard (not front yard), does not extend above the fence or screening, and is completely out of view from all areas open to common or public access.
- (b) Ground-mounted systems must be owned by the homeowner; leased products from third parties are not allowed.

- (c) Reverse angle or tracking platforms or mechanisms that allow devices to tilt seasonally, permanently or by time of day are allowed on ground-mounted systems, so long as this functionality does not result in visibility from areas open to common or public access above the fence or screening.
- (d) Installations must comply with applicable building codes; all necessary permits must be obtained. Installations should also comply with both Energy Trust of Oregon and Oregon Department of Energy guidelines and compliance codes.

## **5.0 REQUIREMENTS FOR SOLAR SYSTEM REQUESTS TO ARB**

All solar energy systems require ARB approval. The following documents must be included along with the required application or request form:

- (a) Plans showing visibility of the system from areas open to common or public access (e.g., public streets, neighboring lots, or association properties or common areas) and a site map showing the orientation of the home in relation to other properties. This site map can be created from web-based applications such as Google maps.
- (b) A conceptual drawing (with dimensions) showing the proposed location of the system, the number of solar devices, how the equipment will be mounted, as well as a description of any visible auxiliary equipment.
- (c) Current roof material and color.
- (d) Photographs or manufacturer literature for all proposed system components including specifications, color, materials, etc.
- (e) Documentation that the system meets the required technical guidelines of this policy.

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