



POLICY STATEMENT FOR SOLAR COLLECTORS

CITY OF CHARLESTON
2 George Street, Third Floor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY
Charleston, South Carolina 29401 843-724-3781 Fax: 843-724-3772 www.charleston-sc.gov

By motion of the Board of Architectural Review – Small at the November 23, 2021 meeting and the Board of Architectural Review – Large at the December 8, 2021 meeting, the following criteria and guidelines were adopted to provide direction and encourage the use of solar panels, solar film or photovoltaic cells (collectively, “Solar Collectors”) in the Old and Historic District, Old City District, Landmark Overlay Zone, and Historic Corridor District (collectively, the “Districts”).

The appropriate Board of Architectural Review (BAR) must consider the visual impact of all required components of Solar Collectors in relation to the historic, architectural, and aesthetic features of the property and the placement location. Therefore, the following criteria and guidelines for the installation of the Solar Collectors should be followed:

Solar Collectors proposed to be installed on properties rated **Category 1 or 2 on the Architectural Inventory**¹ shall not be visible from the public right of way.

Solar Collectors on proposed to be installed on **Category 3 or 4 or non-rated historic properties within the Districts** may be allowed some visibility from the public right of way, while not detracting from the historic character of the property, as determined by the BAR.

Solar Collectors proposed to be installed on **new construction** shall be permitted, but the BAR shall have purview over the placement and size of such Solar Collectors for potential negative impact to the character of the neighborhood.

General Guidelines for Solar Collectors:

1. Solar Collectors on historic properties should be located on rear roof slopes, behind architectural features or parapets, or other locations not visible (following the criteria for visibility listed above). Solar Collectors on Accessory Buildings shall be encouraged.
2. Significant, character-defining features, including, but not limited to, roof slopes, dormers, chimneys, windows, shutters, roof ridges, eaves, and other architectural features, shall not be removed, damaged, altered or obstructed to accommodate Solar Collectors.
3. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* shall be consulted when evaluating the installation of Solar Collectors on historic properties.
4. The load, wind load, and uplift capacity of any roof structure proposed to accommodate Solar Collectors shall be confirmed by a qualified structural engineer.

¹

In the Historic Architectural Resource Survey of the Upper Peninsula, Brockington and Associates, 2004.

5. Installation generally should not penetrate historic roofing materials due to the fragile nature of these materials. Custom details are required that are specific to each structure and application method. All alternative means should be explored before penetrating historic materials, including positioning panels on auxiliary structures, free-standing installations, and locating panels on secondary roof forms, all with restricted visibility from the public right of way.
6. The Solar Collectors should be low-profile, or no more than 8" above the roof surface, and at a pitch consistent with the existing roof.
7. The color of conduit and all attachment mechanisms for Solar Collectors shall be painted to be compatible with the existing material, including roof, siding, etc.
8. The Solar Collectors shall be installed in a manner that is reversible.

The Board of Architectural Review resolves to review applications for Solar Collectors, and will consider those applications on a case-by-case basis.