**Solar Panel Discussion**

**Guiding Principles, Assumptions and Suggestions**

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In preparation for a formal discussion of the City of Dayton Department of Planning, The City of Dayton Landmarks commission, and the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) the following presents a set of guiding principles, assumptions and several potential solutions that may facilitate the use of solar panels within Historic Districts and on individual properties protected by a local or National Historic designation:

**Guiding Principles**

* This Landmarks Commission operates on the premise that our role, first and foremost is to protect the historic integrity of individual properties with historic designations.
  + Such “protection” includes not only the individual properties but also the esthetics, ambiance and streetscapes that make up the very essence of a District.
* Approval for any modification to a protected structure is limited, by this Commission to the exterior of these structures.
* Modifications to any structure that facilitates a more modern use without affecting the original architecture, historic significance and general appeal of a structure or changes the general esthetics, in some significant way, of the streetscape shall be evaluated, in a reasonable way and on a case by case basis, by the Commission and unless there are factors considered detrimental to the structure or streetscape shall be approved, but may be modified as part of the evaluation process.
* The Commission understands that its charter is one of Preservation and all cases will be evaluated on that premise alone.
* Once a set of standards are established, and a “proof of Concept” validated and/or modified, certain specific conditions may lend themselves to approval of individual cases by the Historic Preservation Officer without full Commission review.
* Justification of any modification will not be based on reversibility alone. As should be clear to the Commission, virtually any modification can be reversed and or the original design replicated but those changes can set precedence and/or affect the general esthetics of the structure and streetscape/District for many years to come.

**Assumptions**

* The Commission understands that energy conservation is important to both the ecology and individual property owners.
* The Commission can put aside individual and personal preferences and evaluate this technology without bias and strictly on the basis of affect on historic structures and streetscapes/Districts.
* This Commission will arrive at a set of standards that is workable, as it relates to our charted responsibilities.
* This Commission understands that we are not structured or organized to champion or promote any specific technology but rather to determine its impact on and protect the historic structure/streetscape/District.
* This Commission will, to the best of our ability and within the scope of our chartered responsibilities, be sensitive to the needs of each property owner.
* This Commission, at least initially, understands that specific circumstances may prohibit some properties from installation of solar panels.
  + The criteria for that determination may be based on:
    - Esthetics
    - Visual impact
    - Position of structure and/or panels
    - Other factors as may be determined by the Commission
* Once this Commission reaches agreement on a set of Standards, any required public hearings will occur and these standards will be adopted, either by incorporation into the Blue Book or by Resolution as a supplement to our guidelines, whichever allows for the most expedient implementation, so as to not encumber or delay requests for COAs.
* Once we agree on a set of standards, we will allow some period of time or some number of implementations and determine if the guidelines work, as intended or need further revision(s).
* Because of the highly visible nature of solar panels and as it relates to properties considered an “intrusion”, the Commission may hold the property owner to the same standard of implementation because of the potential impact on esthetics and streetscapes. TBD.

**Suggestions/Ideas**

* No panels should be permitted on street facing side(s) of any property.
* Where panels are to be installed on non street facing sides of a property but where they may still be visible, a certain amount of “setback” or “clean roof space” should be required on the street facing side(s) of any property.
  + The amount of setback TBD
* We may want to consider the feasibility of panel installations, mounted on privacy fence posts, along the inside side or rear fence walls, where they will not be visible from the street.
* We may find it acceptable to mount panels on the roof of a garage or other subordinate rear structures where street visibility is minimal.
* We should consider the feasibility for Historic Districts implementing a “solar garden” where vacant lots are available and surrounding properties can install panels in that “garden” . Street facing lots should be buffered from the street with landscaping or appropriate fencing.
* Where property roofs are completely obscure from the street, especially flat roof structures, or structures with parapets and/or intrusion type structures, we should encourage adjoining property owners to approach that property owner and attempt to reach agreement to share/lease roof space.
* OTHER IDEAS?????