

Three Colonies Three Colonies Homeowner's Association

Policy on Solar Panel Installation

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and procedures for the installation of solar panels within the community governed by the homeowner's association (HOA), in accordance with the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) Chapter 47F.

Scope

This policy applies to all homeowners within Three Colonies who wish to install solar panels on their properties.

Compliance with NCGS Chapter 47F

All provisions of this policy shall be in compliance with the applicable provisions outlined in the North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 47F, particularly those concerning the rights and limitations of homeowners regarding the installation of solar energy systems.

1. Homeowners should first consider all existing structures and landscaping before selecting a site for any proposed solar system.
2. All plans must be preapproved by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) prior to installation.
3. Preferred location of solar panels is either a ground-mounted array (on the side or rear of the house) or a rear-facing, roof-mounted array. Flush-mounted panels (i.e. – the plane of the array is parallel to the roof) on a roof facing a street will be allowed if documentation is provided from the solar contractor indicating this is the only feasible location for a solar array. If panels are installed on a side or rear roof, the array may be tilted or raised if a variance is granted.
4. All components of the solar system should be integrated into the design of the home. The color of the solar system components should generally conform to the color of the roof shingles to the extent practical. Solar “shingles” that mimic the look of a composite shingle are acceptable but should match the color of the current roof shingles as much as is practical.
5. The installation of all solar heating and cooling systems shall only be done by a licensed installer or journeyman plumber. Applications submitted to the ARC should include the following:
 - a. A diagram “drawn to scale” by the licensed contractor installing the system showing where the system will be installed.
 - b. Photos of the roof area where the array will be mounted.
 - c. Material to be used and/or manufacturer’s description of the system, photos and/or pictures of the system and color of the system.
 - d. Where possible, provide photos of similar existing systems as examples.

6. Piping and electrical connections will be located directly under and/or within the perimeter of the panels, when possible, and placed as inconspicuously as possible when viewed from all angles.
7. The highest point of a solar panel array will be lower than the ridge of the roof where it is attached.
8. All painted surfaces will be kept in good repair.
9. Changes to adjacent property should not impede an existing or soon-to-be-installed solar system or interfere with any existing solar energy easement.

A variance to certain sections of these guidelines may be granted if compliance with these guidelines would significantly increase the purchase price of the solar system or significantly decrease its performance or efficiency. If a homeowner seeks a variance, they must provide a minimum of two bids depicting the cost of installation of the solar systems.

- one bid in compliance with these guidelines and a second bid depicting the desired alternative location unless the variance represents the only feasible installation location.

The ARC may require bids or estimates from a second contractor in order to make an informed decision. Three Colonies will bring the neighbors of our community together to achieve and preserve a vibrant community for living, working, learning, and playing.

Goals

We are committed to strengthening our community by:

- promoting neighborliness, cooperation, and goodwill among the members of our community.
- collecting and distributing information that is relevant to Three Colonies community to keep residents informed.
- facilitating community conversation and consensus on important topics and providing a community voice where possible.

Cont. Checklist on following page

Step-by-Step Checklist for Homeowners Installing Solar Panels

SEE BELOW

Step-by-Step Checklist for Homeowners Installing Solar Panels

1. Preliminary Considerations

- **Assess Property:** Review existing structures and landscaping to determine potential sites for the solar panels.
- **Determine Feasibility:** Consider the most suitable location based on the property's orientation and existing conditions.

2. Plan Preparation

- **Select Solar Panel Type:** Choose the type of solar panel system (e.g., ground-mounted, or roof-mounted). Ensure it aligns with the preferred locations:
 - Ground-mounted arrays (side or rear of the house)
 - Rear-facing roof-mounted arrays.
 - Flush-mounted panels facing the street (with contractor documentation if this is the only feasible location)
- **Color and Integration:** Ensure the solar system components are integrated into the home design and match the color of the roof shingles as closely as possible.

3. Architectural Review Committee (ARC) Submission

- **Prepare Documentation:**
 - **Diagram:** A scale drawing by the licensed contractor showing the proposed installation location.
 - **Photos:** Pictures of the roof area where the panels will be installed.
 - **Material Specifications:** Details about the materials used, including manufacturer descriptions and color.
 - **Examples:** Photos of similar existing solar systems if available.
- **Submit Application:** Send the completed application package to the ARC for review.

4. Professional Installation

- **Licensed Installer:** Ensure that the installation is carried out by a licensed installer or journeyman plumber.
- **System Integration:** Ensure piping and electrical connections are located directly under and/or within the panel perimeter and are as inconspicuous as possible.

5. Compliance and Maintenance

- **Height Restrictions:** Verify that the highest point of the solar panel array is lower than the roof ridge where it is mounted.
- **Surface Maintenance:** Keep all painted surfaces in good repair.

6. Variance Request (if applicable)

- **Determine Need for Variance:** If compliance with the guidelines would increase the cost or affect the system's performance, prepare to request a variance.
- **Obtain Bids:**
 - Provide a minimum of two bids:
 - One bid compliant with the guidelines
 - One bid for the desired alternative location
- **Submit Variance Request:** Include both bids with the variance request to the ARC.

7. Neighbor Consideration

- **Community Impact:** Ensure that the installation does not impede or interfere with neighboring properties or existing solar energy easements.

8. Final Review

- **ARC Decision:** Await the ARC's decision on your application or variance request.
- **Approval:** Proceed with installation only after receiving ARC approval.

9. Installation and Follow-Up

- **Installation:** Proceed with the solar panel installation as per the approved plan.
- **Post-Installation Review:** Ensure compliance with all guidelines and address any issues or adjustments as needed.

10. Contact Information

- **Questions and Assistance:** For further guidance or questions, contact the **Three Colonies Homeowners Association Board or Architectural Review Committee.**

By following this checklist, homeowners at Three Colonies can ensure their solar panel installation meets community standards and regulatory requirements.