

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS ORDINANCE

No. 60

Adopted: July 10, 2017

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 2.3 DEFINITIONS, ARTICLE 3 GENERAL PROVISIONS, TABLE 4-1 USE CLASSES, TABLE 4-2 AUTHORIZED USES, TABLE 4-3 ACCESSORY USES, ARTICLES 6-8 AND 10-12 SECTIONS 6.2.3, 7.1.3, 8.1.3, 10.1.3, 11.1.3, 12.1.3 'ACCESSORY BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND USES, PARKING AND SIGNS', AMEND ARTICLE 7 SECTION 7.3.1 AND ADD NEW SECTIONS 15.10.29 MEDIUM SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AND 15.10.30 LARGE SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS TO THE GRANT TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE.

THE TOWNSHIP OF GRANT ORDAINS:

- 1. Amend Section 2.3 Definitions of the Grant Township Zoning Ordinance by adding the following new definitions to read as follows:**

Small solar energy system: A single residential or small business-scale solar energy conversion system consisting of roof panels, ground-mounted solar arrays, or other solar energy fixtures, and associated control or conversion electronics, occupying no more than one (1) acre of land, and that will be used only to produce utility power primarily for on-site users.

Medium solar energy system: A private on-site or utility-scale solar energy conversion system consisting of many roof panels, ground-mounted solar arrays, or other solar energy fixtures, and associated control or conversion electronics, occupying more than one (1) acre and no more than five (5) acres of land, and that will be used to produce utility power for on-site users and/or off-site customers.

Large solar energy system: A utility-scale solar energy conversion system consisting of many ground-mounted solar arrays in rows, and associated control or conversion electronics, occupying more than five (5) acres of land, and that will be used to produce utility power for off-site customers.

- 2. Amend Article 3 General Provisions of the Grant Township Zoning Ordinance by adding the following accessory use and structure section:**

Section 3.30: SMALL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

3.30.1 Intent: An on-site use solar energy system (see Section 2.3 for definition) is intended to first serve the needs of the private owner. Systems occupying less than one (1) acre are considered small solar energy systems. Systems may be rooftop-mounted or ground-mounted. Small systems may be approved through the issuance of both, a zoning compliance permit and a building permit, provided the applications and installations meet the requirements set forth in this section. If the zoning administrator has a good faith belief that the solar energy systems may have an adverse impact on the health and safety of the public, it may require the applicant to apply for Site Plan Approval to the Planning Commission. Small solar energy systems may be permitted in all zoning districts.

3.30.2 General Requirements:

- A. Only one (1) solar energy system is permitted per lot or premises.
- B. Setbacks: All small solar energy systems shall maintain a minimum setback of twenty (20) feet from all property lines.
- C. Glare: The applicant shall provide documentation that the glare will be eliminated, insofar as possible. This may include manufacturer's specifications of the panels, proficient angling, adequate screening, or other means, as to not adversely affect neighboring properties.
- D. Mechanical equipment must be screened from street and neighboring residences by fencing or landscaping.
- E. A site plan, drawn to scale, shall show all existing and proposed structures, driveways, adjacent structures within 100 feet, and any other information required by the Zoning Administrator, Building Inspector or Planning Commission that is necessary to determine compliance with this ordinance.
- F. Complete, professionally prepared site plans signed and sealed by the responsible parties shall not apply to applications proposing:
 - i. Roof-mounted solar panels
 - ii. Ground-mounted solar panels that do not exceed 8,000 square feet.

3.30.3 Roof-mounted Solar Panels:

- A. Panels may extend up to five (5) feet above a flat surface and two (2) feet for all other roof types.
- B. Panels shall not hang over the edge of the building or project below the eaves.

3.30.4 Ground-mounted Solar Panels:

- A. Shall not be installed on parcels less than one (1) acre in size.
- B. Shall only be located in the side or rear yard.
- C. The maximum ground area occupied by solar panels and associated paved surfaces is one (1) acre.
- D. If more than 2,000 square feet of impervious surface is proposed, a drainage plan must be submitted with the permit application.
- E. The maximum ground-mounted panel height is eight (8) feet, measured from grade to the top of the panel.
- F. Panels shall be screened from residential districts and public rights-of-way by a greenbelt and/or six (6) foot privacy fence.

