

1 APPROVED  
2 HDC MEETING  
3 AUGUST 3, 2017  
4

5 Board Members Present: Chair Rodney Rowland, Jeff Hughes, Irene Bush, Kate Murray, Elaine  
6 Nollet, Judy Groppa and Peter Reed.

7 Not Present: Tom Maher.  
8

9 Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm and noted that he,  
10 Jeff Hughes, Kate Murray, Elaine Nollet and Peter Reed will be voting. He asked everyone to  
11 sign in who would be speaking.  
12

13 1. Continuation of Public Hearing for Ruth Zikaras and Michael Sullivan,  
14 81 Cranfield Street, Map 18, Lot 12-2  
15

16 Guests: Michael Sullivan  
17

18 Mr. Sullivan stated that construction has begun however as they looked at the neighborhood, it  
19 became obvious that the standard for Greek Revival was more in alignment for clapboard siding  
20 rather than the shingles that they originally proposed so they decided to come back to the board  
21 for its opinion. We have provided plans showing elevations and changing the shingle siding to  
22 clapboards on the main house but leaving shingles on the garage addition and dormers. They  
23 will paint all the clapboards white.  
24

25 Chair Rowland asked if there were any questions. Judy Groppa asked what material they would  
26 be using for the clapboard siding. Sullivan advised that they will be using Boral siding similar to  
27 what went in across the street. Chair Rowland asked if the main or original part of the house  
28 would be clapboard siding and the L, which is an addition, was being treated differently?  
29 Sullivan confirmed that yes, the L would have shingles.  
30

31 Chair Rowland asked if there was anyone from the public to speak? There being no one, the  
32 public hearing was closed at 7:06 pm. Kate Murray moved to approve the application, Jeff  
33 Hughes seconded. All Members were in favor including the Chair.  
34

35 2. Public Hearing for James Sullivan, 22 Piscataqua Street, Map 18, Lot 36  
36

37 Guests: Clyde Haas and James Sullivan

38 Abutter: Pam Cullen  
39

40 Mr. Haas stated that the Sullivans recently replaced the upstairs windows with 2 over 1. They  
41 would like to replace the lower windows, which are currently 6 over 6, but they would like to  
42 replace the lowers with 2 over 1 to match the upstairs windows and to allow a better view. They  
43 would be the same type of window and they would also replace the aluminum trim with wood  
44 trim. The house currently has aluminum siding, so if someone wanted to re-side the house in the  
45 future, at least the trim would be wood. We are also doing the front entry door which we have a  
46 permit for.

1  
2 They are also replacing the garage door as the current one is in pretty bad shape. At one time the  
3 garage door was black and they want to replace it with a steel overhead door that is flush and  
4 black, that would look the same as the wood door. Chair Rowland asked if they had pictures and  
5 Haas said he had submitted them to Pam Cullen. However Rowland said that Ms. Cullen had  
6 informed him that the garage door came up after legal notice was issued. Haas stated they have a  
7 permit to replace the garage door but they wanted to ask the Historic District Commission as  
8 they want to be careful and not get in any trouble. The garage door is in the back. At present the  
9 Styrofoam on the inside of the door is showing and it is in pretty bad shape. Irene Bush stated  
10 that she is an abutter and the garage door can be seen from a private lane but not from the street.

11  
12 Jeff Hughes said that the Building Inspector already approved and issued a permit and the door is  
13 not visible from the street so it is not in the purview of the board.

14  
15 Chair Rowland confirmed that the windows on the second floor were 2 over 1 before being  
16 replaced with 2 over 1. Judy Groppa said that she thinks it is unfortunate because she believes 6  
17 over 6 is more appropriate for this house stating that usually 2 over 1 windows are for a  
18 farmhouse and this is a federal style. She added that had anyone come before the board for the  
19 upstairs windows, she would have said no for 2 over 1 windows upstairs.

20  
21 Haas advised that there were 2 over 1 windows upstairs and we replaced with in kind. Kate  
22 Murray said she also thinks 6 over 6 are more appropriate for this house. Elaine Nollet said that  
23 her windows were 2 over 1 and she replaced them with 6 over 6. Jeff Hughes asked if because  
24 the upper windows are new and will remain, whether aesthetically it would make more sense to  
25 have 2 over 1 on the bottom also? Chair Rowland stated that it would be a more aesthetic  
26 appearance however it is going in the wrong direction. There were lots of changes made to  
27 buildings before the HDC was created and the idea was there would be an opportunity to undo  
28 some of these changes that may not be sympathetic to the district. Historically it's an early  
29 house and the windows should be 6 over 6. Kate Murray stated that having 6 over 6 downstairs  
30 would still be fine. Chair Rowland said that the houses on Piscataqua Street are 6 over 6 or multi  
31 pane. This house was built in 1730 and would not have had 2 over 1.

32  
33 Jeff Hughes asked if Mr. Sullivan is against installing 6 over 6 windows. Jim Sullivan said that  
34 he would rather have 2 over 1 as the view is better when you are looking out at the water and  
35 they are easier to clean.

