

ZONING INTERPRETATION RECORD

REVOKED &  
REPLACED  
5-17-07

Subject of Interpretation: Visibility of exterior lighting in the ESL district

Zoning Ordinance Section Number: Section 7.854.E.1.f

Title of Section: E. Site Development Design Standards: 1. Within the ESL District

Cause for Interpretation: Light fixtures with clear glass sides in the Ancala development have been rejected by Scottsdale inspectors recently because they did not meet Section 7.602 standards and/or ESL zoning requirements. Lighting distributors, contractors, and homeowners want an interpretation of what is and is not acceptable under ESL.

Interpretation: The text of ESL on exterior lighting is intended to be fully consistent with the purpose of the general provisions of the ordinance (Section 7.600) to insure minimal light pollution, reduce glare and to aid in the control of detrimental effects to astronomical observation of the night sky. The intent of the ESL provisions are not only to meet Section 7.602 but to keep the levels of external illumination low for these purposes. The ESL provision is aimed at keeping the spillage of light from exterior fixtures low for neighboring property, the night sky, and from designated viewpoints on the ESL Special features maps.

Mounting Heights: In general, "low scale" means that the exterior fixtures attached to buildings, along walkways or adjacent to driveways shall be placed so shielded lights do not shine in people's eyes; typically not more than six feet above grade. Lights directed downwards or located on walls that are mounted back from the fascia of an eave or under a covered entry or carport may exceed six feet above grade if shielded and directed downwards. Lights mounted above eye level shall be fully shielded, cut-off type fixtures.

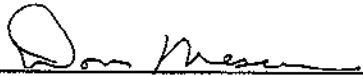
Illumination: The intent is also to keep the number of bulbs and the total watts in a fixture low, whether the fixture is free standing or attached to a structure. The illumination from fixtures shall be directed primarily towards the ground and on-site, not up or to the side. The fixtures shall also not be clustered to project a high level of combined illumination. A low level of illumination from entry lights or other fixtures that does not cause glare to the street or other property is acceptable.

Visibility: "Not visible from residential development in the area" shall be interpreted to mean that the spillage of light off-site shall be kept low. Lights that are fully shielded on the top and sides, and/or that will result in indirect lighting at low levels are preferred. The term "not visible" shall not be interpreted as an absolute in this case but shall be thought of as low visibility: a house does not need to look vacant because no light is visible. Small bulbs with low watts may be visible if the off-site spillage is kept low.

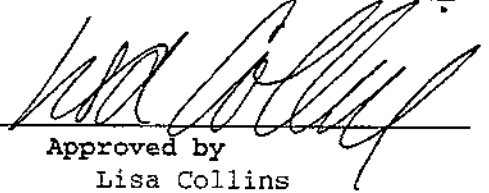
Clear Glass or Exposed Bulbs: The ordinance intent is to keep illumination

low. Therefore clear glass on the sides of fixtures are discouraged, but, if used, the bulbs shall be small, 40 watts or less, with no more than two bulbs per fixture. Smoked, tinted, or frosted glass is preferred to clear glass. Exterior chandelier style fixtures with numerous exposed bulbs visible from the street or other properties are unacceptable. Fixtures must be placed to keep glare and the spillage of light off-site or into the night sky low. Spotlights or other security lights shall be recessed in the fixture and directed on-site. Security lights that are activated by motion detectors are preferred.

Non-Residential: Non-residential uses shall design exterior lighting to have minimal off-site effects on residential properties. Bulbs, the point source of light, for parking areas for non-residential uses shall not be visible from residences. Security lights cannot be directed towards houses.



Interpretation by Don Meserve 9/03/96



Approved by  
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