3.30.5 Decommissioning: If the solar energy system ceases to operate for a period of twelve months or is deemed unsafe or not consistent with code by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official, the current land owner shall repair and restore the system to good working order within a reasonable amount of time set by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official or, if no longer operating or no longer in compliance with federal, state or local codes, the current land owner shall remove the system in its entirety. This shall include removing posts, equipment, panels, foundations and any other items so that the ground is restored to its preconstruction state and is ready for development as another land use.

3. Amend Table 4-1 Use Classes of the Grant Township Zoning Ordinance by adding the following use class, definitions & examples of permitted uses after Social Institutions and before Two-Family Dwelling to read as follows:

SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS
Solar-powered photovoltaic (PV) panels convert the sun's rays into electricity. The electricity can then be used to supply renewable energy to homes and/or businesses.
Examples of Uses:
Small solar energy system: Roof-mounted solar panels and/or ground-mounted solar panels used to produce utility power for a single residential home and/or small business.
Medium solar energy system: Private on-site or utility-scale solar energy conversion system used to produce utility power for on-site uses and/or off-site uses.
Large solar energy system: Utility-scale solar energy conversion system consisting of numerous ground-mounted solar arrays in rows to produce utility power for off-site customers.

4. Amend Table 4-2 Authorized Uses of the Grant Township Zoning Ordinance by adding the following authorized uses after 'Livestock Production Operations, Large' and before 'Wind Energy Conversion System, Agricultural':

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL USES	A-1	A-2	R1-A	C	LI	MH	OS	SPECIAL STANDARDS
Solar Energy System, Medium	S	S		S	S			15.10.29
Solar Energy System, Large	S	S		S	S			15.10.30

5. Amend Table 4-3 Accessory Uses of the Grant Township Zoning Ordinance by adding the following accessory use after Satellite dishes and before Swimming pools:

ACCESORY USE	A-1	A-2	R1-A	C	LI	MH	OS	SPECIAL STANDARDS
Solar Energy System, Small	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	3.30

6. Amend Sections 6.2.3, 7.1.3, 8.1.3, 10.1.3, 11.1.3 and 12.1.3 Accessory Buildings, Structures and Uses, Parking and Signs by adding:

D. Solar energy systems, small; see Article 3, Section 3.30.

7. Amend Article 7 Section 7.3.1 Qualifications and Exceptions by adding:

J. Solar Energy Systems may occupy more than ten percent (10%) of a parcel.

8. Add new Section 15.10.29 Medium Solar Energy Systems to Article 15 Special Approval Use Regulations:

Section 15.10.29: Medium Solar Energy Systems:

A. Medium solar energy systems are permitted by Special Approval Use Permits in the A-1, A-2, C and LI zoning districts.

B. Intent: Grant Township promotes the effective and efficient use of Solar Energy Systems with the minimum regulations on the site design and installation of the energy conversion systems so that the public health, safety and welfare of neighboring property owners or occupants will not be jeopardized.

C. General requirements:

1. Setbacks: All systems shall maintain a minimum setback of fifty (50) feet from all property lines.
2. Glare: The applicant shall provide documentation that glare will be eliminated, insofar as possible. This may include manufacturer's specifications of the panels, proficient angling, adequate screening, or other means, as to not adversely affect neighboring properties.
3. Mechanical equipment must be screened from the street and neighboring residences by fencing or landscaping.
4. A site plan, drawn to scale and conforming to Section 16.5 Site Plan Submittal Requirements, shall show existing and proposed structures, driveways, adjacent structures within 100 feet, and any other information requested by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission that is necessary to determine compliance with this ordinance.

D. Roof-mounted solar panels:

1. Panels may extend up to five (5) feet above a flat roof surface and two (2) feet for all other roof types.
2. Panels shall not hang over the edge of the building or project below the eaves.

