

Woodstock Historic District Commission  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, February 24, 2014  
Minutes

1. Call to order at 8:05 by Chair Gail White Usher. Members present: Lyn Smith, Tim Monahan, and Dan Atwood and alternates Earl Manz and Christine Lessig. Public present: Jean McClellan, G. Leslie Sweetnam, Tom Chase, Bruce Lyman, Frank Olah, Stephanie Boniri and Earl Brazeal.
2. Designation of alternates: Earl Manz serving as a regular member.
3. Review of Minutes of the previous meeting: Approved on a motion by E. Manz and a second by T. Monahan with unanimous approval.
4. Public Hearing:
  - a) First Congregational Church of Woodstock, 543 Route 169, for installation of solar panels.
    - ^ Earl Brazeal presented photographic roof plans and elevations showing the location of the proposed flat plate solar panels on the south facing slope of the east addition (Harrison Hall) of the Church. Panels will be slightly visible from Route 169 and entirely visible from Roxbury Road. Maple tree between the parsonage and the church will need to be taken down to eliminate summer shading effect, and existing asphalt shingles will be replaced with new asphalt 3 tab shingles to match in color, shape and texture. Additional features of the system will include a metal power conduit running from the eave to the net meter located on the southwest corner of the library, as well as a disconnect switch in the same location as the existing electric meter. There is a provision by the equipment provider that will insure the removal of the equipment after its useful life.
    - ^ Motion to close the public hearing by D. Atwood with a second by E. Manz. All in favor.
    - ^ Commission deliberations.
      - ^ Discussion regarding removal and new technology installation application to come before Commission when appropriate based on a concern that obsolete technology be removed in an appropriate and timely way.
      - ^ L. Smith motion to approve the application as presented with the following conditions: that exposed conduit and disconnects be painted to match the background fabric; that a shrub be planted in a location west of the meters to limit visibility of the meters. D. Atwood second. All in favor. Non opposed. Motion carried.
      - ^ On a motion by D. Atwood with a second by E. Manz, and unanimous approval, the public hearing was reopened to hear the following application.
  - b) First Congregational Church of Woodstock, 543 Route 169, for new signage.
    - ^ Bruce Lyman presented reasons that the Commission should reconsider the proposed signage as presented at the public hearing on January 27, 2014 and denied. These reasons included the position that a plastic sign cannot be identified by sheen; that a painted wooden sign is in fact a wooden substrate with a plastic (latex) finish; that there is precedent for plastic signs in the historic district; that the church should not be held to a higher standard than other properties in the district; that the proposed sign is economically appropriate to a non-profit organization and is less maintenance intensive than a wood sign. The current proposal is identical to the previous proposal being a 24" wide x 36" high x 5/4" thick, polyvinyl plaque with painted lettering similar to the existing sign. Signage will be located in the same position, with the same plastic sheathed post and iron bracket hardware as the existing sign. While age of existing wood sign is unknown, the sign frame exhibits deterioration and the lettering needs to be modified to meet current pastorship and church goals. The proposed sign has been approved by church counsel.

- ^ Public comment by J McClellan: continued concern about sheen of plastic material, lack of weightiness of 5/4" thick plastic sign.
- ^ Motion to close public hearing by D. Atwood with a second by T. Monahan. Unanimous in favor.
- ^ Commission Deliberations: Commission applauds the passion, effort and purpose of the proposal; precedent for plastic signage in the district is site specific relating to size, carving, dimensionality, visibility, etc.; the site of the church sign holds prominent location within the district; the sign should appropriately reflect and celebrate the historic importance of the church within the Hill District by utilizing historic materials and scale; the sign will need to be maintained whatever the material.
- ^ On a motion by D. Atwood and a second by E. Manz, the Commission unanimously approved continuing the hearing to the March meeting in order to review a material sample of the proposed sign and suggested framing.
- ^ On a motion by D. Atwood with a second by E. Manz, and unanimous approval, the public hearing was reopened to hear the following application.

c) Olah, 546 Route 169, for installation of solar panels.

- Frank Olah presented his proposal to install solar panels on the south facing roof of the main residential building closest to the street. The panels will be mounted close to and parallel with the existing roof line and will cover the entire roof surface except around the chimney. The existing asphalt shingles will remain as they are relatively new. Conduit will run down the back side of the main house where the meter and disconnect will be located, and will not be visible from the street.
  - On a motion by D. Atwood with a second by E. Manz, and unanimous approval, the public hearing was closed.
  - Commissioner deliberations included a discussion of how the proposal met the sample guidelines for installation of solar panels in a historic district.
  - On a motion by E. Manz and a second by T. Monahan with unanimous approval, the application was approved as presented.

5. No Public Comment

6. No Correspondence

7. Old Business

- ^ Alternate member candidates to be discussed at the next meeting.
- ^ Review Rules and Regulations to be tabled until the next meeting. Chair will circulate the current rules for review.

8. No New Business

9. Adjournment on a motion by E. Manz with a second by D. Atwood and all in favor at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lyn Smith, Clerk

While these minutes may be published, they are not approved by the Commission until the next meeting.