

Article 1, March 2021

## What Just Happened ?

A discussion that began in September 2020 by the Planning and Zoning Commission, took months of research and Point Venture now has an outdoor/exterior lighting ordinance – Ordinance 2021-02-17 which amends and updates Point Venture building regulations as Article 408 Outdoor/Exterior Lighting.

The intent of this ordinance is to help reduce light pollution. The advantages of reducing light pollution include increasing the number of stars visible at night, reducing the effects of electric lighting on the environment, improving the well-being, health and safety of both people and wildlife and cutting down on energy usage.

This concept started with professional and amateur astronomers alarmed that nocturnal skyglow from urban areas was blotting out the sight of stars. The idea is fully endorsed by the Mc Donald Observatory in the Big Bend area of our state.

Nocturnal animals can be harmed by light pollution because they are biologically evolved to be dependent on an environment with a certain number of hours of uninterrupted daytime and nighttime. The over-illumination of the night sky affects these organisms (especially birds). Light pollution has also been found to affect human circadian rhythms.

### **What is Light Pollution?**

- 1). Glare - Excessive brightness
- 2). Sky Glow - Brighten night sky over habitats
- 3). Light Trespass - Light falling where it is not intended or needed
- 4). Clutter - Bright, confusing, and excessive grouping of light sources.

Future articles will discuss other steps we can take to help and improve the safety of our community by adopting dark sky/ night sky principals.



Please consider replacing or specifying outdoor fixtures for your home to comply with this ordinance.