

Minutes of the Historic District Commission and the Historical Commission

Date: February 21, 2019

Commission members present: Nancy Allen, Claudette Bishop, Bob Clark, Chris Mandel, Lynn Shaw

Commission members absent: Jeremy Gabrenas, Melissa Martinez

Others present: Cynthia Henshaw, Jordan O'Connor, Ann Lewis, Stephanie Selden, Henry Woolsey, Roy Nilson

Chairperson Nancy Allen opened the meeting at 7:17, after the close of the public hearing on proposed modifications to the exterior of the south side of the Petersham Country Store, 2 North Main St.

Agenda Items

Country Store proposed solar installation

Meet with East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) which owns the Country Store building, to discuss and conduct a preliminary review of their application for proposed alterations to the building's exterior for the installation of rooftop solar panels on the main roof and ell, and to set a date for a public hearing as appropriate. EQLT provided paper copies of their application materials, and samples of two different solar panel designs to view.

Cynthia Henshaw from East Quabbin Land Trust (EQLT) summarized the material in their application. Their goal in desiring to install solar panels is to reduce the Country Store's electricity costs to ensure the Store remains a viable community resource for Petersham. Solar panels will be installed on the main roof and ell, which will involve 86 solar panels in total. The existing skylights will be removed and the shingles on both roofs will be replaced prior to the solar panel installation. EQLT has chosen an all-black panel vs. a panel with a grid pattern (samples of both were shown) for aesthetics and less reflective glare. It is estimated the solar panels will produce 62% of the Country Store's annual electricity use.

The following items/topics were discussed:

- The panels' setback from the edge of the roof will be approximately 2 feet.
- Most controls, conduits, etc. will be on the north side of the building or in the basement and therefore out of view from the public way; however, there will be one conduit visible between the main roof and the ell roof, along the edge, which will be painted white to blend in with the building's trim.
- The panels are designed to withstand 1 inch hail and 52 mph winds. There is no current plan to install lightning rods.

- Snow guards will be installed, which break up snow and ice into smaller pieces and slow their speed as they slide off. Chris Mandel noted it would be helpful for HDC members to have a photo of installed snow guards for reference.
- The estimated payback time for the project is 7-10 years. The system's life is expected to be 20-25 years. Roy Nilson asked what the total cost of the system was expected to be; EQLT declined to discuss costs in a public meeting, and reiterated their goals to reduce the Store's electric costs and make the building more sustainable for the future. Ann Lewis noted the Store may need to add some air conditioning units for improved cooling in summer, but that there is no plan to increase the Store's overall electric use as a result of installing solar panels.

Because the proposed installation does involve alterations to external architectural feature of the building, a hearing date will be required, and several proposed dates were discussed, with March 21 ultimately chosen, at 7 PM in the Library. Nancy Allen noted that HDC would like the electronic file of the application for review prior to the hearing.

Review other project applications and queries

Nancy Allen noted that an application related to a project for handicap access at the Town Hall was expected, and Monday, February 25 at 7 PM in the Library was chosen for preliminary review of that application. The committee also decided to continue the review of the draft solar guidelines at the same meeting.

Review previous meeting minutes

Chris moved and Bob seconded to read the draft minutes from the meeting of January 17, 2019. Chris moved and Bob seconded to approve the minutes as read; four members approved and one abstained.

Bob moved and Chris seconded to read the draft minutes from the meeting of January 30, 2019. Bob moved and Chris seconded to approve the minutes as read; four members approved and one abstained.

Business permits

None

Correspondence

None

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM

Lynn Shaw moved and Chris Mandel seconded to adjourn the meeting, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudette Bishop, Clerk

Approved by:

Minutes approved at April 18 2019 HDC Meeting.