



Memorandum

TO: Village President and Board of Trustees

FROM: Lou Garapolo, Historic Preservation Commission Chair *(Signature)*

DATE: September 9, 2025

CC: Kevin J. Jackson, Village Manager
Craig Failor, Director of Development Services
Mike Bruce, Village Planner/ Planning & Urban Design Manager
Atefa Ghaznawi, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

SUBJECT: Historic Preservation Guidelines Revision

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends the Village Board to adopt an ordinance authorizing amendment of Requirements for Roofing – Solar Panels of the Historic Preservation Guidelines (p-123 and p-124).

History of Historic Preservation Ordinance

Based on the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Commission may recommend, and the Village Board may adopt, criteria and guidelines to be used when making a determination on a Certificate of Appropriateness or Certificate of Advisory Review (7-9-12A). The Architectural Review Guidelines were adopted in 1993 and, along with the current Ordinance, went into effect on January 1, 1994.

In 2005, the Village Board directed the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to revise the Guidelines. The HPC began the Guidelines update in 2009 with the goal of creating a more user-friendly document with photographs, graphic illustrations, and educational information. Several issues were also identified for further study. This included: the garage policy, second floor bungalow additions, window repair and replacement, commercial buildings, and new construction. Since 2009 the Guidelines and Historic Preservation Ordinance have been updated regularly to assist staff, Commissioners, and applicants in understanding and implementing procedures for Certificates of Appropriateness applications, hearings, and Advisory Reviews.

Summary of Major Revisions to the Guidelines

This section consists of changes made to the Requirements for Roofing – Solar Panels of the Historic Preservation Guidelines. The following summarizes why the change was made or, if applicable, the predicted effect of the change.

The Historic Preservation Commission is concerned regarding visual impacts of solar panels when installed on the street-facing façade of historic buildings. Based on existing Guidelines, a COA is required for solar panels if they are proposed on slate/ tile/ shake roofs, and an Advisory Review is required regardless of the location of proposed solar panels. An advisory review has been proven to be not effective in implementing the Solar Panels Guidelines. Therefore, the Historic Preservation Commission recommends requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness for solar panels when proposed on the street-facing façade of historic buildings. For consistency in the review process, all roof types regardless of material type shall be treated the same. Additionally, as a part of the text amendment, "Requirements to install solar panels on street-facing façade of historic buildings in historic districts" have been added in the Guidelines to give homeowners/ property owners alternative options to install solar panels on the street-facing façade of historic buildings. The proposed amendments to Solar Panels Guidelines will help to preserve the character of historic buildings and reduce visual impact of solar panels while enabling homeowners to leverage the economic and environmental benefits of solar panels.

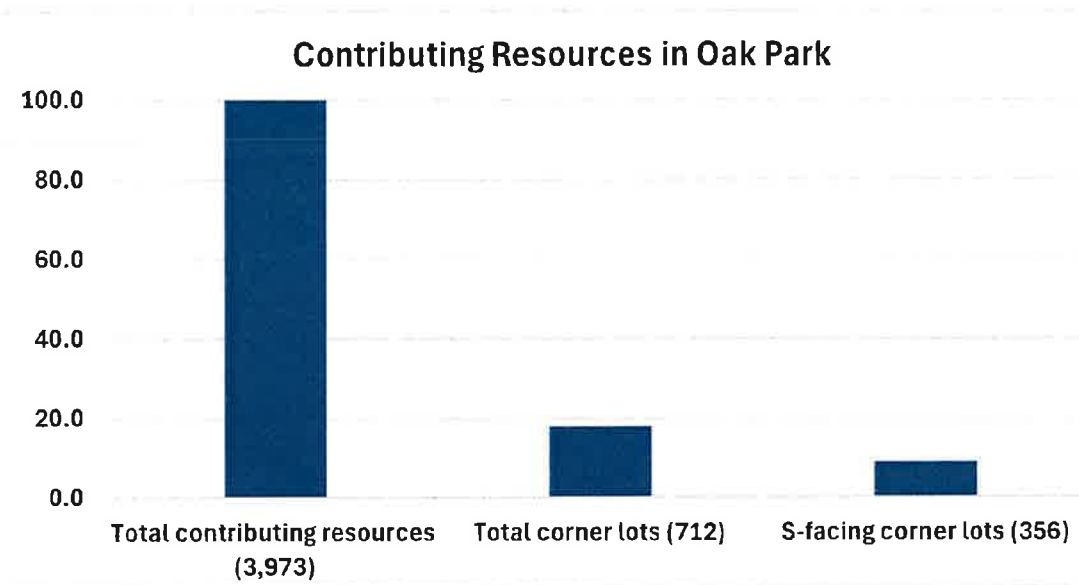
The following requirements (with photos) have been added to the Requirements for Roofing – Solar Panels (p-123 and p-124) to help reduce the visual impact of solar panels when installed on the street-facing façade of historic buildings:

1. Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to established roof materials. Incorporate a monochromatic equipment design (panels are black on black, color matched black attachments and rails, etc.) that blends in well with the roof projections.
2. Use a sleek trim (or skirt) around the perimeter of solar panels array to hide components that are visible beneath the solar panels.
3. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system shall be treated to be as unobtrusive as possible. Incorporate interior conduits instead of exterior conduits and use flush-mounted solar panels that are installed directly on a roof, with a low profile and a clean aesthetic.
4. An alternative to conventional solar arrays is a Solar Shingles system, also called photovoltaic shingles. Solar shingles are solar cells designed to look like conventional asphalt shingles. Various thin film solar cell technologies are used to match conventional shingles both in size and flexibility.

If solar panels are proposed on the street-facing façade of historic buildings, and the proposal incorporates one of the above-mentioned requirements/ alternatives, the project can be approved administratively by staff.

The Village staff did an exercise to evaluate and approximately quantify the impact of revised Guidelines on contributing resources in the Historic Districts, and especially south-facing corner lots which have two street-facing facades, as they would require a COA to install solar panels on their street-facing facades. These numbers are approximate. There is a total of 3,973 contributing resources in all three historic districts, 712 corner lots which is 18% of total contributing resources, and 356 south-facing corner lots which is 9% of total contributing resources (excluding parks, hospitals, and non-contributing resources). The south-facing corner lots will be the most impacted by the revised Guidelines as they have two-street facing facades, and the south facade is the most feasible and efficient location to install solar panels. The Village staff and Historic Preservation Commission are of the

opinion that considering the 9% ratio, the impact would be minimal. Additionally, there are a number of buildings on corner lots that have flat roofs and will not require a COA to install solar panels, which will further reduce the 9% ratio. These changes will assist staff, Commissioners, and applicants in understanding and implementing Historic Preservation Guidelines for solar panels in historic districts.



The Historic Preservation Commission thanks the Village Board of Trustees for their consideration of these modifications to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The Commission believes this change will be more equitable and fairer for all applicants as well as reflect the decisions made by a majority membership of the Commission. This change will mirror the Commission's Rules of Procedure and other Commission's protocols.