36  
37 Chair Rowland asked if there was anyone from the public to speak to, for or against? Pam  
38 Cullen of 11 Becker Lane stated that her father bought that house in 1937 and he probably was  
39 the one to put the 2 over 1 windows in because they were cheaper adding that it has been that  
40 way since 1937. Also, as an abutter, she doesn't mind the windows being 2 over 1 for the entire  
41 house. She asked that the board vote in favor because it will be uniform.

42  
43 Chair Rowland closed the public hearing at 7:17 pm.

44  
45 The board discussed the application. Chair Rowland said they should honor the history of the  
46 house and it has had 2 over 1 for many years however it is not keeping with the streetscape.

1 Judy Groppa said she just couldn't go there, that it is going too far away from what the historic  
2 district stands for. Jeff Hughes thought the applicant should reconsider doing 6 over 6.

3  
4 Mr. Haas stated he respects the board's opinion but it is the applicant's decision. Chair Rowland  
5 advised Mr. Sullivan that if he wanted to amend the petition, the board could vote on it or the  
6 application could be postponed until next month to give him time to think about it advising that  
7 if he decides to go with 6 over 6, he probably wouldn't need the board's approval and that if he  
8 went forward tonight with his request for 2 over 1 windows, it would most likely be denied. The  
9 applicant decided to postpone.

10  
11 Jeff Hughes moved to table any further discussion on the application until next month, Peter  
12 Reed seconded. All voted to table the application.

13  
14 Mr. Haas confirmed that he could go forward with the garage door which Chair Rowland  
15 confirmed.

16  
17 3. Approve minutes from July 6, 2017

18  
19 Jeff Hughes moved to approve the minutes of July 6, 2017 as amended, Kate Murray seconded.  
20 All approved.

21  
22 4. Discussion of Solar Technology in the historic district.

23  
24 Chair Rowland had sent out the current policy of the board which was passed five years ago  
25 along with recommended application materials from the Secretary of the Interior  
26 (<https://www.nps.gov/tps/sustainability/new-technology/solar-on-historic.htm> and  
27 <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/guidelines/solar-technology.htm>).

28  
29 Elaine Nollet pointed out that the end of the first paragraph of the HDC policy says "rule" and it  
30 should say "regulations".

31  
32 There was much discussion on item 2 of the regulations in comparison to the recommendations  
33 of the Secretary of the Interior standards. The HDC regulations regarding Photovoltaic & Solar  
34 Thermal systems state that:

- 35  
36 2. PV or ST System Technologies must be positioned within the Historic District where  
37 they are not visible from any public street. If the array is located on the ground,  
38 appropriate screening is necessary  
39

40  
41 Chair Rowland stated that the wording "must be positioned where they are not visible from any  
42 public street" is not necessarily what the Secretary of Interior standards are and may not be  
43 necessary because if there was new technology that was unobstrusive, it might be considered,  
44 whether visible or not. Judy Groppa pointed out that there was one example on the Secretary of  
45 Interior's website that you could see the solar panels from the street but it was such a low profile  
46 and therefore was allowed.

1  
2 Chair Rowland wanted to know how board members felt about the existing policy and whether it  
3 should be completely redone or should there be subtle changes made. Irene Bush thought that  
4 most of the HDC policy is parallel to the Secretary of Interior standards. Elaine Nollet stated the  
5 board needs to find a way to segway into the new technology but was not yet sure how to do that.  
6 Jeff Hughes likes the idea of giving the HDC more latitude in judgment rather than having strict  
7 standards that would eliminate the possibility as technology advances.

8  
9 Irene Bush said she came across National Alliance of Preservation articles which talked about  
10 Tesla tiles and the utilization of low profile solar panels which is recommended, as well as solar  
11 shingles, laminates or similar materials, however they should not replace *original or historic*  
12 *materials*. The board discussed the use of the terms "*original or historic materials*" adding that  
13 most of the historic houses do not have the original materials.

14  
15 Chair Rowland gave an example of a slate roof, as it would not be permissible to remove the  
16 slate roof to put solar shingles on. Groppa stated that the idea is not to disturb the historic  
17 fabric, but if something is an overlay, low profile and invisible, it may be allowed. The key is  
18 making it reversible.

19  
20 Chair Rowland stated Tesla shingles would not be allowed if the board found the roof in question  
21 had historic value or was an asset to the historic value of the house, such as red Spanish tiles  
22 which adds to historicity of the house, adding that every case is different. Rowland read from  
23 the Secretary of Interior: "Solar panels that cannot be seen from the ground will generally meet  
24 SOI standards for rehabilitation. Conversely an installation that negatively impacts the historic  
25 character would not be allowed. But what about the gray areas?"

26  
27 Chair Rowland stated he would be interested in removing or rewording the 2<sup>nd</sup> item on the  
28 regulations so it is more encouraging for applicants to come before the HDC and the board can  
29 review each application, but the board must come up with an option to replace it.

