



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Barney S. Heath
Director

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARINGS
CHESTNUT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

DATE: February 17, 2022

PLACE/TIME: Fully Remote

ATTENDING: Peter Vieira, FAIA, Chair
Robert Imperato, Member
Susana Lannik, Member
Matthew Montgomery, Member
John Wyman, Member
Barbara Kurze, Commission Staff

ABSENT: Brett Catlin, Member
Rick Wetmore, Member

The fully remote meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with Peter Vieira presiding as Chair. Voting permanent members were R. Imperato, S. Lannik, M. Montgomery, and J. Wyman. B. Kurze acted as recording secretary and the meeting was recorded on Zoom.

29 Gate House Road – Remediation of Violation

This review was continued from previous meetings. Paresh Malalur proposed two options to remediate the existing solar panel violation. Both options would flatten the existing 12 panels by removing the tilt legs; there would still be a three-inch gap between the roof surface and the panels which was required for airflow. The first option, “Centered Array”, would justify the array to the front edge of the roof. The second option, “Array Pushed Back 2”” would set the array two inches back from the front edge of the roof; there would be a two-inch overhang at the back. There were no cost differences between the two options.

Materials Reviewed:

Aerial views
Renderings
Roof plans
Diagrams
Structural details
Roof section details
Product information

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Installing Solar Panels

There was discussion about the new guidance from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards which allowed the possibility that visible installations could be considered appropriate if they were not obtrusive and did not detract from the key characteristics of the property. M. Montgomery said that the off-set option would draw attention to the installation; the centered option minimized it. S. Lannik and P. Vieira agreed; P. Vieira was comfortable with the degree of visibility. J. Wyman was uncomfortable with approving the remediation as appropriate; previous discussions were around a different standard. He said that granting a Certificate of Hardship should not be the automatic go-to and that hardship required a unique situation. S. Lannik thought the new guidelines needed more study for future projects. R. Imperato said that the new guidelines changed the playing field and based on those guidelines, the project would be appropriate. P. Vieira commented that the Secretary of the Interior's example of the flat roof installation indicated that the centered remediation would be appropriate.

P. Vieira moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for remediation option one to reconfigure the 12 panels by flattening and centering them. M. Montgomery seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote, and the motion was passed 4-1, J. Wyman voted in the negative. P. Vieira said that the evolution of standards for reviewing solar projects was like what happened with simulated divided lite windows; the bar was moving, and the commission needed to develop standards. J. Wyman said there was no difficulty in developing the standards on a case-by-case basis. There was discussion about developing standards that could be published so that there was consistency. J. Wyman appreciated the owner's patience, especially since the problem was not of their making. P. Malalur offered to help look for examples of projects that could be replicated.

RECORD OF ACTION:

DATE: February 18, 2022

SUBJECT: 29 Gate House Road – Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on February 17, 2022, the Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 4-1,

RESOLVED to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted at 29 Gate House Road to remediate the installed solar panels which are in violation by changing the orientation and configuration of the existing 12 panels so that the panels are flattened and on the same plane as the flat roof, and are centered on the flat roof area.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Peter Vieira, Chair

Robert Imperato, Member

Susana Lannik, Member

Matthew Montgomery, Member

Voting in the Negative:

John Wyman, Member

92 Reservoir Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness

Franklin Schwarzer presented an application to build a covered front entry porch with a flat-seamed copper roof; the extruded pediment would carry through the details of the existing entry. The bulkhead would be moved. Several windows would be replaced on the right-side bump out and on the back of the house, and the right-side bump out fenestration would be changed. All wood double-hung Marvin windows were proposed. The driveway would be slightly reconfigured, and they would replace the front steps, cheek walls, railings,

window wells, fence, and gate enclosure. They would add new light fixtures and remove, modify and replace exterior stone walls.

Materials Reviewed:

Project description
MHC Form B
Photos
Elevations
Plans
Entry details
Landscape existing conditions photographs
Landscape existing conditions and removal plan
Proposed landscape and grading plans
Products and materials

M. Montgomery and J. Wyman commented that the plans were thoughtful and appropriate. P. Vieira agreed that it was a well put together design. P. Vieira moved to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted. M. Montgomery seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote, and the motion was passed 5-0.

