

**VILLAGE OF RINGWOOD**  
**ORDINANCE NO. 2022 - 4-18-3**

***AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RINGWOOD ZONING CODE TO ADD  
SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AS ACCESSORY STRUCTURES***

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Ringwood (“Village”), McHenry County, Illinois, is a non-home rule municipality as contemplated by the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the passage of this Ordinance constitutes an exercise of the Village’s powers and functions as granted in the Constitution of the State of Illinois and applicable statutes; and

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it ordained by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Ringwood, Illinois, as follows:

**SECTION 1:** Section 306, Accessory Buildings, Structures and Uses, of the Ringwood Zoning Code is hereby amended to add a new subsection 306.4, SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS, which shall read as follows:

**306.4 SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS**

1. Purpose: The purpose of this section is to provide standards for the use of solar energy systems as accessory structures within the Village of Ringwood. This section seeks to protect properties from incompatible uses and to conserve and enhance property values, while promoting the use of solar energy systems, where appropriate. This section provides a process to facilitate the use of a solar energy system in a manner that minimizes visual impacts of solar energy systems and the potential for nuisance.
2. Application: An applicant who seeks to install a solar energy system must submit an application for a permit as provided by the Village of Ringwood. A solar energy system meeting the criteria herein is a permitted use in the Village’s residential and estate zoning districts and a conditional use in all other zoning districts of the Village. The application must include photographs of the existing conditions of the principal building on the subject property for a solar energy system which is to be attached to such principal building, or where the solar energy system is freestanding or ground mounted, the back yard of the subject property and the view from each street adjacent to the subject property.

Building permit applications for solar energy systems must be accompanied by standard drawings of the solar energy system and a plan showing the location and all parts of the proposed solar energy system.

Each application for a solar energy system must be accompanied by a line drawing of the electrical components in sufficient detail to allow for a determination that the manner of installation conforms to the most recent edition of the National Electric Code. This information may be supplied by the manufacturer.

Electric solar energy system components must have an Underwriters Laboratory (UL) listing or approved equivalent.

3. Definition: Solar Energy System – One or more solar photovoltaic panels, that include a listed and labeled structural support system, relying upon solar radiation

as a source for the generation and/or storage of electricity from sunlight, but does not include solar hot water systems.

4. Regulatory Framework: A single solar energy system shall be allowed only as an accessory structure and must be i) integrated and attached to the non-front-facing sloped roof on a principal building or, alternatively, or ii) integrated and attached to a flat roof on a principal building; or iii) a freestanding or ground mounted solar energy system directly behind the principal building within the rear yard which is not visible from the front of the house while meeting all requirements in this subsection 306.4. Requests not meeting all requirements of this Section 306.4 shall require a variance. Solar hot water systems are prohibited.

5. General Requirements for Solar Energy System:

- a. Setbacks: Each solar energy system must comply with all setback and height requirements for the underlying zoning district in which the subject property is located but in no case may a freestanding or ground mounted solar energy system exceed 66 inches or 5 feet and 6 inches in height as measured from the ground.

- b. Additional Required Criteria for Solar Energy Systems:

- (i) Each solar energy system which is to be attached to the sloped roof on a principal building, must be located on a portion of the roof which is not front-facing on such building, as viewed from the fronting street, or, with respect to a freestanding or ground mounted solar energy system must be situated directly behind the principal building and within the rear yard on the subject property;

- (ii) Where a solar energy system is attached to the principal building, height is measured from the roof surface to the highest edge of the solar energy system, as follows:

With respect to a solar energy system to be situated on a non-front-facing portion of a roof on a principal building, such solar energy system shall be mounted parallel with the roof, shall not have a higher finished pitch than 45 degrees inclusive of any slant of the roof, and the surface of the collector shall not exceed two (2) feet in overall height from the roof surface at any point. No portion of any solar panel shall extend beyond the ridgeline of the roof at any point, except for flat roofs which must still comport with the maximum pitch and height requirements stated herein. The total height of the principal building including the solar energy system shall also comply with the height regulations of the zoning district.

