



Legislation Text

File #: 20-212, Version: 1

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

Memo Date: April 7, 2020
Agenda Date: April 22, 2020
Prepared By: Nancy A. Bunt, Community Services Director
Through: Matt Fuhrer, Interim City Manager
Requested Action:

Seek Council direction on the temporary waiver of building permit fees related to the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems previously approved by City Council.

BACKGROUND:

On May 8, 2019, Council approved Resolution 2019-032 providing for a temporary waiver of building permit fees related to the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems for a period of one year; expressing the City's support for the Solar United Neighbors of Florida (FL SUN) Initiative of the League of Women Voters and the intention of the City to partner with those organizations to further adoption of solar energy in the City and Brevard County. The City assisted by:

- Promoting the FL SUN information meeting on May 22, 2020 about solar energy to increase interest in renewable energy and help recruit co-op members and/or help promote other FL SUN informational meetings, and
- Providing information about the FL SUN co-op partnership opportunities on the City's website and in the City's newsletter.

Solar energy is a renewable energy source. An increasing number of residential and commercial property owners are therefore making significant investments in solar electric systems. Solar cells do not require much maintenance once brought up to their maximum efficiency and are considered quiet collectors. Unlike other energy sources, energy harvested from solar radiation by photovoltaic systems is clean energy, they produce no noise, can be very reliable, and can last longer than most other energy sources. The cost of installing photovoltaic systems and thermal systems serving individual residential and business properties is approaching parity with the cost of centrally generated electrical power obtained through the electrical grid.

Additionally, the League of Women Voters of Florida and the nonprofit Solar United Neighbors of Florida (formerly Community Power Network) have partnered to promote use of solar energy. Solar United Neighbors of Florida (FL SUN) seeks to help communities learn about and affordably participate in solar power generation through group purchasing power and has established multiple co-operatives elsewhere in Florida to improve the affordability of photovoltaic systems for co-op members. The Space Coast Chapter of the League of Women Voters is participating in the co-op

initiative as well.

Additionally, recognizing the need for statewide energy efficiency, UCF's Florida Solar Energy Center celebrated the completion of its newest research facility in 2011 for testing energy improvements in new and existing homes. Initial research at the new facility has focused on energy improvement potentials in vintage Florida homes. Those constructed prior to 1975 make up 63 percent of Florida's more than eight million existing homes, which represents a substantial energy and cost savings potential for cost-effective, "deep" home energy improvements, or retrofits. Prospective savings could result in 30 to 50 percent of current residential energy use. Funded by the state's Florida Energy Systems Consortium, the research facility was instrumental in attracting a major multi-million dollar, four-year research grant from the U.S. Department of Energy.

As directed by Council under Resolution 2019-032, staff is providing the following information:

For the period of May 8, 2019 through April 7, 2020, the City received eight (8) building permits for the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems. The permit valuation was \$180,638.10 and the permit fee waivers totaled \$1,160.40.

ADDRESS	VALUE	PERMIT FEE WAIVER
3808 Arrowsmith Drive	\$ 29,321.00	\$ 166.95
3836 Stonemont Drive	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 150.75
1326 Stetson Court	\$ 28,675.00	\$ 163.70
5085 Brilliance Circle	\$ 23,632.10	\$ 147.50
711 Cressa Circle	\$ 27,514.00	\$ 160.50
5260 Extravagant Court	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 105.25
1305 South Lakemont Drive	\$ 11,100.00	\$ 108.50
3208 Westchester Drive	\$ 26,396.00	\$ 157.25
	\$ 180,638.10	\$ 1,160.40

Staff is seeking Council direction on the temporary waiver of building permit fees related to the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems previously approved by City Council on May 8, 2019 and provides the following three (3) options:

- 1) Discontinue the fee waiver and begin collecting the permit fees for solar photovoltaic and thermal systems.
- 2) Request staff bring a Resolution to the May 13th Council meeting to continue the fee waiver for a period of one more year.
- 3) Request staff bring a Resolution amending Resolution 2013-37, which previously established a schedule of building permits fees and eliminate the building permit fee associated with photovoltaic and thermal systems.

In order to promote the goals and objectives of the City's Sustainability Advisory Committee and draft Sustainability Action Plan and Resiliency Report to encourage residential and nonresidential building strategies to promote energy efficient measures, including renewable energy installations such as solar photovoltaic and thermal systems staff is recommending option 3.

STRATEGIC PLAN CONNECTION:

N/A

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

For the period of May 8, 2019 through April 7, 2020, the City received eight (8) building permits for the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems. The permit fee waivers totaled \$1,160.40.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

On May 8, 2019, City Council approved Resolution 2019-032 providing for a temporary waiver of building permit fees related to the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems for a period of one year; expressing the City's support for the Florida Solar United Neighbors (FL SUN) Initiative of the League of Women Voters and the Community Power Network; and the intention of the City to partner with those organizations to further adoption of solar energy in the City and Brevard County.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Seek Council direction on the temporary waiver of building permit fees related to the installation of solar photovoltaic and thermal systems previously approved by City Council.