E. Ground-mounted solar panels:

1. Shall not be installed on a parcel less than ten (10) acres.
2. The maximum ground area occupied by solar panels and associated paved surfaces shall not exceed five (5) acres.
3. If more than 2,000 square feet of impervious surface is proposed, a drainage plan must be submitted with the application to the Planning Commission.
4. The maximum ground-mounted panel height is ten (10) feet, measured from grade to the top of the panel.
5. Panels shall be screened from residential districts and public rights-of way by a greenbelt and/or six (6) foot privacy fence. Screening requirements may be waived or reduced by the Planning Commission when existing natural vegetation accomplishes the same goal.

F. Decommissioning: If the solar energy system ceases to operate for a period of twelve months or is deemed unsafe or not consistent with code by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official, the current land owner shall repair and restore the system to good working order within a reasonable amount of time set by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official or, if no longer operating or no longer in compliance with federal, state or local codes, the current land owner shall remove the system in its entirety. This shall include removing posts, equipment, panels, foundations and any other items so that the ground is restored to its preconstruction state and is ready for development as another land use.

9. Add new Section 15.10.30 Large Solar Energy Systems to Article 15 Special Approval Use Regulations:

Section 15.10.30: Large Solar Energy Systems:

A. Large solar energy systems are permitted by Special Approval Use Permits in the A-1, A-2, C and LI zoning districts.

B. Intent: A utility grid solar energy system (also known as a solar farm) is a solar energy system that is designed and built to provide electricity to the electric utility grid. These solar farms are intended to be so constructed and located to be compatible with other land uses such as farms and heavy industrial uses, while being distanced enough from residential uses to avoid becoming a nuisance. Large scale systems shall only be considered for utility purposes.

C. General Requirements:

1. Shall not be installed on a parcel less than twenty (20) acres.
2. **Setbacks:** All systems shall maintain a minimum setback of fifty (50) feet from all property lines and a minimum setback of 100 feet from any residential dwelling.
3. **Glare:** The applicant shall provide documentation that glare will be eliminated, insofar as possible. This may include manufacturer's specifications of the panels, proficient angling, adequate screening, or other means, as to not adversely affect neighboring properties.
4. Mechanical equipment must be screened from the street and neighboring residences by fencing or landscaping.
5. A site plan, drawn to scale and conforming to Section 16.5 Site Plan Submittal Requirements, shall show existing and proposed structures, driveways, adjacent structures within 100 feet, and any other information requested by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission that is necessary to determine compliance with this ordinance.
6. The maximum ground area occupied by solar panels and associated paved surfaces shall be determined by the Planning Commission based on circumstances of each individual large solar energy system application.
7. If more than 2,000 square feet of impervious surface is proposed, a drainage plan must be submitted with the application to the Planning Commission.
8. **The maximum ground-mounted panel height is ten (10) feet, measured from grade to the top of the panel.**
9. **Panels shall be screened from residential districts and public rights-of-way by a greenbelt and/or six (6) foot privacy fence, and/or a landscaped greenbelt and berm, as determined by the Planning Commission. Screening requirements may be waived or reduced by the Planning Commission when existing natural vegetation accomplishes the same goal. The minimum berm required shall be four (4) feet eight (8) inches high, with a two (2) foot wide crown and one (1) on three (3) side slopes. The minimum landscaping requirement shall be two staggered rows of evergreen trees or like, not less than five (5) feet tall at the time of planting, placed on each of the side slopes of the berm, with a fifteen (15) foot spacing between trees in each row. The Planning Commission may require supplemental planting of small evergreen and/or deciduous shrubs along the crown of the berm. Planting requirements may be reduced up to 50% by the Planning Commission, but not eliminated, only when existing natural vegetation accomplishes a substantial portion of the screening requirement. Berms shall include diagonal channels at grade or cross berm culverts, where necessary to maintain drainage patterns in the area.**

- D. Decommissioning:** If the solar energy system ceases to operate for a period of twelve months or is deemed unsafe or not consistent with code by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official, the current land owner shall repair and restore the system to good working order within a reasonable amount of time set by the Zoning Administrator or Building Official or, if no longer operating or no longer in compliance with federal, state or local codes, the current land owner shall remove the system in its entirety. This shall include removing posts, equipment, panels, foundations and any other items so that the ground is restored to its preconstruction state and is ready for development as another land use.

NANCY SHARUM, Clerk