- (iii) The collector surface and mounting devices for a solar energy system to be attached to a principal building shall not extend beyond the roof edge or the exterior perimeter of the principal building;

- (iv) Each photovoltaic panel for any solar energy system shall not cause glare and shall be non-reflective;

- (v) A solar energy system mounted on portion of the roof which is not front-facing on a principal building shall be installed in a flush mounted manner

or made a part of the roof design (capping or framing being compatible with the color of the roof or structure). Mounting brackets will be permitted to increase the solar angle if required or if the applicant can demonstrate that the existing pitch of the roof would render the solar energy system ineffective or would be otherwise technically infeasible;

- (vi) Each portion of the solar energy system shall be installed internally except for panels and the utility disconnect and other system components required to be installed externally for code compliance and fire and life safety;
  - (vii) Each ground mounted or freestanding solar energy system shall be situated in the rear yard which abuts and is directly behind the principal building on the property, shall not extend beyond the rear building line, and shall meet the minimum setbacks and shall not be visible from any street adjacent to the property on which the solar energy system is to be installed, which, if necessary, shall be screened with a landscaping plan approved by the Village in advance, as further demonstrated in Exhibit A to this Ordinance. Any ground mounted or freestanding solar energy system not attached to a roof for which an applicant seeks to place in any yard other than the back yard shall require such applicant to obtain a variance for same.
  - (viii) Each solar energy system must be installed and maintained in a uniform fashion to avoid, at a minimum, asymmetrical locations of panels, different sizes, angles, or extensions of grouped panels, inconsistent materials or colors of panels or related components, as well as any other condition(s) that would unreasonably create a nuisance or impair property values of surrounding properties, as determined by the Building Official in accordance with the currently adopted version of the International Property Maintenance Code.
- c. Safety Criteria Requirements:
- (i) Each solar energy system must meet all federal, state and local codes;
  - (ii) Each solar energy system must have a listed and labeled mounting system
  - (iii) All access panels and electrical equipment of each solar energy system must be lockable except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (vi) below;
  - (iv) Appropriate warning signage must be placed on each solar energy system; and
  - (v) A separate isolating lightning protection guard system is required for each solar energy system.
  - (vi) With respect to a ground mounted or freestanding solar energy system, such system shall be surrounded by a black decorative wrought iron or aluminum fence 48 inches in height with a self-closing/self-latching gate with a lock, subject to all requirements of the National Electrical Code currently adopted by the Village, to include any amendments thereto

adopted by the Village. The footprint of a ground mounted solar energy system must be installed within the allowable setback requirements as well as at least 10 feet from the principal building structure. Such fencing requirement shall be the sole fencing requirement for a ground mounted or freestanding solar energy system notwithstanding any other provision in the Ringwood Zoning Code.

- d. Removal of Defective or Abandoned Solar Energy Systems: Any solar energy system found to be unsafe by the Village building official must be repaired by the landowner to meet federal, state and local safety standards or shall be removed within six months by the owner of the property on which such solar energy system is situated. If any solar energy system is not operational for a period of 60 days or more, such solar energy system shall be deemed abandoned and/or defective, and the Village will request, by registered mail, that corrective action be complete within 60 days. If there is a failure to comply, the solar energy system may be removed by the Village at the owner's expense. The Village President shall have the authority to pursue legal action if necessary.

Any such removal by the owner of the property must meet all state and federal EPA regulations for removal of any part of the solar energy system.

- e. Emergency Disconnect: An external disconnect switch, readily accessible by emergency responders, and which is clearly identifiable and unobstructed, shall be provided to disconnect power at the solar panel. In addition, roof-mounted solar energy systems shall allow for adequate roof access for firefighting purposes.

6. The Village's granting of a permit for a solar energy system in no way grants, vests or implies an easement for such solar energy system.

**SECTION 2:** If any section, paragraph, subdivision, clause, sentence, or provision of this Ordinance shall be adjudged by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, invalidate or nullify the remainder thereof, which remainder shall remain and continue in full force and effect.

**SECTION 3:** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict. In addition, Ordinance No. 2021-04-20 is hereby repealed.

**SECTION 4:** This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon its passage, approval and publication in pamphlet form (which publication is hereby authorized) as provided by law.



PASSED THIS 18 DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

AYES: Meyer, WALKINGTON, HEADUS, REINWALL, Hewes.

