

MINUTES  
**Hamilton Historic District Commission**  
November 8, 2017

Members Present: Tom Catalano, Chair, Stefanie Serafini, Edwin Howard, Jack Hauck and George Connolly.

Staff Present: Dorr Fox

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Tom Catalano opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Stefanie Serafini made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2017 meeting. Jack Hauck seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE: 587 BAY ROAD – SOLAR PANELS

Dorr Fox stated that at the meeting they could decide whether the proposed solar panels would require a Certificate of Non-Applicability or a Certificate of Appropriateness. Mr. Hauck stated that he believes that if the panels can be seen from a public way, the project should not receive a Certificate of Non-Applicability. Mr. Catalano stated that the proposal is important enough that it should go for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Other members concurred.

Mr. Catalano stated that he had reviewed the documents that Mr. Fox had provided regarding how other towns handle solar panels in their historic districts. Ed Howard stated that he did not understand why some of the towns required a roof area, like a picture frame, around the solar panels. He would like to see the entire roof covered with panels. Mr. Catalano stated that they should take into consideration that the panels are being placed a newly constructed building. Therefore, he believes that the Commission has more latitude when reviewing the proposal. Mr. Hauck noted that there were examples of situations where Commissions did not permit panels on newly constructed buildings.

Mr. Catalano noted that some of the examples were bad examples intended to show how panels should not be attached to a roof. He noted that one of the issues is that the panels should not be visible from the main public way. He has driven down Bay Road several times and one can barely see the building. Mr. Hauck noted that the driveway behind Town Hall is a public way. Mr. Catalano noted that the DPW yard behind Town Hall is even more unattractive. Therefore, one should take into consideration the context of the site. He stated that Mr. Allsopp has not covered the entire roof with the solar panels, however, Mr. Allsopp has stated that he cannot do this.

Mr. Hauck stated that he would like to obtain the perspective of the neighbors on the project. Mr. Catalano concurred. Mr. Howard expressed concern that if the panels are approved, there will be several applications in the future. Mr. Catalano stated that they need to word the decision carefully, noting that the panels will be placed on new construction and not within view of the primary road within the district. Mr. Howard stated that in other districts, the primary concern is whether the new construction faces the main road.

Mr. Catalano noted that Hamilton is officially a green community. Therefore, they should be encouraging green technology. Ms. Serafini questioned whether there is a need for a set of guidelines for solar panels. Mr. Catalano noted that they would need to create guidelines for the entire district, which is a large project.

Mr. Hauck noted that some towns require an array on the ground, not the roof. Mr. Catalano noted that some people do not have the option to do this and it is a more expensive option.

The Commission discussed whether the panels should receive a Certificate of Non-Applicability or a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Commission members discussed the two options that Mr. Allsopp had provided. The Commission members discussed regulations that other towns had put together. The Commission discussed the Tesla solar shingles.

Mr. Hauck made a motion that the project requires a Certificate of Appropriateness. Ms. Serafini seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. It was determined that the best date for the hearing would be December 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Catalano inquired about the date that the Planning Board would discuss the demolition delay bylaw. Mr. Fox stated that the Planning Board would discuss it in December and the Board of Selectmen would discuss it in January. Mr. Howard noted that he had discussed the demolition delay bylaw at a previous Planning Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.