Notes on Meetings with Solar Industry Representatives

Noah Carter, Madison Energy Infrastructure, 9/3/26

- The criteria look really good.
- They provide good opportunities for solar to thrive while allowing staff review.
- Recommend adding "if not visible" to staff review note in both places.
- Re: disorganized: look for layout that is not piecemeal, good if it has an overall grid with a few pieces removed and is aligned with the edges of the roof
- 15-16" height max on flat roof is reasonable. Staff review available for that max. ARB review over 16".
- Ballasted racking typically at 5-10 degrees.
- Current trend is moving to bigger panels, by a few inches
- Consider a setback from the EC beyond which review isn't necessary. Maybe 500'

Deven Barkley, Virtual Solar, 9/9/26

- Good job with the draft criteria.
- The requirements are pretty standards.
- We could work with these.
- Fire code determines much of the design.

Laura Spetz, SunDay Solar, 8/31/26

I am so sorry for my very slow reply! I think everyone has had high utility bills this summer, and they ALL want solar!

Richard and I had a chance to look through the 'Draft Design Criteria' that you sent over. We thought everything looked good! The only thing I would add is that flat roofs typically require a tilt mount system. This kind of system is installed like any flush mount system, meaning it is installed in a coordinated and orderly way. The panels need some slope to shed water and snow and ice.

Richard is currently out in the field often, so it is hard for me to nail down a time for a Zoom with him but I will try.

Funny enough I have a solar project currently in permitting with Albemarle that will require ARB approval. I just submitted it today.

I will reach out if he is available in the next several days and try to get something scheduled.

Allison Hoffman, Tiger Solar, 9/9/26

General Goals

1. To the greatest extent possible, choose locations, mounting options, and design features that will minimize visibility of the facility from the EC street. (Note, on some buildings the south facing producing faces will face the street. Advise putting a specific guidance that this does not mean putting modules on the north face)

2. Panels and related items must not interfere with elements that contribute to the architectural composition, style or character of the building. (Examples? This wording is non-specific and could lead to interpretations that the shingles or some other more benign architectural feature can't be covered)

Solar Facilities Mounted on Pitched Roofs Must Have

1. Panels mounted in a manner that establishes an orderly and coordinated appearance and that avoids disjointed arrangements and stair stepping. Some roofs feature panels that are offset at ½ module length from one another on hip roofs. Is this problematic, or a desired feature to better follow the natural line of the roof?
2. Panels located parallel to and set back a minimum of 12" from the ridge, eaves and ~~edges~~ of the roof. 18" is minimum setback from ridge. For residential systems, 36" from rake/edge, for commercial systems, 4' perimeter (generally – assess case by case) Hip roof edges are not perpendicular to the top and bottom. Advise setting them parallel to the eaves/ridge. Alternatively, parallel to the general architecture of the building
3. Panels mounted parallel to the roof plane. Same as above?
4. Panels of consistent size and color.
5. Fixed, non-moveable panels.
6. Panels mounted such that there is no more than 10" from surface of roof to the top of the panel.
7. Conduit, hardware, and related equipment located on the roof below the modules, interior to the building or on walls not visible from the EC. If interior or invisible locations are not available, use matte finishes and colors consistent with the color of the surface to which the equipment is attached. Conduit and external hardware/equipment cannot be painted until after inspection.
8. Panels, frames and attached hardware in a consistent color, coordinated with the building whenever possible.
9. Mounting systems that do not extend beyond the panels or the roof. 3"

NOTE: If solar panels are installed on roofs that are not visible from the Entrance Corridor street and in a manner that renders the installation not visible from the Entrance Corridor street, ARB approval of the design is not required. Documentation confirming lack of visibility will be required for staff review.

Solar Facilities Mounted on Flat Roofs Must Have

1. Panels arranged in an organized pattern that establishes a coordinated and orderly appearance consistent with the architecture.
2. A mounting design that is unobtrusive or is an element that complements the building.
3. Conduit, hardware, and related equipment located interior to the building or on walls not visible from the EC. If interior or invisible locations are not available, use matte finishes and colors consistent with the color of the surface to which the equipment is attached. Conduit and external hardware/equipment cannot be painted until after inspection.

NOTE: If parapets or other parts of the building eliminate visibility of the solar installation as viewed from the Entrance Corridor street, ARB approval of the design is not required. Documentation confirming lack of visibility will be required for staff review.

Note: Solar parking canopies are not included in this category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness.

Sadhbh O'Flynn, C3, 8/27/26

General Goals

1. Encourage EC rooftop solar installations that advance the goals of the County's Climate Action Plan, while incorporating design priorities for the Entrance Corridor
2. ~~1.~~ Where financially and logistically feasible ~~To the greatest extent possible~~, prioritise ~~choose~~ locations, mounting options, and/or design features that will reduce visual obtrusion ~~minimize visibility~~ of the installation ~~facility~~ from the EC street - provided this does not prevent maxized solar generation capacity. ~~.~~
3. ~~2.~~ ~~P~~Where financially and logistically feasible, panels and related items should avoid ~~must not~~ interfer~~inge~~ with design elements that positively contribute to the architectural composition, style or character of the building.

Solar Facilities Mounted on Pitched Roofs Must Have

1. Panels mounted in a manner that establishes an orderly and coordinated appearance and that avoids disjointed arrangements and stair stepping.
2. Panels located parallel to and set back a minimum of 12" from the ridge, eaves and edges of the roof.
3. Panels mounted parallel to the roof plane.
4. Panels of consistent size and color.
5. Fixed, non-moveable panels.
6. Panels mounted such that there is no more than 10" from surface of roof to the top of the panel.
7. Conduit, hardware, and related equipment located interior to the building or on walls not visible from the EC. If interior or invisible locations are not available, use matte finishes and colors consistent with the color of the surface to which the equipment is attached.
8. Panels, frames and attached hardware in a consistent color, coordinated with the building whenever possible.
9. Mounting systems that do not extend beyond the panels or the roof.

NOTE: If solar panels are installed on roofs that are not visible from the Entrance Corridor street and in a manner that renders the installation not visible from the Entrance Corridor street, ARB approval of the design is not required. Documentation confirming lack of visibility will be required for staff review.

Solar Facilities Mounted on Flat Roofs Must Have

1. ~~Panels arranged in an organized pattern that establishes a coordinated and orderly appearance consistent with the architecture.~~
2. ~~2.~~ 1. A mounting design that is unobtrusive or is an element that complements the building.
3. ~~3.~~ 2. Conduit, hardware, and related equipment located interior to the building or on walls not visible from the EC. If interior or invisible locations are not available, use matte finishes and colors consistent with the color of the surface to which the equipment is attached.

NOTE: If parapets or other parts of the building eliminate visibility of the solar installation as viewed from the Entrance Corridor street, ARB approval of the design is not required. Documentation confirming lack of visibility will be required for staff review.

Note: Solar parking canopies are not included in this category of Countywide Certificate of Appropriateness.

Commented [1]: Noting that Chair Gallaway explicitly stated that the design criteria should support the goals of the Climate Action Plan - should this be included in the General Goals?

Commented [2]: Suggest removing altogether - but at a minimum, add a degree of flexibility -- it could be interpreted to be extremely restrictive as written

Commented [3]: Need the specification that there are three tiers and suggest adding to the top of the guidelines

Commented [4]: As we discussed yesterday, including the visual examples of what could be considered complementary will be very helpful -- e.g. the modern glass building with solar panels that looked similar to a pitched roof with green elements behind