



TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Get a Slice of the Apple.

Staff Report

- AGENDA DATE:** August 21, 2013
- SUBJECT:** Discussion of Photovoltaic Solar Farm Requirements
- PLANNER:** Carol Miller, Senior Planner
- RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss the information presented, take public testimony and provide direction.

At the July 9, 2013 Town Council meeting, the issue of solar farms was discussed as it pertains to commercial development to ensure there are no issues as the demand for photovoltaic solar farm development increases. To date, five (5) applications for solar development have been received by the Town, four (4) of which have been approved. Following the discussion, the Council requested that the Planning Commission review the standards for solar farms and consider some revisions, including setbacks, height, and eliminating chain link as a fencing option.

To facilitate the Commission's discussion on photovoltaic solar farm development requirements, the following tables highlight the development requirements as provided for within the Development Code and North Apple Valley Industrial Specific Plan and how approved projects compare with these standards.

	Solar Development Code Standards	RVLD Development Code Standards	Project Designs As Approved
<u>Setbacks</u> Front – Major Rd Front – Local Rd Side Rear Existing SFR Front Side Rear	25 feet 5 feet 0 feet 0 feet 25 feet	50 feet (regardless of street classification) 25 feet 40 feet n/a Accessory Structures – 50 feet 25 feet 10 feet	85 feet 45 feet 47-100 feet 40-360 feet
Height	Max. 35 feet for fixed Max. 50 feet w/ rotating tilt	Max. 35 feet Max. 16 feet for accessory structure	8-15 feet for fixed tilt 8-12 feet for rotating panels
Fencing	Chain link or Wrought Iron Max. 10 feet	Chain link or Wrought Iron Max. 6 feet along side and rear. Open decorative fencing max. 6 feet in front setback provided it is set	Chain Link 7 feet

		back 5 feet.	
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	Solar NAVISP Standards	NAVISP Development Standards	Project Design (1 project)
<u>Setbacks</u> Front – Major Rd Front – Local Rd Side Rear Existing SFR	25 feet 15 feet 0 feet 0 feet n/a	25-75 feet (depends on the street) 0 feet 0 feet n/a	25 feet 15 feet 16 feet
Height	Max. 35 feet within Airport Influence Area A-1 Max. 50 feet within Airport Influence Area A-2	Max. 35 feet within Airport Influence Area A-1 Max. 50 feet within Airport Influence Area A-2 Max. 100 feet outside of Airport Influence Area	8.5 feet at max tilt
Fencing	Chain link or Wrought Iron Max. 10 feet	Decorative open fencing w/ pilasters Max. 8 feet or up to 10 feet with PC approval	Chain link 7 feet

To date, the submitted solar facilities meet the minimum building setbacks for solar development and meet the setback requirements of the underlying zones. To require the building setback as the underlying zones does not appear to be an issue, given the projects are designed with an access road around the perimeter of the solar arrays/panels which places the panels outside of the required setbacks. Does the Commission find the existing setbacks acceptable or should the Code be amended? Due to the heights requested in the approved projects, is the height limits in the Code and Specific Plan too generous? They could be reduced.

The Commission should discuss the situations where the use of chain link might be acceptable, such as along the side and rear property lines but outside the front setback or street side yards. Within the front setback decorative fencing could be used as allowed by the underlying zoning standards. In the underlying zoning of the RVLDD, chain link is permitted fencing material.

Following the Commission’s discussion and direction to staff, a Development Code Amendment will be brought back for the Commission’s consideration.

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss and provide direction.