



MINUTES

MERCHANTVILLE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION Borough Hall, 1 West Maple Avenue, Merchantville, NJ 08109 Thursday, September 5, 2019

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Mrs. McLoone called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.
2. **SUNSHINE LAW.** Mrs. McLoone explained the manner in which notice had been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Attendees participated in the pledge of allegiance.
4. **ROLL CALL.** Ms. Wuebker called the roll call. The following members were present: Ms. Regina Lovelidge, Mrs. Maureen McLoone, Mr. Nathan Weiner, Mr. R. Taylor Ruilova, Ms. J. Taylor. Mr. Shawn Waldron was not present. Mark Asselta, Esq., Board Solicitor, was not present; Beth Marlin took the place of Mark Asselta, Esquire at tonight's meeting. Mara Wuebker, Borough Community Development Director, was also present.
5. **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - a. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES.**

July 2, 2019 – Mrs. McLoone noted several corrections that were needed to the minutes. Mr. Weiner made a motion to approve the July minutes as amended. Ms. McLoone second the motion. Ms. Lovelidge, Ms. McLoone, and Mr. Weiner voted to approve the minutes. Ms. Taylor and Mr. Ruilova abstained from the vote.

May 7, 2019 – Mr. Ruilova made a motion to approve the May minutes. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion. Ms. Lovelidge, Ms. Taylor, and Mr. Ruilova voted to approve the minutes. Ms. McLoone and Mr. Weiner abstained from the vote.
6. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. HPC#1909-1 Charles Hummel of Azimuth Renewable Energy on behalf of Ryan Middleton,
21 N Centre Street, Block 58, Lot 11
Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic System

Presentation:

Mr. Hummel was sworn in. He summarized the proposed solar array application to be installed on the roof of the property 21 N Centre Street, Block 58, Lot 11. There would be two locations on the roof -- one on the south facing side, which is on the right side of the building that can be viewed from someone walking on the street. The other is on the rear side of the building, which

would not be visible from the street. The solar panels are low profile – they stand off the roof 5 ½ inches high (to the top of panel), it is a railless system, and it will be black in color. If the right side (southern side) was not included in the approval, it would limit the amount of solar power that can be captured. The solar energy production in the back is less than on the side. He explored another design alternative with the property owner, but it would be a financial burden.

Mr. Ryan Middleton (property owner) was sworn in. He explained that he purposely did not propose solar panels on the front of the house to keep the historic integrity of the primary elevation of the building. The building next door has a high profile so it will help to block the visibility. Mr. R. Taylor Ruilova asked the age of the shingles. Mr. Middleton responded that he estimated 5 years old. Ms. McLoone asked the color of the shingles. Ms. Wuebker asked to enter two photos of the property into the record as exhibits. The photos were marked as “Board 1” and “Board 2” accordingly. Board 1 shows the view looking north on Centre street towards the property and Board 2 is a closer view of the subject site. Mr. Weiner commented that he personally knows solar installation designers and he showed them the proposal; they agreed that this was a well thought out and appropriate design, given the circumstances.

Mrs. McLoone asked if the roof would be damaged if the solar panels were removed in the future. Mr. Hummel said no. There is a metal pan underneath the solar panel that goes under the shingle into the rafter itself. Mr. R. Taylor Ruilova asked him to explain how many panels are being proposed in the drawing. Mr. Hummel responded there are 7 panels along the bottom; he stated there are not partial panels. The panels are 39 inches wide by 65 inches high.

Mr. Middleton discussed the alternative proposal – which would be a pergola style roof on top of the deck in back of the structure – there would be less visibility than what is being proposed now, but at an increased cost. Ms. Wuebker asked to enter another photo into the record as an exhibit; it was labeled “Board 3.” It shows the alternate location and the measuring tape shows an approximate height of the pergola. Ms. McLoone questioned the cost of the alternative. Mr. Hummel stated the cost was not yet determined. The construction of an additional structure along with the purchase of additional panels would be an additional expense to the applicant. Ms. McLoone asked what the alternate look like. Mr. Hummel explained the structure would be 16 to 18 feet away from the house and it would be the width of the porch which would be 16 to 18 feet wide. Mr. R Taylor Ruilova asked if panels would be flat. Mr. Hummel stated they would be flat but more beneficial if there is a slope.

Public Comment:

The floor was made open to public comments on the application. However, there were none. The public portion was closed.

Board Discussion:

Ms. McLoone stated that there is nothing in the Zoning Ordinance about solar panels yet. This is a new frontier – need to balance new technology while focusing on preserving the historic integrity of the community. Mr. Ruilova stated it’s a progression in technology and sustainable energy. To him, he thinks we need to look at on a case by case basis. If, for example, there would only be a one-story building next door, or if this property was located on a corner lot, then he may not be in favor of a roof installation, as it would have more of a visual impact. However,

– treating it as one sign across multiple windows. Mr. Bordi stated that the proposed signage is very similar to a previous store at the same location, the Trading Post, which was approved. There was some discussion about how tall sign bands can be, how large the lettering can be on sign bands, where the measuring starts, etc.

Ms. Wubeker discussed the intent of the ordinance, which is to make sure there is not multiple large logos on storefront windows, which is not the case in this instance. Here, the windows are predominantly transparent and the wording is very similar in nature to a sign band – just without the background color. She finds the signage to be attractive and modest.

Ms. Wubeker asked about the proposed temporary ‘coming soon’ sign – Mr. Bordi responded that he likes to give signage to alert the public of the opening of the store. Once the new sign is complete, the temporary sign will be removed.

Public Comment. The floor was made open to the public for comments on the application. However, there were none. The public portion was closed.

Motion. Mr. Ruilova made a motion to approve the motion for the sign package as submitted in the application. Ms. Lovelidge seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor.

7. BOARD COMMENTS.

Ms. McLoone gave an update on the historic society, the celebration on Friday of the unveiling of the historic marker for Collins & Pancoast Hall, and upcoming 150th anniversary in 5 years.

8. ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Weiner made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Ruilova. All members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned approximately 8:23 pm.