

January 30, 2019

Minutes of the Meeting of the Historic District Commission and the Historical Commission, Petersham Lower Town Hall

Call to Order: 7:12 PM, Chairperson Nancy Allen

Commission members present: Nancy Allen, Claudette Bishop, Bob Clark, Chris Mandel, Melissa Martinez

Commission members absent: Jeremy Gabrenas, Lynn Shaw

Recorder: Claudette Bishop

Others Present: Ann Lewis, Roy Nilson, Stephanie Selden

Agenda Items

Continue review of solar energy installation guidelines

The committee discussed version 3 of the draft solar guidelines. Items discussed included whether the top of the panels should project not more than 3 inches, or not more than 4 inches, above the roof. Chris Mandel provided some information about how historic districts in other towns in Massachusetts determined that measurement. The committee members agreed to amend the language in the draft guidelines to be not more than 4 inches to the top of the panel. There was also discussion about adding or amending language regarding appearance and visibility of electrical components, like-kind replacement materials, removing system components at the end of the system's functional life, whether details about ultimate removal should be included in an application, and a discussion about the term "fabric" and whether it needs clarification. Lynn Shaw could not attend the meeting but did email comments, which were read aloud as part of the discussion.

At 8:23, Nancy Allen opened the meeting to comments from the public. Both Ann Lewis and Stephanie Selden commented favorably on the content and progress of the guidelines. Additional topics and questions discussed included the 4-inch measurement from the roof to the top of the panels, and the importance of reviewing each proposed installation case-by-case; e.g., panel sizes are standard and sometimes an entire roof can't be covered, and some rooflines on historic houses have dips or bulges that need to be accommodated and might affect the visual or measurement aspects of an installation.

Roy Nilson also asked about the application process, relative to a pending application for the Town Hall handicap access project. Nancy said that an application had already been sent to John Woolsey, the committee chair for the handicap access project, and noted there are now three applications in process for the committee to review, which will likely require additional meetings to be scheduled.

Review of previous meeting minutes

None

Business Permits

None

Correspondence

Bob Clark said he received a call from Fred Day about an upcoming safety inspection of the dam at Brown's Pond. Fred has recently had repairs made to the dam, including to the stone piers and the sluice gate. (Bob noted that all stone dams are generally considered "unsafe.") Fred also wanted to let Bob know that he plans to participate in a study the Massachusetts Dept. of Fish and Wildlife is undertaking to explore removing dams in the state to restore natural stream flow. Bob noted that if the study showed removal of the dam was feasible, Fred would have to pay for the removal. This led to a brief discussion about the historic nature of Brown's Pond and the dam, and their importance as town landmarks.

Programs and Initiatives

None

Next Regular Meeting

February 21, 2019, 7 PM

Meeting adjourned: 8:51 PM

Melissa moved and Chris seconded; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Claudette Bishop, Clerk

Approved by:

Meeting Minutes approved by HDC at meeting of February 21, 2019.