June 8, 2020

RE: Advisory Determination of Use – Accessory Use Photovoltaic Systems

To All Interested Parties:

Sarasota County encourages the use of accessory photovoltaic (PV) systems. This letter shall serve as confirmation that such solar PV systems are allowed by-right in all major zones, in which cases all requirements outlined in the Sarasota County Unified Development Code (UDC) are met.

The UDC provides general standards and requirements for accessory uses and structures. Standards must be met to maintain consistency in the zoning district and to ensure the character of the primary use is served.

Accessory uses, including the accessory use of solar PV systems, shall be permitted only when a principal use exists, and given that the use is accessory and clearly incidental or subordinate to permitted, limited, or special exception uses and structures (UDC Section 124-73, Accessory Uses and Structures).

Approval of proposed accessory use solar PV systems is contingent upon compliance with the standards and requirements detailed in the UDC, including those listed in Section 124-73 pertaining to accessory uses and structures.

The UDC does not explicitly list solar PV systems as either a primary or an accessory use. Systems that are clearly incidental or subordinate to the primary use or structure, and that are in compliance with the UDC standards and regulations, shall be treated as accessory uses or structures and shall be permitted by-right in all zoning districts within Sarasota County.

Pursuant to Section 124-7, the authority and responsibility for implementation of the provisions of the UDC are assigned to the County Administrator or designee. Responsibility for individual provisions, regulations, or sections of the UDC may be designated, delegated, and assigned to other named individuals by the County Administrator in accordance with Section 124-29. The County’s Zoning Administrator, has been delegated authority for implementation of the provisions of the UDC, including those relating to accessory uses.

Inquiries related to accessory use photovoltaic systems can be directed to zoning@scgov.net.

Sincerely,

Donna Thompson
Zoning Administrator, Planning and Development Services