



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

New Planning Code Change Summary:

Wind Turbine Height Exemption in Bernal Heights SUD

- Code Change:** Amendments relating to Planning Code Section 242 (e)(1)(D) to allow certain wind power generators within the Bernal Heights Special Use District subject to height limitations set forth in Section 260(b)(1)(A).
- Case Number:** Board File No. 07-1216
- Initiated By:** Supervisor Ammiano, August 14, 2007
- Effective Date:** October 29, 2007

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The Way It Is Now:

Section 260(b)(1)(A) provides a general exemption allowing wind energy equipment to extend up to 10 feet above the permitted height limits subject to visual screening. This exception does not apply to Bernal Heights Special Use District (S.U.D.) Section 242 of the Code.

Section 260(b)(1)(A) allows, in Height Districts of 65 feet or less, wind generation equipment to exceed the height limit by a maximum of ten feet. However, Section 242(e)(1)(D) overlays this height exemption with a further restriction in the Bernal Heights Special Use District limiting such equipment to a maximum height of 42 inches above the permitted height limits. This section does allow chimneys and non-parabolic antennas to extend ten feet above the height limits.

Height limits in the Bernal Heights S.U.D. are lower than comparable districts elsewhere in the City due to the hilly terrain, small lot sizes, and narrow streets that characterize this area. The general 30-foot height limit, in combination with the restrictions on roof equipment heights, effectively prohibits the installation of roof-top wind-powered turbines at heights that provide sufficient power to justify that installation.

The Way It Would Be:

The proposed ordinance would add definitions, geographic controls and neighborhood noticing requirements.

The proposed legislation will change Section 242 (e)(1)(D) to permit vertical-axis wind-powered electrical generators with a horizontal diameter not to exceed 3 feet to extend 42 inches above the permitted height limit.