

Approved as Presented
July 8, 2019

**MAHTOMEDI ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MINUTES
JUNE 10, 2019**

A regular meeting of the Mahtomedi Environmental Commission was held on Monday, June 10, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at Mahtomedi City Hall.

Present were Commission Members: Chair Kevin Toskey, Kimberly Byrd, Christine Ahmann – Maples, Mike Chevalier, William Seuffert and Scott Peterson.

Also present were: City Council member Jeff Ledermann, City Administrator Scott Neilson, Conservation Minnesota Representatives Lucy McCurdy and Keely Cervantes and Office Assistant Luann Tembreull.

AGENDA

Upon motion by Commissioner Chevalier, seconded by Commissioner Ahmann-Maples, all members voting in favor, the agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Commissioner Ahmann-Maples, seconded by Commissioner Chevalier, all members voting in favor, the May 13, 2019 minutes were approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

SolSmart Update

The report from City Planner, Erin Perdu, was reviewed. (See Attachment A) In her report, Planner Perdu noted that the next steps for moving forward in the program include evaluating potential code changes suggested by the SolSmart code audit. Mahtomedi has been working with the Metropolitan Council's SolSmart advisor to work through tasks to achieve at least a Bronze level designation. To move toward the Silver designation, the City must also take actions in some of the eight categories listed in Planner Perdu's report.

Yard Waste and Organics Curbside Pick-up Update

It was noted that currently there are 57 residents signed up for yard waste and organics curbside pick-up.

Chair Toskey volunteered to place an article in the White Bear Press promoting the yard waste and organics curbside pick-up in the City of Mahtomedi. It was suggested that yard waste and organic curbside pick-up continue being promoted in the city newsletter.

Old Business continued:

Commissioner Ahmann-Maples would like to confirm with Public Works that they pick up piles of buckthorn that residents place at the curb.

One Time Use Plastics –High School Representative Stephanie Comfort

High School Representative, Stephanie Comfort, was not able to attend this meeting.

Finalize Sustainability Plan

During much discussion, the following items were discussed and agreed upon:

- Add in City's Comprehensive Plan to reduce areas being mowed and reduce fertilizing in both residential, commercial and public property
- Promote "low mow grass seed" for all properties in Mahtomedi
- Provide a "Fix It" clinic at the next RITE of Spring event
- Promote "Biz Recycling" at local businesses
- Every City Department conserve paper by duplexing when possible
- Promote City Council use "tablets" or "chrome books" at meetings to save paper
- Provide paper cups or reusable mugs at meetings instead of Styrofoam
- Promote wind and solar energy
- Encourage residents and businesses to swap out for LED lighting
- Encourage residents and businesses to install programmable thermostats or contact Xcel Energy to install a "Saver Switch" during summer months
- City install an electric car charging station at Veterans Park

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

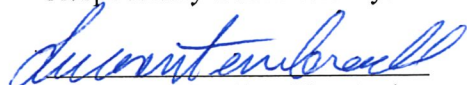
The following items are proposed for the next Commission Meeting Agenda:

- SolSmart Update
- One Time Use Plastics –High School Representative Stephanie Comfort
- Carbon Goals – Partners in Energy Update
- Library Update – Washington County Representative Attend meeting

Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Chevalier, seconded by Commissioner Ahmann-Maples, all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:


Luann Tembreull, Office Assistant



Mahtomedi Memorandum

To: Environmental Commission
Scott Neilson, City Administrator

From: Erin Perdu, Senior City Planner

Date: June 4, 2019

Re: SolSmart Designation Update
WSB Project No. 013316-000

City staff have been working with the Metropolitan Council on getting the City designated as a SolSmart Community. The SolSmart program provides no-cost technical assistance from a team of national experts to evaluate programs and practices that impact solar improvements. Part of the goal of SolSmart is to streamline the process of getting solar development approved and eliminating red tape.

Mahtomedi has been working with the Metropolitan Council's SolSmart Advisor to work through tasks to achieve at least a Bronze level designation. Points for designation are awarded in the following categories:

- Permitting
- Planning, Zoning and Development Regulations
- Inspection
- Construction Codes
- Solar Rights
- Utility Engagement
- Community engagement
- Market Development & Finance

To date, the following have been accomplished, which our SolSmart Advisor has indicated will allow us to receive a Bronze level designation:

- Training of permitting staff from Met Council
- Revision of permitting forms
- Development of checklists for roof-top and freestanding solar projects
- Analysis of the City's existing code language by SolSmart (attached)
- Create a solar landing page on the City's website with information on permitting, fees, inspections and other solar resources.

Our SolSmart Advisor from the Met Council will be submitting Mahtomedi and a cohort of other communities for Bronze designation by the end of June.

Next steps for moving forward in the program include evaluating potential code changes suggested by the SolSmart code audit. To move toward the Silver designation, the City must also take actions in some of the eight categories listed above.

PZD-1: Review zoning requirements and identify restrictions that intentionally or unintentionally prohibit solar PV development. Compile findings in a memo.

