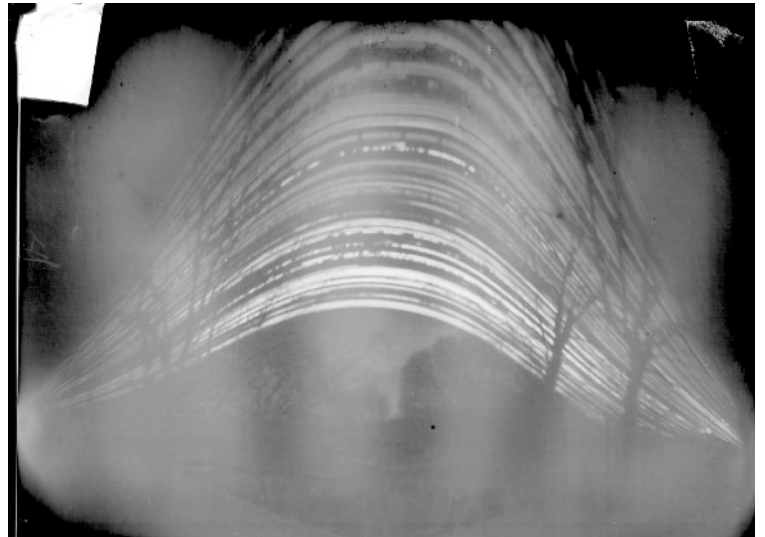




HOA Solution: Energy Independence Out of Sight

Solar Panel Report to the KPVA Board

Nov. 15, 2021



kp villas.org

Solar Panel Report to the KPVA Board

At the 2021 KPVA Annual Meeting, the Board called for a panel to compile information on solar panels and issues related to solar panels, and to report back to the Board.

For transparency and access, the material compiled for this independent report is at www.kpvillas.org. Under the drop-down **Solar** menu are six items:

Solar Report

An introduction to solar energy systems and common issues like appearance, home values, and alternative materials.

Comments & Replies

Compilation of homeowner comments followed by replies by Chuck Bueter.

Model HOA Rules

Guidelines for language and restrictions for a solar panel Rule, from model solar ordinances and other HOAs.

Home Values

Reports showing the impact of solar panels on home values.

Solar Blog Posts

Blog posts related to the solar panel Rule.

Solution

A proposed Rule in which homesites are deemed eligible for solar panels on a map depicting roofs not visible from the street.

Homeowners increasingly seek the multiple benefits of solar energy systems. However, some owners object to the unfamiliar and discordant appearance of solar panels on the fronts of houses. I propose the Board reconcile the desire to benefit from solar energy with the desire to maintain villa appearances.

This independent report recommends roof surfaces not visible from the street should be eligible for solar panels, provided other standards are met. The existing *Official Rule-Solar Panels* can be replaced with a new model based on a map of eligibility, which restricts solar panels to roof surfaces that are not visible from the street.

The compromise establishes which houses are eligible to install solar panels, as opposed to that number being zero. With the roof surfaces pre-approved on the map, future volunteer Board members do not have to judge suitability of a site. Each lot is essentially pre-approved or not; other restrictions may apply.

Homeowners and buyers will be able to make long range plans for energy independence knowing their eligibility in advance.

A change of the map requires a Rule change per Bylaws.

Issues related to considering a Rule change:

Solar installations will generate renewable energy, increase home values, improve air quality, lessen the impact of carbon on all of creation, facilitate energy independence, and show community leadership.

As solar arrays become critical home infrastructure of the future, the HOA should embrace home improvements that are not seen by others.

An eligibility map alone does not give permission to install solar panels. A new Rule would include restrictions that address KPVA homeowner feedback.

Merely insisting “panels are ugly” does not answer why hidden roofs should not be eligible for solar panels. It’s like asking whether a tree falling in the woods makes noise when no one is around--if something can’t be seen, is it ugly?

Multiple homeowners support a Rule change that permits some solar panels.

The proposed eligibility map (map-eligible homes-rev Nov5-1) is merely an example, whereas a Rule change would have more definitive maps.

Eligibility maps merely define the suitability of roof surfaces by virtue of their appearance from the street and back windows. The maps do not account for site shortcomings; eligible homes are not necessarily viable candidates for solar.

All homeowners should get information about procuring their electricity at a discount or from renewable energy providers.

This independent report contains material contributed by the five-person Solar Panel Committee and other homeowners, with excerpts from the KPVA Annual Meeting, Board meetings, homeowner comments, emails, phone calls, a Zoom meeting, and curbside chats.

I believe the content at www.kpvillas.org and in this report is accurate and delivers a fair compromise based on homeowner input. I am responsible for online content and I welcome corrections. This report does not purport to represent the collective findings of the KPVA Solar Panel Committee or the opinions of its respective members.

I recommend the Board reconsider its extant Rule and notify homeowners per Bylaws.

Thanks to all who supported and contributed to this process.

Chuck Bueter
November 15, 2021