

LAYTONSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 5, 2019

Present:

Charles Hendricks, Chair
Andy Drouliskos
Susan Phillips
Jill Ruspi

Absent:

Lisa Simonetti
Michele Shortley, Alternate

Attendees:

Jennifer Sizemore, Secretary
Jim Ruspi, Mayor
Jacob Cook, Vivint Solar
Sheree Wenger, Resident
Amy Koval, Town Council Member

Opening:

Chair Hendricks called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. He noted that a quorum was present.

Minutes:

Member Ruspi made a motion to approve the July 2019 meeting minutes as amended, Member Drouliskos seconded, all approved.

Public Hearing:

HDWP 02-19, 7110 Brink Rd. (John and Eva Ols): The homeowners submitted an application to install solar panels. Jacob Cook from Vivint Solar represented the homeowners at the meeting. He showed plans for the scope of work, including a schematic for the installation. He said the panels would be installed on the rear roof of the house, facing south. The panels won't be visible from the front of the house, and Mr. Cook showed a picture of what would be visible from the side. The planned installation meets all national and county specifications. The rest of the documentation in the application shows engineering specifications. Member Drouliskos asked about the panel dimensions and wiring. Mr. Cook said the panels are 3' x 5' and 3" thick with 1" of dead space. He talked about how the panels are wired together and attached to the roof; they will cover about 80% of the rear roof including the house and garage. Member Phillips asked if the panels would be visible from other houses, and Mr. Cook said only one house is directly to the rear. Member Ruspi commented that there seems to be less difference in color between the panels and housing compared with older solar panels, and Mr. Cook agreed that it's a more uniform black now. Member Drouliskos asked about the meter, and Mr. Cook said it would be on the west side. They discussed the visibility of the inverter and conduit, and the historic district commission (HDC) members thought the conduit should be painted to make it less noticeable.

Mr. Cook said painting the inverter or meter could be problematic, but it's similar in look to current electric meters.

Mr. Cook clarified some additional questions about the wiring diagrams and discussed the general methods for purchasing solar panels and the cost savings provided. Chair Hendricks asked whether there was a risk that the panels may have to be removed in case of foreclosure or lack of payment when financed, and Mr. Cook said it's possible but very expensive and unlikely. In the case of foreclosure, the outstanding debt would be handled as with any other.

Chair Hendricks opened the floor to public comment. Mr. Jim Ruspi, resident, 7111 Brink Road, said he lives directly across the street and has no issues with the solar panel installation. Member Ruspi asked whether other nearby residents had been contacted, and Chair Hendricks said they had been notified by letter about the public hearing. Mayor Ruspi mentioned that two neighbors had commented to him about the issue—Patrick Murray is in favor and Caroline Maurer has no opinion. The need for approval by the Laytonsville Preserve Homeowners Association (HOA) was also discussed. Amy Koval commented that, based on the HOA documents, she didn't think approval would be an issue, and Mr. Cook said it's almost a foregone conclusion given Maryland law. Member Ruspi moved to approve application 02-19 from the Ols with the stipulations that the conduit down the side of the house be painted to match the house and the homeowners receive approval from the HOA. Member Phillips seconded and all approved.

HDWP 03-19, 7401 White House Lane (Patrick Murray): The application is for construction of a new deck, steps, patio, and sitting walls. The applicant was not present. He had responded in writing to questions posed to him by Chair Hendricks. Mr. Hendricks said the project is part of a multi-phase plan, including landscaping, so not all of the plans included in the documentation pertain to this application. The current project will include a deck outside the existing French door, steps down to a patio, and two stone sitting walls at the edge of the patio. The house is in the historic district and the property adjoins the Ols' residence. The HDC members discussed the dimensions of the deck and patio, which will be made with pavers in a subtle color. Once the landscaping is complete, it will block the view of the patio from the street. Member Ruspi asked if the HOA had approved, and Chair Hendricks said they had. The members also discussed drainage but thought there was sufficient land between houses to absorb runoff. Member Drouliskos asked if the house uses propane, and Ms. Koval said all houses in the development use natural gas. She also said a county permit would be needed, though Chair Hendricks clarified that HDC approval would be needed first. He also said Mr. Murray would need to return to the HDC to obtain approval of the later phases of the project. The members further discussed the material for the deck and the HDC guidelines related to wood decking. Member Phillips moved to approve application 03-19 as submitted, noting that follow-up would be needed for additional work. Member Ruspi seconded and all approved.

New Business

7101 Brink Rd. (Dan and Ann Wolf): Chair Hendricks said the town clerk, Charlene Dillingham, had received an application for fence repair on the property but was unsure whether a public hearing was needed. The fencing is chain link, and Member Drouliskos suggested the replacement should be considered in kind. Member Ruspi said part of the fence is on a piece of property with survey markers, which should be addressed before making a decision, but the

photos of the fencing to be repaired do not appear to show that area. Chair Hendricks suggested approving the repair of the fence in just the first two pictures without a formal application. Member Ruspi said a consent document should be used.

Old Business:

Member Phillips will invite Tyler Smith to the September 16 meeting to discuss the scope and fee for revising the HDC guidelines.

Member Drouliskos moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m., Member Phillips seconded, all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sizemore