

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD  
ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 2022(5)**

**THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN,  
ORDAINS:**

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD  
AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 40 ZONING  
BY AMENDING SECTION 40-2 – DEFINITIONS; SECTION 40-634 – EXCEPTION TO HEIGHT LIMITS; AND  
ADDING SECTION 40-653 – SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS REQUIREMENTS**

Springfield Township Code of Ordinances, Chapter 40—Zoning is hereby amended as follows:

**SECTION ONE-Amendments**

**1. Chapter 40-2. Definitions. is hereby amended to add the following definitions:**

*Building-mounted solar energy collector* means a solar energy collector that is attached to a principal or accessory building.

*Ground-mounted solar energy collector* means solar energy collector that is not attached to and is separate from any building on the parcel of land on which the solar energy collector is located.

*Solar energy* means radiant energy (direct, diffuse, and reflected) received from the sun.

*Solar energy collector* means a device or combination of devices, structures or part of a device or structure that transforms direct solar energy into thermal, chemical, or electrical energy.

*Solar energy system* means a solar collector or other device or structural design feature of a structure that relies upon sunshine as an energy source and is capable of collecting, distributing, and storing (if appropriate to the technology) the sun's radiant energy for a beneficial use.

*Solar energy system, private* means a single residential or small business-scale solar energy conversion system consisting of roof panels, ground-mounted solar arrays, or other solar energy fixtures, and associated control or conversion electronics, occupying no more than 1 acre of land, and that will be used only to produce utility power for on-site users. The system shall not be used for any commercial sale of energy, except for the sale of surplus electrical energy back to the electrical grid for credit to the account for the parcel on which the energy system is located.

*Solar panel* means a panel consisting of an array of solar cells used to generate electricity directly from sunlight.

*Solar shingles* means a roofing product made by combining thin film solar technology (which converts sunlight to electricity) with a durable backing to provide a structural roof shingle comparable to traditional shingles.

**2. Amend District Standards:**

Permit private building-mounted solar energy systems by right in all districts

Permit private ground-mounted solar energy systems by right in all districts except the areas of the Dixie Highway Overlay and only on parcels where the principal use is residential

**3. Chapter 40-634 – Exception to height limits. is hereby amended to read in its entirety as follows:**

No building or structure shall be erected, converted, enlarged, or structurally altered to exceed the height limit hereinafter established for the district in which the building is located. Exceptions shall be subject to the following provisions:

- (1) Roof structures for the housing of elevators, stairways, tanks, ventilating fans, or similar equipment required to operate and maintain the building, and fire or parapet walls, skylights, towers, steeples, stage lofts, and screens, flagpoles, chimneys, individual domestic radio and television aerials, energy conservation devices, roof-mounted wind energy conversion systems, water tanks, or similar structures may be erected above the height limits herein prescribed. However, other than solar panels, which are regulated in Section 653, no such structure, may be erected to exceed by more than 15 feet the height limits of the district in which it is located; nor shall such structure have a total area greater than ten percent of the roof area of the building; nor shall such structure be used for any residential purposes or any commercial or industrial purposes other than a use incidental to the main use of the building.
- (2) Public communication or public utility microwave towers shall be subject to the provisions of section 40-648.

**4. New Section 40-651. – Solar Energy Systems Requirements. is hereby added to read in its entirety as follows:**

- (a) Intent: The intent of this section is to permit and encourage the development of solar energy systems within Springfield Township while ensuring that such systems do not become a nuisance to neighbors or the community.
- (b) Requirements for All Solar Energy Systems:
  1. The installation of any solar energy collector shall not negatively impact adjacent properties with additional or excessive storm water runoff and/or drainage.
  2. All solar energy collectors shall be adequately secured to the surface upon which they are mounted, and the mounting structure shall be capable of supporting the panels.
  3. Each system shall conform to applicable industry standards including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and shall comply with all applicable state construction code and electrical code requirements and all other applicable federal, state, county and Township requirements, as may be amended from time to time.
  4. Each system shall obtain a building permit.
  5. Any system that includes batteries must consult the fire department on the location, placement, and code compliance of the batteries.

