



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0242, Version: 1

BUILDING REVIEW BOARD AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommend amendments to Chapters 2 and 10 of Title 5 (Building Regulations) of the Naperville Municipal Code pertaining to equipment screening, installation of sustainable materials, and variance jurisdiction for façade materials and landscape to the Naperville City Council.

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Amy Emery, AICP, TED Operations Manager

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The City of Naperville is committed to quality design. To support that goal, Naperville has adopted Citywide Design Guidelines, as well as, supporting ordinance requirements pertaining to landscaping, signage, height, bulk and a variety of other design considerations. Taken together, these documents provide direction to guide new construction and redevelopment efforts. The amendments here are intended to provide additional clarification of desired outcomes to development professionals in line with the existing adopted Citywide Design Guidelines and observations of staff of common requests and challenges associated with the existing language

DISCUSSION:

The existing municipal code language pertaining to rooftop equipment screening is vague. This is particularly challenging for existing properties seeking to update equipment where a parapet wall may not exist or past installations have occurred without screening for some, but not all, tenants. In such situations, flexibility is required to accommodate unique circumstances. The current code also does not adequately address installation of environmentally sustainable technologies (e.g. solar panels). As written, the existing language actually requires screening that may inhibit the function of sustainable installations. The existing code also does not provide any requirements for ground mounted equipment.

The proposed text amendments related to equipment screening are intended to encourage quality design practices to provide visual enhancement to the City. These amendments also support use of environmentally sustainable materials and incorporate design characteristics that enhance the site at the human scale. The amendments support the adopted Citywide Design Guidelines and provide desired flexibility to accommodate collaboration with design professionals. They also support Naperville's SolSmart Silver status recognizing the City's efforts to support solar installations to promote sustainable living.

Summary of proposed changes:

- Clarifies the expectation for installation of a parapet wall to screen rooftop equipment installed with new construction
- Provides flexibility to accommodate existing buildings, non-conforming uses, and industrial areas where new rooftop equipment is being added by allowing the Zoning Administrator to administratively reduce or waive screening requirements, if certain conditions are met
- Makes clear that screening shall not interfere with operation of green infrastructure (e.g. solar panels)
- Directs petitioners to coordinate with the Zoning Administrator, due to the aesthetic and design nature of these requirements, instead of the Chief Building Official.
- Establishes basic requirements for ground mounted equipment screening.

This agenda item also includes a process improvement and technical correction pertaining to variance jurisdiction. The proposed amendments streamline the development process to direct variances from building material requirements and screening (e.g. masonry minimums contained in Title 5 and rooftop and ground-mounted screening) for projects also involving other entitlements (i.e. zoning variances or rezoning requests) to be considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). Currently, material requirement deviations require review of the Building Review Board (BRB). This change will allow the PZC to consider applications in a more comprehensive, cohesive manner that adds convenience for both applicants and the public seeking to provide input. If no other entitlements are required, deviations from material requirements would remain under the jurisdiction of the BRB. This approach is consistent with how landscape variance requests are considered by the PZC when other entitlements are requested. Lastly, the proposed amendments include a correction in Title 5 to remove the outdated reference to the Zoning Board of Appeals.