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MIND OF A LAWYER. HEART OF A CONTRACTOR.

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## **Solar Panels Now Allowed in New Orleans Historic French Quarter?**

Last week, the New Orleans City Council [voted to approve the installation of solar panels](#) on a home in the city's historic French Quarter. This would seem to be no-brainer for the city, which is one of America's 20 Solar Cities and has pushed solar energy with tax credits and other programs, but it was only allowed after some controversy. (See [Solar Energy tag](#)).

The vote of the city council was on appeal from the homeowner, after his request to install the solar panels was denied by the [Vieux Carre Commission](#). The commission complained that the solar panels are outside the "soul and character" of the French Quarter.

Green building technologies and the industry has a whole certainly has its challenges, and [we've discussed them in the past on this blog](#). This situation, however, presents an interesting issue confronting those in the green building industry that we really haven't previously discussed: Successfully getting through homeowner associations and municipal control with energy efficiency equipment that just isn't very pretty.

As far as popular support goes, it seems to be in the corner of progress and incorporation of this technology. Nola.com ran a poll asking readers whether the solar panels should have been allowed, and as of this writing, 76.88% of people said yes (372 votes, [poll here](#)).

It will be interesting to see more of these situations pop-up across the country, and not just involving municipalities, but also involving homeowner and condominium associations. When a municipality or homeowners association denies a request for incorporation of these technologies, will the property owner have a remedy in law to force acceptance?

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Insofar as this decision, it appears to only concern the one property petitioned. As such, there is no blanket rule allowing solar panels in the French Quarter, and the next resident will first have to go to the Vieux Carre Commission and their obvious disposition to deny the request. But, this is a welcoming precedent for those in the New Orleans solar market, and french quarter property owners.