6. Signage for emergency disconnection procedures must be available on the outside of the building and accessible at all times.
7. The Fire Department must be notified of the approval and installation of any solar energy system within 2 weeks of installation.
8. Solar energy collectors shall be installed, maintained, and used only in accordance with the manufacturer's directions. Upon request, a copy of such directions shall be submitted to the building department prior to installation.

(c) Requirements for Private Solar Energy Systems:

1. Private solar energy systems shall be considered a permitted accessory use in all zoning districts.
2. Building-mounted solar energy collectors for onsite solar energy systems shall be subject to the following requirements:
  - a. Solar energy collectors shall be of such weight as can be safely supported by the building.
  - b. Solar energy collectors shall be considered part of the building to which they are attached and shall meet the required building setback requirements.
  - c. Solar energy collectors shall not project more than 5 feet above a flat roof
  - d. Solar energy collectors mounted on a roof shall not be installed within three (3) feet of the edges of the roof, the peak, or eave or valley in order to maintain pathways of accessibility.
  - e. Solar energy collectors that are wall mounted shall not exceed the height of the building wall to which they are attached.
  - f. Solar energy collectors shall not be mounted on a building wall that is facing an abutting street.
  - g. Building-mounted solar energy collectors mounted on flat roofs on sites that do not have a residential use as the principal use must be screened from view of the right-of-way and adjacent neighbors
3. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors for solar energy systems shall be subject to the following requirements:
  - a. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors are only permitted on lots zoned single family residential where the principal use is residential. This does not apply in the Dixie Highway Corridor Overlay district.
  - b. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall be located only in the side or rear yard.
  - c. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall be located within the building envelope and shall be at least ten feet from any principal building or other accessory building.
  - d. Ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall not exceed twelve (12) feet in height measured from the ground at the base of such equipment. The height of the ground-mounted solar energy collector shall be measured from ground level to the highest point of the solar panel.
  - e. The system shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from the boundary of a wetland or water course.
  - f. Ground-mounted solar energy systems shall only be located on lots that are at least 4 acres in size. The total allowable area covered by solar energy collectors on a single parcel is 1,500 square feet.

- g. The total area of ground-mounted solar energy collectors shall be included in calculations of all principal and accessory structures on-site to determine maximum lot coverage for the zoning district in which it is located.
  - h. Ground mounted solar energy collectors shall be screened from adjoining properties and public rights of way by a mix of deciduous and evergreen screening, a greenbelt, and/or six (6) foot high privacy fence or similar enclosure. Such fence or enclosure shall be approved by the zoning administrator or their designee in conformance with this zoning ordinance.
  - i. A building permit is required for all ground mounted solar energy systems. The application shall be accompanied by a sketch plan drawn to scale showing property setbacks to the solar collector surface area and a description of the screening to be provided.
4. Solar energy equipment shall be repaired, replaced, or removed within three months of becoming nonfunctional.

#### **SECTION TWO—Balance of Ordinance Remains in Effect**

The balance of the Springfield Township Code of Ordinances shall remain in full force and effect, except as specifically modified herein.

#### **SECTION THREE—Repealer**

All ordinances and portions of ordinances inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

#### **SECTION FOUR—Savings Clause**

Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to affect any suit or proceeding pending in any court or any rights acquired, or any liability incurred, or any cause or causes of action acquired or existing, under any act or ordinance hereby repealed as cited in Section Three of this ordinance; nor shall any just or legal right or remedy of any character be lost, impaired, or affected by this ordinance.

#### **SECTION FIVE—Severability**

Should any provision or part of this Ordinance be declared by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unenforceable, the same shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the balance of this Ordinance, which shall remain in full force and effect.

#### **SECTION SIX—Effective Date**

This Ordinance shall take effect following publication in the manner prescribed by law. This Ordinance shall be published in the manner provided by law.

Public Hearing: July 26, 2022 1st Reading: August 11, 2022 2nd Reading: September 8, 2022 Adoption: September 8, 2022 Adoption Publication: September 15, 2022 Effective: September 22, 2022
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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGFIELD

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Laura Moreau, Supervisor

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sean R. Miller, Clerk