

The Wethersfield Historic District Commission held a Public Hearing on March 10, 2015 at the Wethersfield Town Hall, Town Manager's Conference Room – First Floor, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members Present: Robert Garrey, Chairperson
Douglas Ovian, Vice Chairperson and Clerk Pro Tem
Chris Lyons
Mark Raymond
Daniel Bucknam, Alternate

Members Absent: John Maycock, Clerk
Damian Cregeau, Alternate
John Aforismo, Alternate

Also Present: Kristin Stearley, Historic District Coordinator
Linda Messina, Recording Secretary

Commissioner Garrey called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM, and read the opening comments. Commissioner Garrey, read the Legal Notice as it appeared in the *Rare Reminder* on February 26, 2015.

APPLICATION NO. 4350-15. Melinda and James Robidoux seek to 1) replace the existing siding with Cedar Impressions vinyl siding; 2) replace the existing lighting fixtures; 3) demolish the existing attached garage; 4) construct a portico over the rear door; 5) construct a 22'x22' two (2) bay detached garage; and 6) install 4' wood picket and 6' wood stockade fencing at 263 Hartford Avenue. (Tabled at the February 24, 2015 meeting. The last date to act is March 24, 2015.)

Melinda and James Robidoux, 263 Hartford Avenue, appeared before the Commission. Photos of the two arbors, picket fence gate structure, and hardware were submitted. There will be no gate across the driveway. A photo of the privacy fence and the picket topper was submitted. It will be painted white and will be 6' tall. They will use Clopay garage doors and a photo of the doors and the hardware was submitted. They will reside the house and side the garage with Cedar Impressions 7" straight in the color Herringbone. The trim will be in the color Granite Grey. The siding will have mitered corners. The light fixtures will be changed – the originals selected are too big. They will be black. Photos were submitted. They will keep the existing shutters and they will refinish them. They will be grey. The gutters will be grey. When they remove the garage, they will install an Andersen 400 Series window on the rear of the home.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4352-15. Ryan Curran seeks to install a metal exhaust fan on the north elevation of the house which shall be approximately 29" in diameter and extend approximately 27" from the house at 34 Center Street.

Applicant was not present.

APPLICATION NO. 4353-15. Astrum Solar, Inc. seeks to install a solar panel system on the roof with exterior mounted mechanicals at 50 Center Street.

Chris Richwine, 50 Center Street, and Michael Brooks, Astrum Solar, 54 Tuttle Place, Middletown, appeared before the Commission. Photos and plans were submitted. There will be 23 panels. There were two layouts provided. The owner prefers the "L" layout. The micro-inverters will be underneath each panel. They will be running the conduit internally in the attic. They will exit the soffit at the front of the house. It will be enclosed in 1" PVC that will be painted. There will be three electrical components – the combiner panel, PV production meter, and the AC disconnect. They will be on the exterior of the house on the right front corner below the conduit. They will be side by side. A photo of the utilities was provided. The meter will be inside the house. The electrical components on the exterior of the house will be screened with evergreen plantings.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Girard Hayes, 139 Broad Street, spoke in favor of the application.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4354-15. Nancy Jezowski seeks to replace two (2) sets of kitchen windows with Anderson 400 series windows at 14 Old Pewter Lane.

Nancy Jezowski, 14 Old Pewter Lane, appeared before the Commission. Photos of the existing windows were provided. They would like to replace the windows with Andersen 400 Series windows in a 6/6 light pattern. They will be standard double-hung windows in the same size as existing. The trim will remain the same. The windows are wood with vinyl cladding. The exterior will be white.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Gary Vivian, 43 Old Pewter Lane, spoke in favor of the application.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4355-15. Gary Vivian seeks to install a solar panel system on the roof at 43 Old Pewter Lane.

Gary Vivian, 43 Old Pewter Lane, appeared before the Commission. A roof plan was submitted. There will be 36 panels. The majority of them will be on the rear of the house. There will be 6 panels on the garage. The equipment will be in the basement. The disconnect switch will be outside to the left of the meter. The conduit will be on the inside corner of the house by the bump out.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Nancy Jezowski, 14 Old Pewter Lane, spoke in favor of the application.

