



CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701-2724

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Blaise Emerson, Assistant Planning Director

DATE: February 14, 2001

RE: Wind Energy Conservation Systems

Staff has been contacted on the potential construction of a Wind Energy Conservation System to provide an alternative electric service for a single-family residence. A Wind Energy Conservation System (WECS) is a mechanism or device designed for the purpose of converting wind energy into electrical or mechanical power or a windmill.

The Rapid City Municipal Code does not specifically address the use of Wind Energy Conservation Systems. Windmills are exempt from heights regulations in each zoning district. Currently, this type of structure is allowed as an accessory structure to the residence if it provided power that residence. It would have to meet the minimum required setback established in that district.

Staff has also researched how other communities approach this the use of Wind Energy Conservation Systems. Most communities do not specifically address Wind Energy Conservation Systems; however, a few communities do address the use of Wind Energy Conservation Systems. Those communities that do regulate Wind Energy Conservation Systems allow them as permitted use in the agricultural districts and as either a special use or conditional use in the residential districts. Typically, as the minimum lot size decreased for the zoning district, the more intensive review was required for the Wind Energy Conservation Systems structure.

Staff is requesting direction as to whether or not the Planning Commission would like to draft revised ordinance amendment to specifically address Wind Energy Conservation Systems.



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