30  
31 Jeff Hughes asked for an explanation of no. 3 of the policy which states "All PV and ST  
32 installations must be reversible and not harm the historic existing structure". Rowland stated that  
33 if solar panels were to be installed in such a way that they cut through the cornice molding to fit  
34 on a roof, it would drastically change the roof line so you couldn't go back to the original roof  
35 or if they have to change the pitch of the roof, that would not be easily reversible. What they  
36 don't want is the solar panels to alter the historic structure of the house. Hughes then asked if  
37 someone put down Tesla tiles, would that be reversible? The board will need to define reversible  
38 and be clear what reversible will be to represent new technology. Rowland stated that if they  
39 wanted to take off an asphalt roof and put Tesla tiles that would be fine because you could go  
40 back to asphalt tiles.

41  
42 Kate Murray stated that when these regulations were written, Tesla tiles were not available as a  
43 concept and item 3 should be clear to represent newer technology. Guidance and clarity is  
44 needed for the board and for the public. Judy Groppa stated she didn't believe there would be  
45 any roof in New Castle that would be an original roof so the roofing materials themselves should  
46 not be a problem adding that there are not any slate roofs left.

1  
2 Irene Bush suggested replacement language for item no. 3: “All PV and ST installations must not  
3 replace original or historic materials and should not harm the historic existing structure.”  
4

5 There was further discussion on the wording and definition of “historic and original” materials.  
6 In a 1860 house nothing will still be original. The roof pitch is original so one cannot change  
7 that to accommodate solar shingles. The board seemed more comfortable with “historic existing  
8 structure” and Chair Rowland added that the board would have to ask specific questions of  
9 applicants as to exactly what they are changing. Kate Murray asked if it would be a good idea to  
10 incorporate examples or would that be limiting? Chair Rowland thought examples would be a  
11 good idea, including examples from the Secretary of Interior, to include on the town website.  
12

13 Sandra Bissel, Chair of Energy Committee, of 34 Main Street commended the efforts of the  
14 board in discussing changes in regulations and possibly becoming more flexible. Technology is  
15 changing and because of that it affords us the ability to work with technology so it’s suitable for  
16 the historic district. She asked if the board is considering taking the wording “not visible from  
17 any public way” out? Yes, the board is considering removing this language so no one is  
18 precluded from coming before the board if they have a concept. Ms Bissel was glad to hear that  
19 adding that the flexibility is needed as the people working with this technology and installing it  
20 are very skilled. The cost for solar tiles is expensive but is coming down. Ms Bissel asked if it  
21 would be helpful to get contractors that have worked on these houses and ask how they use the  
22 term “highly visible” and how they work with it? Revision did the installation on the Epstein’s  
23 house and it is more visible than the board thought it would be. Chamberlains did an excellent  
24 job so now we have two examples. It would be interesting to see if anyone in the industry is  
25 focusing on historic homes.  
26

27 It was suggested to check with other towns as to the language they use in their regulations and  
28 Chair Rowland has also reached out to the Division of Historical Resources. We are about to  
29 apply for certified local government and they could help us as well.  
30

31 Peter Reed suggested the board obtain a list of projects so they can go to the property and review  
32 the installations adding that he has only a vague understanding of what is included so it would be  
33 helpful. Kate Murray agreed that she would like to view these properties as sometimes the  
34 pictures do not really show what the panels look like. Sandra Bissel said she would call Revision  
35 and get what information she could.  
36

37 Murray also suggested adding the planning board into the discussion because the firemen have  
38 concerns about solar panels and getting through them to the roof if there is a fire and this may  
39 not be the HDC’s purview but it would be the planning board’s.  
40

41 Chair Rowland would like to talk to as many people as possible that have experience installing  
42 solar panels in the historic district as the more input the board receives, the better the guidelines  
43 will be. He used Solar Endeavors out of Rye and will call them and Sandra Bissel agreed to call  
44 Revision.  
45

1 Rowland anticipates that the next few meetings will be discussing the regulations about solar  
2 energy. He would like the board to take the time and do it right adding that these are internal  
3 guidelines and not an ordinance so it does not need to go to the town for approval.

4  
5 Peter Reed stated that the Chamberlains are having a meeting on August 25<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm to look at  
6 their installation and discuss it and requested that board members attend.

7  
8 Chair Rowland asked members about a memo he had provided them that he wants to send to  
9 Don Graves and asked if everyone was OK with it. Kate Murray is concerned about the Building  
10 Inspector understanding what has been approved by the board and also that he does not advise  
11 homeowners that they have to go back to the Planning Board and/or the HDC when they want to  
12 add to or change their plans.

13  
14 There was discussion of a possible meeting with the Planning Board and Selectmen.

15  
16 Jeff Hughes moved to adjourn, Murray seconded. All approved. Adjourned at 8:05 pm.

17  
18 Respectfully submitted,  
19 Diane Cooley, Recording Secretary

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