

INSTALLING ROOFTOP SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide an overview of key considerations and requirements for installing rooftop solar energy systems in DeKalb County historic preservation districts. These guidelines are meant to balance access to solar energy while protecting areas, buildings, and sites of significance in the history of DeKalb County, the State of Georgia, and the United States.

KEY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS*

Propose to install solar modules

- on non-primary, non-character-defining roof surfaces that are invisible from a public right-of-way, especially a primary view;
- in parallel to roof surfaces, including on flat roof surfaces;
- without removing historic or character-defining roofing materials; and
- taking into consideration, views from adjacent properties.

Propose to install mechanical equipment

- on non-primary, non-character-defining façade that are invisible from a public right-of-way, especially a primary view; and

*For additional information, contact the Preservation Planner.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Applicability: DeKalb County currently has two locally-designated historic districts, the Druid Hills Historic District and the Soapstone Ridge Historic District. The guidelines apply to the Druid Hills Historic District and will apply to any future historic districts. Architectural design review is not required in the Soapstone Ridge Historic District, so there are no restrictions on solar in that area other than those applicable to the county as a whole. All permits to install solar energy systems in relevant historic districts are required to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission before other permits can be issued. For applicability by postal address, see "[DeKalb County Parcel Map](#)" on the County GIS website, or contact the Preservation Planner at the contact information below.

Process: See "[Application for Certificate of Appropriateness](#)" for detailed instructions and the application form. Applications can also be obtained at our offices or requested at the phone and fax at numbers listed on this sheet. In accordance with Georgia Code O.C.G.A. 44-10-28 (2010), "The commission shall approve the application and issue a certificate of appropriateness if it finds that the proposed material change in appearance would not have a substantial adverse effect on the esthetic, historical, or architectural significance and value of the historic property or the historic district." The Preservation Commission evaluates applications monthly, and applicants are encouraged, though not required to attend meetings and present proposed projects. Approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness does not release the recipient from compliance with all other pertinent county, state, and federal regulations.

EXPRESS SOLAR PERMIT

Do not apply for other permits before obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness. After obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness, the recipient must also receive permit application approvals from the Department of Planning and Sustainability. For rooftop residential and commercial systems under 25 KW, and for detailed application instructions, see "[Express Permits for Residential and Small Commercial Rooftop Solar Arrays](#)." Other requirements may apply.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Preservation Planner

Website: [Historic Preservation](#)

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