

## Panelist Profile: Oliver Decker

Hi neighbors! As Sustainable Grandview prepares for our Solar Info Session on **Friday February 26th, at 3:30pm** (see event details here: <https://fb.me/e/1Z1aH4j5s>), we have been running a series of profiles here to introduce you to our panel members.

Today, say hello to Oliver Decker! While we've done most of the profiles in interview format, we were entertained enough by Oliver's prose that we're just sharing it as is (with only small edits for length):

Fellow sun aficionados.

My name is Oliver Decker. I live with my family (Moxy, who is an elementary school teacher, Jasper a 7th grade swimmer and runner, and Leo a 5th grade video gamer and showman) at the top of Second Avenue, right across the street from Stauf's coffee house and the Grandview movie theater. I myself work at the UA high school as a custodian for the athletic area during the times when other, smarter, people sleep. On days when I don't remove future Olympians' bodily fluids from fancy porcelain fixtures, or more obscure surfaces like walls, ceilings and lamps, I like to write books and draw cartoons, renovate our abode, participate in the occasional triathlon during summers or gallop through the wintery streets of Grandview on my cross-country skis before the inevitable salt truck forces me off the road.



We moved to Grandview from Franklin Park in 2012, because our nearest public school was scheduled to close and we wanted our kids to be able to walk to school. Now we live right in-between both major schools in Grandview and our kids have been walking ever since (except for plus/minus 50 or so rainy or super cold days over 8 years). We chose the proximity to Grandview Avenue, because we used to live on Eastern Parkway in Brooklyn. The soothing noise of Grandview's firetrucks and pre-pandemic nightlife helps us sleep.

Our solar panels are facing south to the street, but some of the evening hours are blocked by a lush pine forest in the no man's land between our house and the Spencer Research parking lot.

We installed our solar array at the end of 2019 to take full advantage of the federal tax refund, which was going to taper off starting in 2020. However, the savings were not our primary incentive for going solar. The tax refund is great, and so is our electricity bill. But mainly, we believe that the future of human existence will not so much depend on how big industries behave, but on how everyone of us does. Our contribution is small, but not negligible, and it will only increase with the participation of future residents.

Go solar!

Additional notes about Oliver's installation:

1. Installation company: Modern Energy
2. At the time Oliver filed a permit application with Grandview Heights, there were no street-facing arrays in the city that we know of. Grandview will sometimes send the homeowner to the Board of Zoning and Appeals (BZA) for aesthetic review if it is believed that the panels might significantly affect the aesthetic quality of the home (and surrounding neighborhood). While the panels were approved on the upper roof, the BZA did not grant permission to place panels on the porch roof, as they would have been more visible from the street. However, the city has been evolving its views on solar aesthetics, and first-story solar arrays that are quite visible from the street have been approved since Oliver's application in 2019.
3. Oliver notes that there is some shading by trees from the afternoon sun. As we'll discuss during the info session, you don't need a perfectly unshaded, south-facing array to make going solar a good investment.
4. You'll notice some snow on the roof. Before installing, your contractor will make sure that your roof is structurally sound enough to support the panels and any snow that might fall on them. In Ohio, our roofs don't usually spend too much time under snow cover, but even when they do, the loss in production is somewhat minimal, as we get the lowest solar production during these months anyway. Also, snow tends to slide off of the smooth solar panels sooner than it does off an asphalt roof.