

We received a corrections report recently on the permit Solar-0823-0475 regarding a zoning requirement for the ground mounted solar system. The code § 118-718 was referenced and it states this below:

*(2) Ground mounted solar panel systems. Ground mounted solar panel systems shall comply with all standards for permanent accessory buildings and structures, except:*

- a. Roof pitch and masonry requirement shall not apply.*
- b. Screening required: An opaque screening fence shall be provided to screen the system from adjacent properties.*
- c. Maximum height: Shall not exceed the height of the required opaque fence and in no case shall exceed eight feet.*
- d. Long lengths of conduit and wiring associated with the system's connection to the primary electrical panel shall be placed underground.*

*(3) Special use permit provision. Properties not able to justifiably meet the criteria provided herein may apply for a special use permit.*

Based on the requirements listed above, we believe that this homeowner's ground mount solar system does not fit the requirements for Section 2, note 3 "Maximum height: Shall not exceed the height of the required opaque fence and in no case shall exceed eight feet."

This property is isolated from surrounding neighborhoods and not directly in obstruction of any neighbor's view. It is separated by roads on both the east and west sides, a tree line on the north, and fences already constructed on every side of property. Please see attached picture of plans and photos of property to see where ground mount would be located.

We are asking if we can get approval on a special use permit, as stated in section 3 of code § 118-718, to allow the ground mount to be installed without a fence or trees planted around it.

Furthermore, an approval of the solar system with the condition of adding a fence or trees, will only be counterproductive to the use of this alternative energy source.

1. A ground mount based system generally has a 1 foot clearance in the front of the array and an 8 foot clearance in the back of the array, setting it a 25 degree pitch facing south. This maximizes the amount of sun the array gets throughout the day. If any obstruction is close to the array, then shading will ultimately cause the production of the system to decline.
2. Building a fence or planting trees near the ground mount to block the array from view of the roads will only be counterproductive to the system by eventually causing it to reduce solar production from the shading of the obstructions. Ground Mounts are generally built away from the home and away from trees to optimize sunlight exposure, so this would only be adding another issue to the system if we added a fence or trees to surround it.

3. No other structure on the property is currently surrounded by a fence or tree line on three sides, like the one that NRH is requiring for the ground mount system right now. If the goal of the fence or planting trees is to help block the ground mount from public view, then it should be able to blend naturally with the property and not stick out. We would argue that planting trees or building a fence is going to do the opposite by making the structure more visible and prominent to the public.