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APPROVED
HDC MEETING
DECEMBER 7, 2017

Board Members Present: Chair Rodney Rowland, Vice Chair Jeff Hughes, Tom Maher, Kate Murray, Irene Bush, Elaine Nollet and Judy Groppa
Not Present: Peter Reed

Chair Rowland called the meeting of the New Castle HDC to order at 7:00 pm and advised that the work session was cancelled. He also advised that anyone wishing to speak, must sign in.

1. Public hearing for David and Nancy Borden, 40 Walbach Street, Map 18, Lot 71

Applicant: David Borden

Guests: Andrew Moore, 12 Walbach St; Leonard Seagren, 19 Walbach St

Chair Rowland advised that the application was publicized, all fees had been paid and all abutters had been notified. The application is unique as it is a cover for a charging station for an electric vehicle. David Borden presented pictures of a small shed to cover the charging station.

Chair Rowland asked how close to the car the charging station had to be and Borden advised the shed is wide because the cable is quite long and has to fit in it. Considering snow & parking, the Bordens wanted to put the station as close as possible to the wall to reach it.

Judy Groppa asked if they thought about putting a door on it and Mr. Borden thought that was a good idea stating he saw one on Agamenticus that had a door which covered the front. Groppa stated it would protect the charging station and make it look a little more finished.

Chair Rowland asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. Andrew Moore, abutter, spoke on behalf of himself and his wife. The Moores applauded the Bordens in their choice of design, stating the shed to house the station is utterly charming and a door would round it off perfectly. They are in support of the application.

Leonard Seagren stated he comes from Northern Minnesota where car charging stations are very important. He also thinks the addition of a door is a good idea and he is in favor of the application.

Chair Rowland closed the public hearing and opened discussion up to the board. Jeff Hughes moved to approve the charging station with the exception of adding a door to it; Elaine Nollet seconded. All were in favor including the Chair.

2. Discussion and public comment of Solar Technology in the historic district.

Guests: John McCormack, Piscataqua St; Jane Lannon, 55 Locke Rd; Sandra Bisset, 34 Main St; Jesse Ambrose, 3 Oliver St; VJ Strehl 62 Main St; Brendan McNamara, Eliot ME; David Borden, 40 Walbach St.

1 Chair Rowland advised the public that the board has been working on the new guidelines and he
2 was hoping that the board could vote on them this evening.

3
4 John MacCormack stated he is in favor of allowing solar panels on the roof tops of buildings in
5 the historic district and believes that all those who built these old buildings would approve.
6 MacCormack believes that to avoid putting panels on roofs for aesthetic purposes really runs
7 contrary to the environmental issues facing us as a shoreside community. He is in favor of solar
8 energy even if we have to cover architectural shingles.

9
10 Jane Lannon is in favor of the changes to the guidelines as presented by the board. She is a fan
11 of enabling the town to explore ways to promote solar panels and solar energy. The language of
12 the new guidelines gives this committee more discretion with proposals and that's where the
13 discretion should sit. It gives the board more flexibility and that is good.

14
15 Jesse Ambrose is in favor of the new proposed guidelines and stated he is in favor of alternative
16 energy sources. The issue of climate vulnerability has been raised and we can liken solar panels
17 to telephone poles that enable communication; they are an eyesore but they serve a function in
18 our modern lives. Solar panels as an energy source does the same. Ambrose asked if the new
19 guidelines precludes panels on the street alongside a historic building. Chair Rowland stated that
20 the guidelines gives the board discretion adding that a couple of applications have been
21 approved, one which, after installation, the board likes and another that it does not. The policy
22 allows the board to determine on a case by case basis which applications are within the
23 guidelines, while trying to make it as uniform as possible.

24
25 VJ Strehl applauds the commission for embracing new technology and being responsive to
26 residents' desire to pursue new technology. The role of the commission is to preserve and
27 protect the character of the district. Expanding the regulations and encouraging the use of solar
28 panels, will allow residents to pursue their desire. Given other land use boards in town, and with
29 people asking forgiveness rather than permission, she suggested the board might want to enact
30 penalties for those who do not seek the board's approval. Elaine Nollet advised that there is a
31 policy in place and that it is the Select Board that notifies the building inspector; violations are
32 subject to \$250 per day fine.

33
34 Sandra Bisset, Chair of the Energy Commission applauds the committee and would like to work
35 closely with the board to see how those improvements can be made as some solar providers may
36 be better equipped to provide than others.

37
38 Brandon McNamara, architect and designer stated that as a person who appears before boards for
39 clients, it would be easier if the board would spell out exactly what it would approve. Rather
40 than have a resident come before the board with their plans and then have it quashed, it would be
41 good if the public had some indication of what works and what does not. McNamara suggested
42 the board reach out to Revision as they may have pictures and information of solar panels.
43 Trying to maintain the rectangular forms on a historic house or trying to crowd panels on a roof
44 does not work. More specific guidelines would also make it easier for the board. There is an
45 engineering aspect to solar installation, and it may be best to have a resident shift or move a
46 plumbing vent that may be in the way of solar panels.

47

1 Chair Rowland stated the town has hired an IT person to work on the town’s website adding that
2 he will work with him on getting more photos on the website.