Michael Rell, 57 Broad Street, spoke in favor of the application.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

APPLICATION NO. 4356-15. Daniels propane seeks to install two (2) 120 gallon propane tanks on the side yard for a standby generator at 261 Hartford Avenue.

Applicant was not present.

APPLICATION NO. 4357-15. The Town of Wethersfield seeks to install five (5) kiosk style signs and eighteen (18) wayside signs at various locations throughout the Historic District for the Wethersfield Heritage Walk.

Peter Gillespie, Town of Wethersfield, 505 Silas Deane Highway, and Chris Traczyk, 466 Brimfield Road, appeared before the Commission. Locations of signs were submitted. Drawings of the signs were submitted. There will be 5 kiosk signs at four locations. There will be 18 wayside signs. Aerial photos of the locations were submitted. They will be handicapped accessible. They will be installed on platforms if necessary. A sample of the panel graphics was provided. The panels are 3x5. The height is 6.5'. They are aluminum with a crown molding detail on top of the kiosk. They will be painted white. They opted not to go forward with the illumination option. Webb Deane Stevens will have a removable sign. The wayside signs are aluminum. The base will be aluminum. The posts are granite. The aluminum panel will be grey to match the granite. The panels are custom high pressure laminate.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application.

Gary Vivian, 43 Old Pewter Lane, voiced concerns about the application.

Michael Rell, 57 Broad Street, voiced concerns about the application.

Michael Clarke, 330 Main Street, asked questions and voiced concerns about the application.

Commissioner Garrey asked whether there was anyone else wishing to speak in favor or in opposition to this application. There being no one, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovia seconded by Commissioner Raymond, and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to close the public hearing on all applications, leaving application #4352-15 and 4356-15 open, and to open the public meeting.

Aye: Garrey, Ovia, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam

APPLICATION NO. 4350-15. Melinda and James Robidoux seek to 1) replace the existing siding with Cedar Impressions vinyl siding; 2) replace the existing lighting fixtures; 3) demolish the existing attached garage; 4) construct a portico over the rear door; 5) construct a 22'x22' two (2) bay detached garage; and 6) install 4' wood picket and 6' wood stockade fencing at 263 Hartford Avenue. (Tabled at the February 24, 2015 meeting. The last date to act is March 24, 2015.)

Upon motion by Commissioner OviaN seconded by Commissioner Lyons and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application with the following stipulations:

1. The siding shall be Certainteed Cedar Impressions with a 7" reveal in the color Herringbone.
2. The corners shall be mitered.
3. The trim shall be either Certainteed manufactured pieces in the color Granite Grey or shall be aluminum painted to match the Certainteed Granite Grey color and shall be used in appropriate locations.

Discussion

Commissioner OviaN stated that the loss of the garage in the back is countered by the new garage. Hopefully, the garage won't look funny without a window on the side. This is a good combination of new materials that are available and an effort to try to merge that with an old feeling of the house.

Commissioner Garrey stated that the nice thing about the project is that the main body of the house is aluminum sided and they are going to Cedar Impressions which will more closely mimic the original siding on the house, it has the mitered corners and the applicants are retaining the original windows and the original shutters. It will be somewhat of an improvement. The overhang is very nice and appropriate to the structure.

Aye: Garrey, OviaN, Lyons, Bucknam

Nay: Raymond

APPLICATION NO. 4353-15. Astrum Solar, Inc. seeks to install a solar panel system on the roof with exterior mounted mechanicals at 50 Center Street.

Upon motion by Commissioner Lyons seconded by Commissioner Raymond and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner OviaN stated that he is a fan of solar panels. He does think that this application poses some problems for him. He is not concerned about the utilities. If you look at the house, it's quite clear that the rear roof – there is a good view from Center Street. It's just not very attractive to look at. They have only approved solar that was not on the front of the house. A few years from now, there may be a better product available. The application of solar panels on the fronts of houses is not attractive. They don't look like houses of that era any longer. Let people do whatever they want to do on the back, but the front still tells the story of Wethersfield.