This SolSmart prerequisite requires communities to conduct a review of zoning requirements and identify restrictions that prohibit PV development. To assist your community, solar specialists at Great Plains Institute have conducted an initial review of your community's code to assess possible obstacles (i.e. height restrictions, set-back requirements, etc.) and gaps. Below, please find the outcome of their review. By reading the narrative, reviewing the example code language provided, and signing the statement at the bottom of the page, your community will satisfy PZD-1 and be one step closer to achieving SolSmart designation

Considerations for incorporating solar into municipal zoning codes

Section(s)	Element	Reviewer Comments	Example(s) from other codes	SolSmart Credit	Priority Level
11.01.7	Definitions	Zoning ordinance does not define any terms related to solar in planning, zoning, and development. Subdivision ordinance does define "solar energy system." Recommendation: Include definitions for rooftop solar, ground-mount solar, and principal use solar as these are different types of land uses. Consider additional definitions as appropriate	<u>Minnesota Local Government Solar Toolkit Model Ordinance Section III</u>	Enables Several Credits	High
Subd:11.2.4; 11.3.4; 11.4.4; 11.5.4; 11.6.4; 11.7.4; 11.8.4; 11.11.4; 11.12.4; 11.13.4; 11.14.4; 11.15.4; 11.16.4; 11.21.4; 11.27.4; 11.28.4	Rooftop Solar Accessory Use	Ordinance currently allows rooftop solar uses as an accessory use in all major zones.		PZD-2	Done
11.01.2	Principal Use Solar Land Uses	Ordinance allows principal use solar in the Industrial/Business Park District as a conditional use, so long as principal use solar is included within the definition of "solar energy devices not an integral part of the principal structure" currently used in ordinance or pursuant on		PZD-12a	Done, clarity advised

Subd. 11.2.4; 11.3.4; 11.4.4; 11.5.4; 11.6.4; 11.7.4; 11.8.4; 11.11.4; 11.12.4; 11.13.4; 11.14.4; 11.15.4; 11.16.4; 11.21.4	Ground-Mount Accessory Use	described above. Ordinance currently allows ground-mounted solar uses as an accessory use in the majority of zoning districts so long as ground-mount solar is included within the definition of "solar equipment" currently used in ordinance or pursuant on additional clarity within definition section as described above.	PZD-10a	Done, clarity advised
Subd. 10.1.D.6	Rooftop Solar Aesthetics/Screenings	Existing site design requirements requires mechanical equipment on the exterior of buildings to be screened. Recommendation: Exempt rooftop solar energy systems from screening requirements (except in special districts such as historic districts), or explicitly limit aesthetic standards to maintain the design function of the solar array.	PZD-10b	Moderate
Subd. 10.1.C.1.a	Rooftop Solar Height Exceptions	Ordinance currently requires solar equipment to be consistent with height requirements of principal or accessory buildings. Consider increasing maximum height limitations for instances where the solar generation is enhanced by the difference. Recommendation: Add rooftop solar arrays to height regulation exceptions	PZD-10b	Moderate
Subd. 9.4.B	Setbacks for ground-mounted solar	Ordinance requires solar equipment to be consistent with setback requirements of the district where it is located. Recommendation: Consider allowing ground-mount solar incursions into required yards or setbacks, consistent with other uses that are given such flexibility.	PZD-10c	Moderate/ Low
Subd. 10.1.D.6	Screening of ground-mount solar	Existing site design requirements requires mechanical equipment on the exterior of buildings to be screened. Recommendation: Exempt ground-mount solar energy systems from screening requirements that could affect the functioning of the system, or add	PZD-10c	High

<p>11.01.9.6.2(c) Impervious surface: 10.1.E.1</p>	<p>operation of a solar array Maximum lot coverage of accessory uses shall not exceed 80% of lot coverage area of principal building. For impervious surface standards, Recommendation: Exempt accessory-use ground-mount solar from impervious surface standards, provided the soil under the collector is not compacted and vegetated. For lot coverage standards, Recommendation: Exempt accessory-use ground-mount solar from lot coverage standards, or create a separate lot coverage standard for solar accessory uses.</p>	<p>Lot Coverage for ground-mount solar</p>	<p><u>Minnesota Local Government Solar Toolkit Model Ordinance Section IV.D</u></p>	<p>PZD-10c</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>11.01.9.4(B)</p>	<p>Solar Rights</p>	<p>Solar Rights</p>	<p>Ordinance includes subsection on solar rights, including restrictions of trees or shrubs blocking solar energy systems in daylight hours.</p>	<p>SR-3</p>	<p>Done</p>
<p>Subd:11.2.4; 11.3.4; 11.4.4; 11.5.4; 11.6.4; 11.7.4; 11.8.4; 11.11.4; 11.12.4; 11.13.4; 11.14.4; 11.15.4; 11.16.4; 11.21.4; 11.27.4; 11.28.4</p>	<p>Solar Carport Incentives</p>	<p>Solar Carport Incentives</p>	<p>Recommendation: Recognize solar carports or parking structures as a permitted accessory use in non-residential or multi-family districts. Consider parking requirement incentives (reduction of required spaces) to encourage such solar development, particularly if coupled with EV charging infrastructure.</p>	<p>PZD-8</p>	<p>Consider</p>
<p>New district section</p>	<p>Principal Use Solar Development Pathway</p>	<p>Principal Use Solar Development Pathway</p>	<p>Recommendation: Consider creating an overlay district identifying where principal solar uses are desired.</p>	<p>PZD-12b</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Subd. 11.35</p>	<p>Solar Ready Zoning Standards</p>	<p>Solar Ready Zoning Standards</p>	<p>Recommendation: Include an incentive or requirement for making buildings meet "solar-ready" standards in flexible zoning standards such as Planned Unit Developments.</p>	<p>CC-2</p>	<p>Consider</p>
<p>11.01.11.5</p>	<p>Historic Districts</p>	<p>Historic Districts</p>	<p>Ordinance allows solar energy systems as an accessory use in Historic Mahtomedi District.</p>	<p>PZD-4</p>	<p>Done</p>

