

Planning and Zoning Committee developing solar, wind regulations

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The city's Planning and Zoning Committee is working hard to develop regulations governing solar and wind power for residential use, according to John Dahlgren, city planner for Green River.

"We have one resident now that wants to erect a wind turbine. That's pretty much driving this issue," Dahlgren said.

The problem that arises is that of one resident's property rights versus another's property rights.

"On the one side, you have someone who wants to have wind power and on the other, there's a neighbor who doesn't want to live next to or listen to a wind turbine," he explained.

Dahlgren said the P&Z is split on the issue, some fully supporting the idea and others vehemently opposed.

"The thing is, we want to get it right the first time so the regulations don't have to be redone again and again," he said.

Dahlgren said he thinks Green River is better equipped for solar power than wind power because most of the lots within the city are fairly small. There isn't much room for a turbine pole in most yards.

"The way we're leaning now is that wind turbines would have to be mounted on the home itself," Dahlgren said.

Even solar collection panels would pose problems.

"We then run into the issue of a neighbor who wants solar panels on the roof and next door, someone wants to plant a tree which would eventually shade the panel," Dahlgren explained.

But he added many other places have already addressed the problems, so P&Z has several ideas to draw from.

He is also trying to get an expert from the wind energy industry in to speak to P&Z.

"We want to get some concrete answers to some of the questions," he said.

In the meantime, the group will continue working on the issue and Dahlgren hopes to get more input from the community. The committee meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.

Once they come up with a plan, it will go to the City Council as a recommendation and must be voted on before it becomes official.