Commissioner Garrey stated that when you get to utilities and utility boxes, he is less opposed to them. It doesn't have a big impact on the District and they are proposing a screening with evergreens. Either side will have the same visual impact. He is worried about the day when someone is proposing them on an 18th century farmhouse.

Commissioner Lyons stated that they are limited to three sizes of panels. You have that staggered look and it really would draw your eye to it. They need to hold people to standards to get the best grid pattern. There is some height to this building. He wants to see it blend in more. Unfortunately, we have to go with what they are recommending.

Commissioner Raymond stated that he thinks that solar is one of those things ... you are going to have antennas, satellite dishes, cable, etc. ... if they do come up with sleeker newer panels that produce a better percentage of energy, people will update to them and it will change the look and will be less impactful, but to say you just don't want them on certain houses ...

Commissioner Bucknam stated that this house is difficult as they don't really have the south facing roof exposure that they want without exposing the panels to the front so they have the worst of both worlds.

Aye: Garrey, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam Nay: Ovia

APPLICATION NO. 4354-15. Nancy Jezowski seeks to replace two (2) sets of kitchen windows with Anderson 400 series windows at 14 Old Pewter Lane.

Upon motion by Commissioner Raymond seconded by Commissioner Ovia and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that it's an improvement on the windows facing the road on the back corner of the house where the grid patterns are missing.

Commissioner Ovia stated that he's comfortable with its use in the location on the building where it's being requested. He's much more apt to defer to the applicant.

Commissioner Raymond stated that the window has been approved and utilized in the District in the past. He likes that it with the matching grids to both sides to keep the uniformity. It's appropriate for the house.

Aye: Garrey, Ovia, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam

APPLICATION NO. 4355-15. Gary Vivian seeks to install a solar panel system on the roof at 43 Old Pewter Lane.

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey seconded by Commissioner Lyons and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that it's an improvement over his original intent. It's minimal to the front and it's a unique application. He ran out of roof on the back.

Commissioner Ovia stated that he is in favor of the application but he has reservations about it being on the garage. For the same reasons he mentioned before, he thinks the streetscape is diminished by the panels placed on the top edge of the garage.

Commissioner Lyons stated that ideally he wouldn't want that either, but it matches the skylights that are there anyway.

Aye: Garrey, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam Nay: Ovian

APPLICATION NO. 4357-15. The Town of Wethersfield seeks to install five (5) kiosk style signs and eighteen (18) wayside signs at various locations throughout the Historic District for the Wethersfield Heritage Walk.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovian seconded by Commissioner Lyons and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the application as submitted.

Discussion

Commissioner Garrey stated that sometimes you think the sign is very large, but once it's up in a very large area, the impact is less.

Commissioner Ovian stated that once the sign is up, you will get used to it and if it appears not to be working out, he can't imagine that the committee won't hear from the public and will be responsive to that if it needs to be.

Commissioner Lyons stated that it doesn't look finished. That's a good size sign. Something needs to be on the back.

Aye: Garrey, Ovian, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2015

Upon motion by Commissioner Garrey, seconded by Commissioner Raymond and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to APPROVE the minutes of the February 10, 2015 meeting.

Aye: Garrey, Ovian, Raymond

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2015

The minutes from the February 24, 2015 meeting were left open.

OTHER BUSINESS

Public comments on general matters of the Historic District

None.

Report of the Historic District Coordinator

1. Welcome to Commissioner Bucknam.
2. New Proposal for Intersection at Main and Marsh – Discussion to see if there were any concerns.

Correspondence

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Commissioner Ovian, seconded by Commissioner Raymond and a poll of the Commission, it was voted to ADJOURN the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Aye: Garrey, Ovian, Raymond, Lyons, Bucknam

Respectfully Submitted

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Douglas Ovian
- Clerk Pro Tem-