

# CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

## Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

Washington Fire Department Training Room - 200 N. Wilmor Road, Washington

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**Call to Order** Chairman Mike Burdette called the regular meeting of the City of Washington Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. A quorum was established.

**Roll Call** *Present:* Commissioners Burdette, Reeder, Scott, Williams  
*Absent:* Commissioners Milot, Ritter, Shelton  
*Also present:* Planning and Development Director Oliphant and City Clerk Brod

**Approve Minutes** Commissioner Scott motioned, and Commissioner Reeder seconded to approve the meeting minutes from the August 2, 2023 regular meeting and August 16, 2023 special meeting, as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

**Public Comments** None provided.

**Public Hearing** At 6:30 p.m., Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to consider the variance request by Natalie Bielema for a three-foot side yard variance and a four-foot rear yard variance at 210 Monroe Street. Planning and Zoning Director Jon Oliphant explained that Natalie Bielema, the owner, has made the request in order to replace an existing garage. He shared that there was a high wind event that damaged the existing garage which was built in 1947. It was 14'x23' in size and it was located approximately two feet from the west side property line and one foot from the rear property line. He noted that the property is small so this will need a variance request for the same placement. They also plan to attach the new garage to the house. Mr. Oliphant shared that this requires a variance for three feet on the west side and four feet at the rear yard.

With no public comments provided regarding the request, Commissioner Burdett closed the public hearing at 6:32 p.m.

Commissioner Scott motioned to approve the request; Commissioner Reeder seconded. Commissioner Reeder noted the small lot and Commissioner Williams clarified that the previous garage was damaged in a storm.

On roll call the vote was:  
4 Ayes: Burdette, Reeder, Scott, Williams  
0 Nays:  
Motion carried.

**Public Hearing** At 6:33 Commissioner Burdette opened the public hearing to provide details regarding a variance request of Aaron Forinash to allow a ground-mount solar array at 206 Legion Road. Mr. Oliphant provided the measurements noting that it is a five-acre lot and it would be 15 feet from an accessory structure, 30 feet from the south property line, 357 feet from the west property line and 307 feet from the east property line. He stated that the nearest house is approximately 165 feet away. Mr. Oliphant shared that ground-mount solar arrays are still being discussed with Council.

Aaron Forinash stated that this is the ideal time to invest in solar and they had considered this when they bought the property. He shared that the neighbors have no issue. He also shared that they have removed a few trees to allow for it and their primary structure roof is not large enough to accommodate a roof-mount system. Mr. Forinash stated that this would be blocked from the road and they will plant landscaping to help block it as well. He stated that this is also the best place to keep it away from their septic system and have the least impact to neighbors.

At 6:35 p.m., Commissioner Burdette closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Scott motioned to table the request; Commissioner Reeder seconded.

Commissioner Scott explained that the code is currently being written and he thinks it will only be tabled for a short time. He stated that they would like to get that language worked out before they approve any ground-mount structures as this will set a precedent. Commissioner Reeder thinks this will likely fit into what is being written.

Mr. Forinash asked if there has been a previous approval from ground-mount arrays and it was clarified that no residential ground-mount arrays have been approved because the code does not allow it. Commissioner Burdett noted that this is at Council for discussion.

On roll call the vote was:  
4 Ayes: Burdette, Reeder, Scott, Williams  
0 Nays:  
Motion carried.

**New Business** Mr. Oliphant stated that there will be an October meeting.

**Commissioner/Staff** None were provided.  
**Comments**

**Adjournment** At 6:39 p.m. Commissioner move Scott; Commissioner Reeder seconded to adjourn.  
Motion carried by voice vote.



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Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk