

CITY VARIANCE APPLICATION FORM

CITY VARIANCE : Billings Variance # _____ - Project # _____

The undersigned as owner(s) of the following described property hereby request a Variance from the terms of the City of Billings Zoning Regulations.

PARCEL TAX ID # _____ CITY ELECTION WARD # _____

Legal Description of Property: _____

Address or General Location (If unknown, contact City Engineering): _____

Zoning Classification: _____

Size of Parcel (Area & Dimensions): _____

Variance(s) Requested: _____

Facts of Hardship: (attach letter) _____

*** Additional information may be required as determined by the Zoning Coordinator in order to fully evaluate the application.

Owner(s): _____

(Recorded Owner)

(Address)

(Phone Number)

(email)

Agent(s): _____

(Name)

(Address)

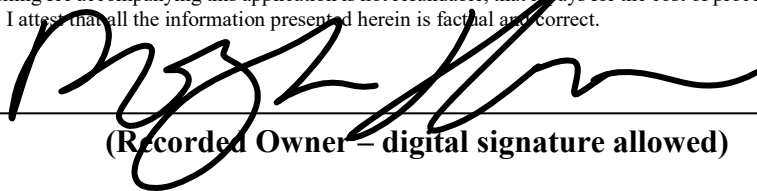
(Phone Number)

(email)

I understand that the filing fee accompanying this application is not refundable, that it pays for the cost of processing, and that the fee does not constitute a payment for a Variance. Also, I attest that all the information presented herein is factual and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(Recorded Owner – digital signature allowed)



In 2013 when my girlfriend (Amanda Mae Schank Newman) and I were searching for a house, one of our important criteria was a large south facing roof so that we could eventually install solar panels, which had long been one of my goals in home ownership. We found 1816 Avenue C, which has a South facing section of roof on the house, as well as a south facing section on the detached garage that we thought would be perfect for installing solar down the road, so we purchased the property. In 2019 we were finally able to talk to a solar contractor (Big Sky Solar and Wind) who informed me that my garage received too much shade from the utility pole, utility lines, as well as neighboring trees to be a viable installation location for the panels (The shadows are clearly visible in the project file from A Team Solar) so we settled for putting panels only on the south facing roof of the house. These 10 panels reduced our grid power consumption by a significant amount, but they still did not provide enough power to ever zero out our power bill for more than 1 month.

In 2020 we bought our first electric car, a Tesla Model Y, which we loved so much that a year later we bought another one. This naturally raised our energy consumption significantly. Since then I have tried using several temporary solar power systems and portable power stations to try to produce enough power to offset our bill. It has not made a significant dent, with yet again only one month having a surplus of power production.

Our property is laid out with a detached two-car garage in the rear, parallel to the alley; between that garage and the house is a perfect piece of land to install a detached solar array, so I went on the hunt for the perfect ground mounted system to fit our needs. What I found is that most are not suitable, as they sit too low or are at such an angle that our back yard would no longer be of any use to us, and going between the garage and house would be impeded by their design. After A Team Solar and Roofing replaced my roof and siding in 2022, Nate Rodda and I began talking about my solar dilemma, and he recommended the Chiko solar pergola that was also designed to be used as a car port, giving us the elevation we would need to still enjoy our back yard. In September of 2024 we finalized my design requests that would provide a large shaded area to my back yard, as well as enough inverter and battery storage to provide power for our cars as well as our entire home, year-round and in the event of power outages. I wrote them a \$65,000 deposit check to order the equipment, and then started seeking concrete bids for the project. In October Yellowstone Concrete was able to tackle the project and filled our back yard with a 4,000 PSI rebar reinforced concrete slab, leaving 2½ feet on the East and West sides for drainage from the rain and snow melt the pergola would need. A local tree company removed the Juniper tree in my neighbors back yard, at my expense, as the neighbor was very supportive of our project.

Things were going great. Then the bad news came. The city denied our permit, saying that the solar pergola would exceed the 40% roof coverage that I am allowed for my property. That was something I couldn't even wrap my head around, that my pergola was being considered a roof. In my further communication with the city planning department I was told that the pergola also being able to be used as a car port was an issue, and that they believed the pergola could be enclosed to create more indoor area for my property. That is not our intention. Our property has sufficient parking, with a 2 car garage and an additional 2 cars being able to park next to the

garage. What we want is to create our own energy independence, to not be a burden on an increasingly taxed power grid, and to create a shaded area in which our family can enjoy fresh air, have cookouts and entertain family and friends.

We ask that you approve our request for the variance based on the uniqueness of our property, and how unobtrusive the pergola will be to our neighbors. It will hardly be visible from the street, and will be lower than the house and garage, as well as being of all black construction with black on black bu-facial solar panels. It will be attractive to look at.

Please help us to fulfill our dream of personal energy independence.

Signed,
Amanda Mae Schank Newman

Amanda Mae Schank Newman

and,
Roger Wayne Harding

Roger Harding

On July 30th 3025.