



**COLUMBIA CITY/WHITLEY COUNTY
JOINT PLANNING & BUILDING DEPARTMENT**

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March 9, 2023

TO: County Plan Commission
FROM: Nathan Bilger, Exec. Director

RE: 23-W-ZOA-2, proposed moratorium

On February 21st, the County Commissioners gave directive to the Plan Commission to adopt a moratorium dealing with new commercial solar installations. The purpose being to prevent additional new commercial solar filings while the Plan Commission and Commissioners are reviewing 23-W-REZ-2, the request for the first solar overlay district. Regulations on solar facilities in §5.23 could then be adjusted to address any issues brought forth during this review process.

The proposed ordinance would place a moratorium on new permits for any Commercial Solar Energy Collection Systems (CSECSs). Permits for CSECSs are only permissible in a Solar Overlay District. As no Overlay District yet exists, no CSECS permits have been submitted.

Additionally, the proposed ordinance would also place a moratorium on new applications for zone map amendments to create any Solar Overlay Districts. Again, this would not affect the review process of the currently filed application 23-W-REZ-2, but it would prevent any new applications.

The duration is proposed to be one year from the date of adoption. Based on the earliest date of adoption, the moratorium period would be March 20, 2023, to March 19, 2024.

As a reminder, like any amendment of the zoning code, the Plan Commission and Commissioners are to pay reasonable regard to the following:

1. The most recently adopted Comprehensive Plan;
2. The current conditions and the character of current structures and uses in each district;
3. The most desirable use for which the land in each district is adapted;
4. The conservation of property values throughout the jurisdiction;
5. Responsible development and growth;
6. The public health, safety and welfare.