

Process – Installation of Solar on Residential Buildings - FINAL

Steps required in Forest Hills (consult actual ordinances for full and updated regulations/requirements):

1. Installation must comply with the borough's zoning ordinance (as of 2016: Chapter 27, section 1016). The fee resolution must be consulted for current information and cost requirements noted here.

2. Zoning Permit – Under section 27-1016.1.B: Before any construction or installation on any solar PV system, except for construction or installation of a solar PV system not to exceed 6 square feet in area or 1 kW, a permit issued by the Borough shall be obtained to document compliance with this Chapter.

A. An application for a zoning permit shall be submitted for approval in a timely manner to allow sufficient time for proper review and inspection. Application review requires a minimum of 5 business days. However, it is advised that applicant shall provide the application at least 2 weeks prior to anticipated work.

B. A zoning permit fee is set by council each year in the fee resolution. Consult the fee resolution for full information.

C. In 2016, the fee for a Zoning Use Permit is \$40 (subject to change).

3. Under section 27-1016.3.A: The solar PV system must be constructed to comply with Chapter 5 of the Forest Hills Code of Ordinances, Code Enforcement, as amended, and any applicable codes, standards and regulations incorporated into the Forest Hills Borough Code of Ordinances, except where an applicable industry standard has been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry under its regulatory authority.

A. Chapter 5 requires conformance with the current building and electrical codes in force in the borough as required by the Uniform Construction Code (UCC).

1) Requires certification by a registered architect or engineer that the roof can support any additional load placed on it by the solar installation (ICC, ASCE 7-05)

2) Requires inspection by the electrical inspector as specified by the current international electrical code in force in the borough and under the UCC (NEC Code article 690-Solar).

- a) An electrical inspection fee is set by council each year in the fee resolution
- b) In 2016, the fee for electrical inspection is \$50 (subject to change). Consult the fee resolution for full information.

3) A building permit is not required unless there is an alteration to the property other than the installation of solar panels or unless the contractor and/or property owner require a review of work.

4. Support & Guidance (purpose – supporting document)

A. From: Solar Energy Systems, A Guide for Pennsylvania Municipal Officials - Here comes the Sun! 12/1/2009 Governor's Solar Working Group

P. 15 Inspections

Under the PA Sunshine Solar Program rules, DEP will perform inspections of at least 10 percent of all installations. A code official and/or electrical inspector will typically perform the electrical inspection for compliance with the National Electric Code (NEC)

along with any required building inspections. If the solar system is grid-connected, the local utility company may also require inspection prior to activating the system or require documentation from the solar installer. To ensure that a solar energy system passes inspection and is properly installed, contracting with an approved installer is critical to ensure consumer protection. In administering the PA Sunshine Solar Program, DEP has developed an approved list of solar system installers.

p. 18: Does a solar PV system have to meet local building codes?

A. Yes. You will probably need to obtain a permit from the municipality, or city. You may be required to purchase a building permit and/or electrical permit before you can begin installation. Most solar installers should be able to assist you with local permitting issues.

Approved: July 20, 2016