

Policy #5

SOLAR PANELS (Revised August 25, 2020)

In order to ensure a consistent approach in the consideration of the installation of solar panels and to assure compliance with the Condominium Act Section 67.700 and 701.A, B & C all solar energy collection systems require Architectural Review Committee approval. This approval will be based on the following guidelines and restrictions. Due to differing house styles and new advancements in solar technology resulting in new panels, designs and changes in size requirements, each request for approval will be considered individually on its own merits. A panel which lies flat with the roof pitch would be the most readily accepted. When a flat installation is not possible, design considerations must be given to how the installation will blend in with the design of the building. Installations which are more easily seen from the street or neighboring properties require more attention towards blending them in as inconspicuously as possible with the existing structure. Solar collection systems are prohibited in limited common element and common element areas.

Solar Panels: Placement, Mounting, Size, and Color Requirements

Solar panels shall be placed so as to cause minimum visual impact on surrounding residences.

Ideally panels should be placed on the rear roof of a home (see “reasonable restriction” definition below).

The panels should be mounted as close to flat on the roof surface as is feasible, parallel to the roofline, and located entirely within the roof boundary.

Panels should be far enough from the ridge line so that they do not protrude above the house and no part of the installation should be visible above the peak or hip of the roof on which it is mounted.

Panels should be of the same size and shape and placed together within a flat roof section to avoid gaps between panels, unless gaps cannot be avoided due to roof-mounted penetrations such as vents.

Piping, wiring and mounting hardware must be hidden or minimally visible.

Systems must be sized to be residential and appropriate for the electrical capacity of the home.

The above established restrictions must be considered reasonable per Virginia Code (§ 67-701. Covenants regarding solar power). A restriction shall be deemed not to be reasonable if application of the restriction to a particular proposal (i) increases the cost of installation of the solar energy collection device by five percent over the projected cost of the initially proposed installation or (ii) reduces the energy production by the solar energy collection device by 10 percent below the projected energy production of the initially proposed installation. The owner shall provide documentation prepared by an independent solar panel design specialist, who is

certified by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners and is licensed in Virginia, that is satisfactory to the community association to show that the restriction is not reasonable according to the criteria established in this subsection.

Additional Application Requirements for Solar Energy Collection Devices

The application for solar energy collection device installations should include the following:

- Drawings and/or photos showing proposed location on the roof, with color photos taken from street.
- Detailed information regarding size, installation details, materials and color. Manufacturers' brochure would be helpful.

An Owner shall take into consideration the future height of neighbors' trees/shrubs when planning placement of a solar energy device. Under no circumstances shall a neighbor be required to remove or prune established plantings. However, once a solar system is approved, adjoining neighbors may not build or plant structures that will obstruct solar collection, without prior approval from the ARC. Vegetation not located within the Woods Edge common area is outside the purview of the WECA.

All installations must comply with all applicable building codes and other governmental regulations, and must be secured so that they do not jeopardize the safety of residents or cause damage to adjacent properties. Installers must be licensed, insured, obtain all required permits, and meet all criteria required of contractors to do work in the Woods Edge community.