

OUTDOOR MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

These guidelines are meant to provide guidance to property owners in Springfield's Local Historic Districts (LHD) and to make the approval process easier and timelier. In some LHD, antennas and other similar appurtenances are exempt from control. Please see the attached chart to find out which districts exempt this. The Springfield Historical Commission (SHC) has determined that satellite dishes, commercial cellular antenna and related equipment do not fall within this exemption.

Although outdoor mechanical equipment are not original features of buildings within Springfield's local historic districts, the SHC does not want to unduly prevent homeowners from taking advantage of modern technology. However, applications for approval of these non-historic additions must strive for them to be unseen or minimally visible from public right of ways and other public places. The SHC only controls the exterior of properties within LHDs and therefore these guidelines are not intended for any interior equipment.

For the purpose of these guidelines, the following are considered outdoor mechanical equipment:

- Antennas
- Energy Producing Technology (i.e. Solar Panels)
- HVAC Systems
- Satellite Dishes
- Utility Meters
- Other Similar Appurtenances

DEFINITIONS

Antenna - a transducer designed to transmit or receive electromagnetic (e.g., TV or radio) waves including any related equipment, conduit, and wiring.

Energy Producing Technology or Solar Panel - a panel designed to absorb the sun's rays as a source of energy for generating electricity or heating including any related equipment, switch boxes, meters, and conduit.

HVAC System - Heating, ventilation and air conditioning technology for indoor environmental comfort to provide thermal comfort and acceptable indoor air quality. For this purpose, it is any part of the system that can be seen on the exterior of the building including any related equipment, piping, conduit, wiring, vents, and ducts. Removable window air conditioning units are not controlled by the SHC.

Satellite Dish - a dish-shaped antenna designed to receive electromagnetic signals from satellites, which transmit data transmissions or broadcasts, such as satellite television including any related equipment, conduit, and wiring.

Utility Meters - a device for measuring electricity or gas usage including any related switch boxes and conduit.

Other Similar Appurtenances - an accessory or other item not specifically listed here that may be considered a piece of equipment that is permanently affixed to the exterior of an historic building or located on property within LHDs.

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DEFINITIONS OF LOCATION

Non-Visible Installation

A non-visible installation is not visible at all from the public way. **NOTE:** Only the SHC or its staff, **not the property owner or contractor**, determines lack of visibility of a proposed installation location. Locations that are only hidden by landscaping/trees or fences are not considered non-visible. SHC will provide a certificate of non-applicability if SHC determines that an installation is non-visible. Please note that on a corner lot, the rear of the building is often visible so the rear does not automatically fall under non-applicability as visibility is the sole criterion for this category.

Minimally Visible Installation

Installation location **not** on the main façade (or a side façade if building is located on a corner) that is minimally visible from the public way such as hidden behind a porch, bay window, chimney, or other projecting features on the side of the building so that it is significantly hidden when viewed from the public way.

Moderately Visible Installation

If minimally visible installation is not possible, the SHC will consider alternative installation locations with moderate visibility. The homeowner needs to demonstrate that a particular condition affecting the building precludes a minimally visible installation. Documentation for this may include reports from outdoor mechanical equipment installers, site plans, and photographs.

The petitioner should strive to present a placement that, although moderately visible, is the least visible to the public. The SHC will then determine whether the proposed location of the installation can be approved without a significant detriment to the district.

Significantly Visible Installation

Significantly visible locations are on any building façade that faces a public right of way. The SHC will only accept placement of outdoor mechanical equipment on significantly visible places in extreme circumstances that affect the particular property and that is unique to that property. The SHC generally does not consider the hardship of not having a satellite dishes, energy producing technology (i.e. solar panels), antennas, or other similar appurtenances to overcome significantly visible installations. In the case of utility meters, it is the utility company's burden to locate the meters in the most non-visible location. Utility meters are **not exempt** from local historic district ordinances.

Outdoor mechanical equipment shall be guided by the following guidelines:

Duration of Use and Removal: Outdoor mechanical equipment is permissible as long as it is in active use. All outdoor mechanical equipment no longer in use must be taken down. All cabling and wiring associated with outdoor mechanical equipment should be dressed in a neat and workmanlike manner and be painted or significantly match in color the color of the surface it spans.