3
4 David Borden thinks the board going through this process is a good thing because it gives the
5 board the option of looking at each individual installation. It may be a long time before solar
6 shingles replace solar panels and he has seen installations by Revision where panels took up the
7 entire roof; there was no reflection and the panels were not noticeable. He thinks one of the
8 difficulties is filling in the gaps of these rectangular panels and he hopes solar installers can
9 figure out how to remediate this.

10
11 Chair Rowland stated that McNamara’s comment of the vent makes him wonder, how much
12 clearance is there under the panels, as the panels would protect the vents from snow and rain
13 and asked if there was enough clearance for a vent. Mcnamara stated the best thing is to move
14 the vent.

15
16 Chair Rowland asked if there were comments from members of the commission? Kate Murray’s
17 concern is that sometimes the plans submitted look very different from what the homeowner
18 constructs or installs. The drawings look fine to the board, but the outcome is different than
19 portrayed or expected. Chair Rowland suggested the board do more site walks.

20
21 Maher asked whether, in order to conform with the aesthetic the board is looking for, a “faux”
22 panel could be designed to work with active panels. This would help alleviate a roof looking like
23 an unfinished puzzle and because technology is not yet at a point where solar shingles are
24 available for older homes on Main Street, these faux panels might be the answer. Sandra Bisset
25 advised that they do make “dummy” panels.

26
27 Chair Rowland asked if the board could entertain a vote? Maher motioned to approve the new
28 photovoltaic and solar thermal guidelines for the historic district. Jeff Hughes seconded. All
29 members were in favor, including the Chair. Chair Rowland stated it will be put on the website
30 as soon as possible.

31
32 Irene Bush said she thinks people heard “Great now we can do it” and not that each one is at the
33 board’s discretion. Chair Rowland stated that yes the board is going to have a lot of work.

34
35 3. Approve minutes from November 2, 2017

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37 4. Kate Murray motioned to approve the minutes of November 2, 2017_as amended. Tom
38 Maher seconded. All approved.

39
40 5. New Business

41
42 Chair Rowland said he heard from some members of the board on the proposed metal roof for
43 the fire station and they do not think a metal roof is a good idea. Maher said it may be the
44 cheapest option but the entire building needs to be looked at. If money is going to be invested in
45 a roof, it should be considered whether other elements of the building also need some work. The
46 Fire Department cut the back off the building trying to get a boat in there. Chair Rowland said
47 the question is whether the town is going to save the building or get rid of it. Maher stated the

1 town retains the building, not the fire department; they are just allowed to store stuff there. It has
2 been brought to the attention of the Select Board that the historical society wants to store artifacts
3 there so from an insurance perspective, it needs to be determined what kind and amount of
4 insurance is needed. Chair Rowland said he will tell Damon Frampton the board does not
5 approve of a metal roof. Elaine Nollet stated the historical society board would pay for
6 insurance so the town doesn't assume the responsibility and a grant could be applied for through
7 the CLG. Maher suggested that the roof be addressed so the building is not lost and a decision
8 be made on the building at a later date adding that he believes the funds are available to get the
9 roof done, and hopefully before winter. Kate Murray asked if the building can sustain a new
10 roof if it doesn't have a back and suggested a grant be applied to restore the entire building.

11
12 Next item up for discussion was lighting. Maher said two test lights have been installed in town,
13 one on Walbach Street and another on Atkinson, to get a sense for the wattage. The one on
14 Walbach has screens on it so the light doesn't go right into homes. Maher reviewed the
15 Harrisville proposal, however, the town engaged Affinity which is a company that does street
16 light conversions from old sodium bulbs to LED; it is a New Hampshire company. The outlay
17 for the town is about \$10,000.00 which includes a rebate of \$6,000.00. The project is a total of
18 \$16,000.00. Maher said he has learned that the town spends a great deal of money on electricity
19 at the public safety building and at The Commons and said the Select Board may pause the LED
20 implementation to get a more comprehensive audit of all energy use and try to do an LED
21 conversion on the indoor lighting but it needs to better understand what is spent on electricity at
22 the public safety building. All the lights may not be upgraded to LED lights because it is such a
23 big building.

24
25
26 With regard to street lighting, Maher said the town is just replacing the actual light fixtures,
27 which will attach to the existing arms. Chair Rowland showed the board a picture of the
28 historical light fixture. It's historically based and would cut in on the return on investment
29 because it's a little more expensive. If there is not enough money or a grant cannot be obtained,
30 the Chair may propose to the public to help fund the historic lights in the center of town, Judy
31 Groppa asked if it would be the same height as the current light fixtures as it seems it would lose
32 its effect if it was as high as the current lights. Ms. Groppa asked if Harrisville had actually
33 installed the lights yet as it would be good to see them installed.

34
35 Chair Rowland advised that Ken MacDonald is the new project coordinator for the town. The
36 Chair met with him two days ago and MacDonald has already put information on the website
37 such as the ordinance and the historic district map and has also organized the meeting minutes by
38 year. The HDC instructions are now part of the web page, and are neat, clear and tidy. The
39 board could ask MacDonald to put material on the website such as pictures of appropriate solar
40 installations like the Chamberlain's house.

41
42 Jeff Hughes motioned to adjourn; Tom Maher seconded. All approved. Adjourned 7:55 pm.

43
44 Respectfully submitted,
45 Diane Cooley, Recording Secretary

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