South of the Green Milford Historic District No. 2,

Minutes of Regular Meeting and Public Hearing – Via Zoom –July 14, 2021

Present: Christopher Bishop, Liz Kennard, Andy Kozlowski, Marc Muller, Walter Ortoleva

Also Present: Applicants and Michael Connolly

Chrmn. Bishop convened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and declared a quorum present. The regular meeting stood in recess at 6:36 p.m. and the public hearing was called to order at that time.

**COA Application by Curran D. and Abigail R. Bishop, 21 Green Street for installation of solar panels on front and rear buildings**

Mr. Bishop (applicant) explained the solar panels are to be installed on the west side of the house noting the panels have a black finish and will be a flat black panel on the new metal roof which is almost completed. (panels are flat black and will be placed on the standing seam of the black roof). He added the panels are almost the same color and texture as the new roof. With regard to the rear building, it cannot be seen from the street.

Chrmn. Bishop asked if the applicant was able to get a picture of the solar panels up against the metal roof and he was told they could not get that photo superimposed at this time.

Mr. Muller questioned if the panels are going to be above the ridges in the roof or sit on them and it was explained they will be approximately 3 inches off the roof and directly on the roof ridges and those ridges are actually what holds the roof sections together. It was further noted the brackets for the panels sit on the roof.

Being no further questions/comments, Chrmn. Bishop invited the owners to stay for the remainder of the meeting or he would be happy to let them know the decision when the meeting was over.

**COA Application by Adrian C. Poffenberger, 50 Green Street for construction of a border-line privacy fence.**

It was explained by the applicant they are looking to put up privacy fence on the side of the house that faces towards Lafayette Street noting at this time there is an existing picket fence (two 8 ft. panels) and the privacy fence, a 6 ft. polished cedar which will be left unfinished will include thirteen 8 ft. sections.

Mr. Ortoleva asked why the owners are starting the fence at the point beyond the picket fence and it was explained the new fence will provide more privacy at the intersection of Green and Lafayette Street.

Mr. Ortoleva asked if there will be a transition or taper from the picket to the privacy fence and he was told there would not.

Mr. Muller asked if they are planning to change the front where there is a gate and he was told that will remain as is.

Chrmn. Bishop asked why they chose to go with a natural fence and he was told it would blend in with the planned shrubbery/landscaping.

Chrmn. Bishop asked the height of the picket fence and he was told it just under 4 ft. It was also noted it was all picket all the way to the back but some of that fence has deteriorated.

Mr. Ortoleva stated he understands the motivation to put up a privacy fence noting the proximity of the neighbors’ parked cars.

Chrmn. Bishop stated the city map does show the parking area directly to the side of the house and he suggested an inquiry could be made to the Building Dept. to determine if there are any restrictions on the number of parked vehicles in that proximity on a property within the District. He added any change in parking at a residence must come before the Commission.

The public hearing closed at 6:57 p.m. and the business meeting immediately reconvened.

**COA Application by Curran D. and Abigail R. Bishop, 21 Green Street for installation of solar panels on front and rear buildings**

Motion was made by Ms. Kennard and seconded by Mr. Ortoleva to approve the COA Application by Curran D. and Abigail R. Bishop, 21 Green Street for installation of solar panels on front and rear buildings as presented.

Mr. Muller noted when the original plan for the roof was presented to this Commission, a discussion took place as to whether that roof fit the historic nature of the District.  He added there are no other houses with the standing metal roof in the district and now the roof will have solar panels.  Mr. Muller stated he is not against the panels but he has concerns regarding the placement of the solar panels on the main residence adding those panels will be visible from both sides of the house in either direction and the panels on the rear house are not visible from the street.

Ms. Kennard shared that concern and added there is no way we can ascertain the height of those panels adding the metal roof does make the solar panels higher and more visible.

In the absence of Mr. Stowe, Mr. Kozlowski was appointed voting member and in the absence of Ms. Smith, Mr. Ortoleva was appointed voting member.

Mr. Muller stated he was reluctant as he had concerns a precedent will be set but stated he would be voting in favor.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Ms. Kennard and seconded by Mr. Ortoleva to approve the COA Application by Adrian C. Poffenberger, 50 Green Street for construction of a border-line privacy fence in accordance with the terms of the application.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Consideration of Minutes** – Motion was made by Mr. Muller and seconded by Mr. Kozlowski to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

**Chair’s Report including Correspondence** – will be discussed further in the agenda and there had been no correspondence.

**Clerk/Treasurer’s Report** – Mr. Ortoleva reported the balance as of this date was $6,898.26.

He noted the check for reimbursement to Chrmn. Bishop for mailing expenses of letters to District property owners in the amount of $879.75 was not included in that amount and that check will be sent.

**Unfinished Business**

1. Review Study Report Booklet and consider allocating funds to print additional copies – to remain on the table.
2. Attorney Berchem regarding Airbnb, ground mounted satellite dishes – to remain on the table. It was also noted it is necessary to speak with Attny Berchem regarding signage in the District.

Mr. Ortoleva stated he was hopeful homeowners would make an effort to obscure the signs if possible.

Chrmn. Bishop noted the state suggests “reasonable alternative” when possible.

Mr. Muller stated that was his concern about the solar panels reviewed earlier and if there were alternatives to having the panels sit on a roof in the heart of the District.

Ms. Kennard noted it is necessary to take into consideration the improvements already made to that home, in particular the front of the house, the siding and the roof.

Discussion ensued regarding the initial discussion about replacing the roof on the house and it was suggested if a future request comes in for a new roof installation, the owners should be asked if their intention is to install solar panels at a future date.

Mr. Muller noted drilling into the roof to install the panels he felt would diminish the integrity of the roof which has a suggested lifetime of 100 years.

**New Business**

Mr. Ortoleva stated he was not present at the June meeting but expressed concern regarding the removal of the chimney on the 27-29 Center Street property. He felt in the future the applicant can be asked to put up a façade of the chimney.

Ms. Kennard stated other members had the same concerns.

Mr. Muller noted the chimney is gone and the roof has been repaired. He added he shares the same concerns but felt we have set a precedence with that approval.

Chrmn. Bishop suggested we talk to the property owners about putting up a façade and Mr. Ortoleva added the owners are installing a gas furnace so there is no need for a working chimney.

Mr. Ortoleva noted that as commission membership changes in the future, opinions also change and such a request can be made in the future.

Discussion ensued regarding a problematic house on Lafayette Street

Being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Kennard and seconded by Mr. Muller to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Recorded by Diane Candido