

SUPPLEMENTAL PACKET

Planning Commission Memo

Meeting: Feb. 6, 2017

To: Chair Ronningen and members of the Planning Commission
From: Ron Moorse, City Administrator
Date: February 1, 2017
Re: Comprehensive Plan Update – Solar Access

At the January 9, 2017 Planning Commission meeting, Chair Ronningen asked the Commission members to provide any additional comments regarding the Comprehensive Plan to the City Administrator for the February 6, 2017 Planning Commission meeting agenda packet. The following comments regarding the solar access language in the Comprehensive Plan were provided by Commissioner Nelson. Because the agenda packet was completed earlier than normal, the comments were not received in time to be included in the packet.

Solar Access

2008 Comp Plan on p. 18 states "Section 12-132 prohibits the construction of any structure that will block solar access for an existing principal structure or infringe on the solar access of a vacant lot." With the adoption of the Solar Energy Systems Ordinance, this clause was moved to 12-230 D.2.a. and slightly modified: "No structure shall be erected that will block solar access for existing principal structures or infringe on the solar access of the buildable area of a vacant lot or parcel." 12-230 also provided a strong definition of solar access as: "Unobstructed use of the solar resource on a lot or building." Side setbacks of 5 feet in the VHS District create a possible conflict at adjacent parcels with one property owner possibly claiming the right to unobstructed use.

Proposal for modification of Comp Plan: New and modified structures must allow the buildable area on other parcels to achieve reasonable capture of Solar Resource in square footage set according to parcel size and zoning district by Section 12-230, including for the buildable area of a vacant lot or parcel.

Proposal for modification of 12-230 D.2.a. : New and modified structures must allow the buildable area on other parcels to achieve reasonable capture of Solar Resource in square footage set according to parcel size and zoning district by this article, including for the buildable area of a vacant lot or parcel.

By referring to the quantities of solar capture set by 12-230, a parcel in the VHS would be protected only up to 150 square feet of solar panels, or 1% of the lot's square footage, whichever is less. By writing this protection in terms of Solar Resource, the protected status exists between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM, avoiding the long shadows of early morning and late afternoon/evening.

PLANNING COMMISSION DIRECTION REQUESTED:

Provide direction regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan language changes.