
To: Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Brad Deets, Development Services Director

Date: March 23, 2018

Re: Solar Energy Ordinance

Attach: Proposed Ordinance

Fridley Theaters has approached the City regarding the use of solar energy to power a portion of the electrical needs for the proposed theater. The City has previously allowed for a couple applications of solar installations on roofs but there is currently no formal ordinance that regulates solar energy systems within Waukeee. The item was brought to the City Council for consideration and the City Council has directed staff to prepare a solar energy ordinance for consideration. Fridley has proposed to utilize both roof mounted solar panels that would be obscured by the height of the parapet wall on the building as well as an accessory structure within the parking lot.

The basis for the proposed ordinance is a model ordinance that was created in 2017 by the planning subcommittee of the Capital Crossroads project. The proposed ordinance is also similar to what has been adopted within the City of West Des Moines.

The proposed ordinance identifies five different types of solar energy systems which are described as follows:

Building Integrated System: These types of systems are actually integrated into the design and construction of the building such as skylight systems, roofing systems, etc. Per the proposed ordinance, building integrated systems would be permitted in all zoning districts.



Examples of Building Integrated Systems

Building Mounted System: These types of systems are what people are most familiar with and perhaps are the most common in terms of installation. These systems attach to the roof of a building and include applications for both pitched and flat roofing systems. Per the proposed ordinance, these types of systems would also be allowed in all zoning districts.



Examples of Building Mounted Systems

Ground Mounted System: These types of systems are generally either ground mounted or mounted on an accessory structure and not the building itself. The proposed ordinance would allow for these types of systems in commercial and industrial districts with a minimum lot size of two acres.



Examples of Ground Mounted Systems

Large Solar Energy Systems: These types of facilities could include both building integrated/mounted systems as well as ground mounted systems. This type really relates to the amount of electricity that is generated. Whereas the other types of systems would provide enough energy to serve the principal building on the site, a large system would produce enough energy to serve the principal building with the excess available for sale to a utility company.

The proposed ordinance would restrict these types of facilities to industrial zoned property only.

Utility Scale Solar Energy System: These systems are designed and constructed solely for purposes of supplying power for use by off-site users and are proposed to be prohibited within the City of Waukeee.

