



Legislation Text

File #: 17-221, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Public Hearing on Land Use Ordinance Amendments Related to Solar Arrays

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an opportunity for the Board of Aldermen to receive public comment and to consider amendments to the Land Use Ordinance related to roof and ground mounted solar arrays.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Christina Moon - 919-918-7325, Randy Dodd - 919-918-7326, Marty Roupe - 919-918-7333, Bob Hornik - 919-929-3905

INFORMATION: In the summer of 2016, staff from Orange County and Chapel Hill reached out Carrboro to share information about the SolSmart program, and to invite the Town to collaborate and seek designation. (Information about SolSmart may be found at the following link: <http://www.gosparc.org/>.)

As part of its participation, and with guidance and recommendations from a SolSmart Advisor, the Town has undergone an intensive review of the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) to make it more solar friendly, and has taken other steps under the SolSmart categories of permitting, inspections, community engagement, and market development and finance. The completion of this level of work has earned the Town Bronze status in the SolSmart program. (Press release announcing the Town's achievement may be found at <http://www.townofcarrboro.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=679> .) The adoption of LUO amendments may promote the Town to Silver or Gold status.

A draft ordinance (Attachment B) has been prepared which establishes new definitions for roof and ground mounted solar arrays and assigns permitting requirements on the basis of size and intensity. If adopted, small-scale solar arrays and solar hot water heaters would be allowed as accessory uses in all zoning districts.

The draft ordinance was presented to the Planning Board, Environmental Advisory Board and Appearance Commission on June 1, 2017, and was referred to the Economic Sustainability Commission and Orange County. Neither the Appearance Commission nor Economic Sustainability Commission had quorums at their meetings. Comments from the Planning Board, Environmental Advisory Board and Orange County are provided (Attachment E).

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Public hearings involve staff and public notice costs associated with advisory board and Board of Aldermen review.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen consider the attached resolution finding consistency (Attachment A-1), and the draft ordinance (Attachment B).