NAYES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: Robel

NOT VOTING: NONE

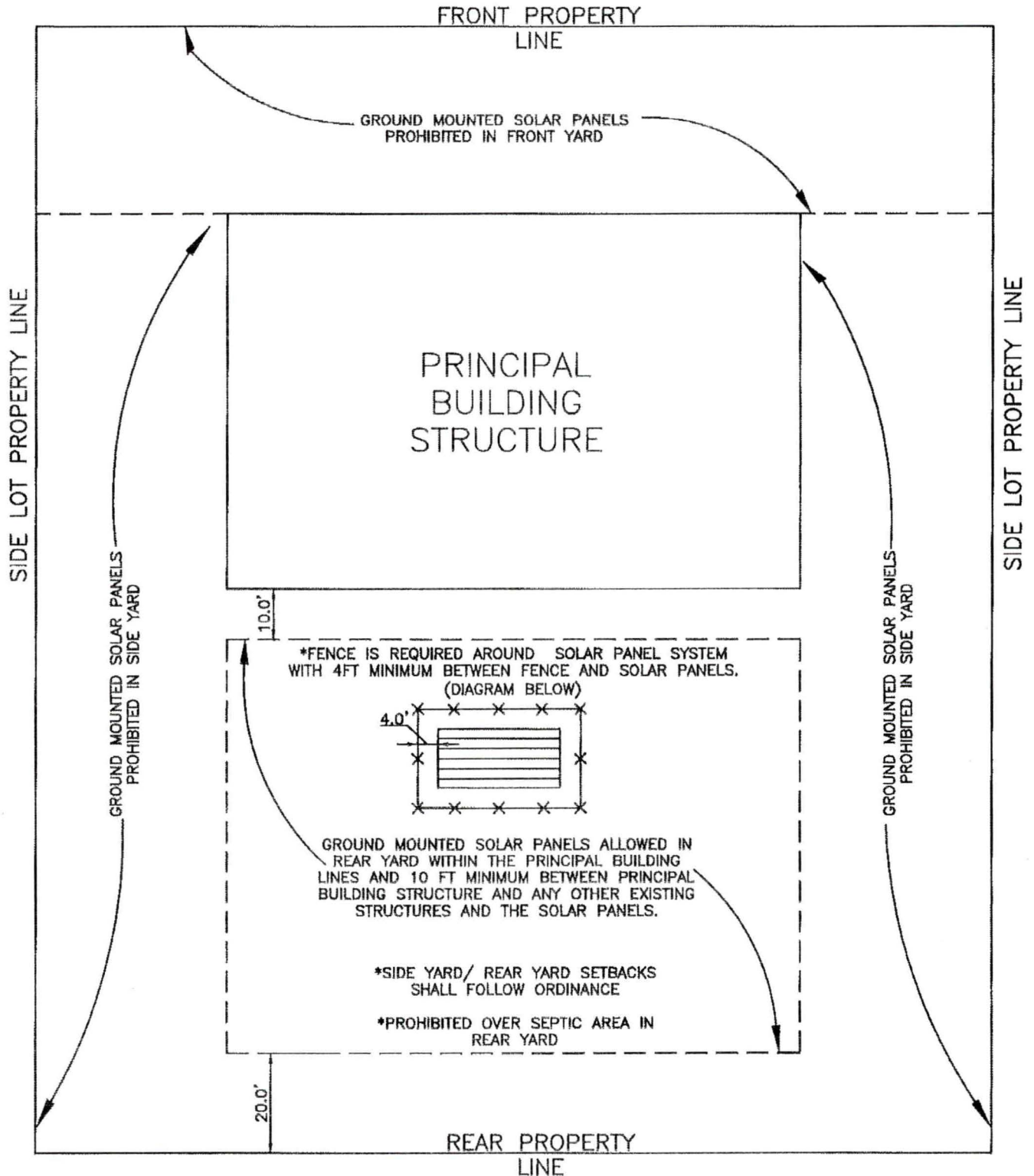
APPROVED THIS 18 DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

Rick Mack  
President Rick Mack

(SEAL)  
ATTEST: Sue Keener  
Village Clerk Sue Keener



# EXHIBIT A







## CERTIFICATION

I, SUE KEENER, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed, acting and qualified Clerk of the Village of Ringwood, McHenry County, Illinois, and that as such Clerk, I am the keeper of the records and minutes and proceedings of the President and Board of Trustees of said Village of Ringwood.

I do hereby further certify that at a regular meeting of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Ringwood, held on the 18 day of April, 2022, the foregoing Ordinance entitled *AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RINGWOOD ZONING CODE TO ADD SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS AS ACCESSORY STRUCTURES*, was duly passed by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Ringwood.

The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. 2022-~~4-18-3~~, including the Ordinance and a cover sheet thereof, was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was available from the Village Clerk, commencing on the 18 day of April, 2022, and will continue for at least 10 days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance are also available for public inspection upon request in the office of the Village Clerk.

I do further certify that the original, of which the attached is a true and correct copy, is entrusted to me as the Clerk of said Village for safekeeping, and that I am the lawful custodian and keeper of the same.

Given under my hand and the official seal of the Village of Ringwood this 18 day of April, 2022.



*Sue Keener, Village Clerk*  
Sue Keener, Village Clerk  
Village of Ringwood,  
McHenry County, Illinois