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Amendment Report to the Plan Commission

Revise Rooftop Solar Panel Review Process

Prepared: 10/13/2025

Project: 2025-0820 – Land Development Code Amendment: Revise Rooftop Solar Panel Review Process

Requested Approvals: Revise the Solar Panel Review Process to remove the Appearance Review requirement for flush-mounted rooftop commercial solar panels.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT SUMMARY

The goal of this proposed amendment is to revise the Environmental Clean Technology (ECT) regulations to simplify the review procedure for non-residential flush-mounted rooftop solar panels. In 2023, an amendment was approved to remove the Appearance Review requirement for residential flush-mounted rooftop solar panels (Case No. 2023-0994).

Currently, Appearance Reviews for non-residential rooftop solar panels are conducted regularly, and staff has observed that they consistently meet the ETC code requirements. As a result, the need for Appearance Reviews for solar installations has become largely procedural rather than necessary.

The proposed amendment would streamline the process by allowing all flush-mounted rooftop solar installations to be approved administratively through the building permit review process. Ground-mounted or highly visible systems would continue to require an Appearance Review prior to building permit submittals to ensure appropriate design, adequate screening, and minimal visual impact.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TEXT

Section 6-314 – Environmental Technology Standards

Key: Removed text is ~~**Bolded and Strikethrough**~~

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B. Environmental Clean Technology Review and Approval Process. The following outlines the review and approval process required for installing an Environmental Clean Technology (ECT). ECTs include, but are not limited to, renewable energy systems such as Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS), Solar Energy Systems (SES), and Geothermal Energy Systems (GES). Unless otherwise noted in these regulations, all ECT projects shall be subject to the following review and approval process:

1. **Application.** Except for ~~residential~~ flush mounted rooftop solar panels, all petitioners seeking to construct or install an ECT must submit a complete Appearance Review application to the Development Services Department concurrently with a building permit application. ECT projects accessory to buildings or structures in the Old Orland Historic District or an Orland Park Landmark shall submit a complete Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application to the Development Services Department concurrently with a building permit application. All ECT projects shall be reviewed in accordance with the regulations of this Section.

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STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Regarding Case Number 2025-0820 – Land Development Code Amendment: Revise Solar Panel Review Process, Staff recommends to accept and make findings of fact as discussed at this Plan Commission meeting and within the Staff Report dated October 13, 2025;

And

Staff Recommends the Plan Commission **approves** the Land Development Code Amendment for Section 6-314.B.1.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

Regarding Case Number 2025-0820 - Land Development Code Amendment: Revise Solar Panel Review Process, I move to approve the Staff Recommended Action as presented in the Staff Report to the Plan Commission for this case.