RECORD OF ACTION:

DATE: February 18, 2022

SUBJECT: 92 Reservoir Avenue – Certificate of Appropriateness

At a scheduled meeting and public hearing on February 17, 2022, the Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission, by roll call vote of 5-0,

RESOLVED to **grant** a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application as submitted at 92 Reservoir Avenue to replace some windows and make fenestration changes; build a covered front entry; to install a new fence and gate enclosure; replace the existing front walk and stairs, add a railing, and light fixtures; replace the driveway; add walkways, hardscaping, and landscaping improvements; and remove and/or replace exterior stone walls.

Voting in the Affirmative:

Peter Vieira, Chair

Robert Imperato, Member

Susana Lannik, Member

Matthew Montgomery, Member

John Wyman, Member

43 Gate House Road – Working Session

Molly Schaefer requested feedback on options for solar technology and installation locations. The owners met with multiple installers and had come up with different options for solar panel placement and options for other types of solar technology. The intent would be to replace the roof before doing the installation. The challenge was that the roof surfaces of the house and garage were very visible. Other concerns were drainage, damaging the roofs, ending up with a patchwork of panels, and appropriate roof colors. Their preference was to put panels on the garage roof, but they would need additional solar options elsewhere to meet their energy requirements. The architect put a lot of thought into the siting of the house; there was solar gain in winter and trees provided some cooling in the summer.

Materials Reviewed:

Assessors database map

Aerial view
Photographs
Objectives
Options
2010 submission materials and minutes
Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Installing Solar Panels

S. Lannik appreciated the impressive research and presentation. J. Wyman and P. Vieira commented that the presentation was very thorough. P. Vieira stated that the house was very important as it was designed by Paul Rudolf and many of his structures were gone. The roof was a critical part of the architecture and should be considered the fifth façade; any project would have to respect the authenticity of the roofs. There was discussion about the systems required for heating, and the location of the conduits. P. Vieira proposed, and commission members agreed, that the owners consult with an expert on Paul Rudolph's architecture or an expert on modernist architecture to get information on what would be appropriate; a letter of support from an expert for a solar solution would be very helpful. Neighbor S. Kugell said that a flat installation that covered the roof as completely as possible might work; he noted that the 1950s was a period of technological innovation.

17 Old England Road – Working Session

Lee Silverstone and Sanna Belorussets requested feedback on a project to replace the windows on the left-side 1986 addition with energy-efficient aluminum-clad windows that have a similar profile to the windows on the main house. They wanted to replace windows on the back of the house with the same aluminum-clad window as they thought the back would not be visible from a public or private way. Some fenestration changes would be made on the back of the house.

Materials Reviewed:

Assessor's database map
MHC Form B
Description
Photos of windows to be replaced
Elevations and photos identifying windows to be replaced
Details of historic windows
Existing and proposed detail drawings
Replacement window cut sheets and information

Commission members said that clad windows would not be approved to replace double-hung wood windows. P. Vieira and J. Wyman stated that the windows at the back, except for the basement windows, were visible from Woodman Road. M. Montgomery and P. Vieira agreed that the fenestration program at the back was appropriate. The owner agreed to come back with a full submission for an all-wood window and to provide a sample window.

152 Suffolk Road – Working Session

The working session was continued from a previous meeting. Franklin Schwarzer, Kent Duckham and Brian LaBau noted that they had removed the proposed fence from the front of the property and moved the playset to the back. They asked for feedback on the proposed guardrail and what additional materials were needed for a full review.

Materials Reviewed:

Photographs
Plot plan
Plans
Elevations
Window project estimate

P. Vieira said that mock-up photos would be helpful and detailed information and drawings showing how the railing and screen would be constructed. S. Lannik and M. Montgomery thought the wrought iron option was an improvement; the glass screen was not appropriate.

P. Vieira said that the applicants should submit perspectives and renderings that accurately represented what the entire project would look; views of the back of the property and the shed were critical. J. Wyman said that the openness of the property was important. Commission members repeated their concerns that the back was over-programmed.

Administrative Discussion

Minutes: The July 7, July 15, and August 2021 minutes were approved.

Design Guidelines: Staff advised that Jay Walter, architect on the Upper Falls HDC, and Liora Silkes, Newton's Energy Coach, were working on draft design guidelines for solar and other sustainability technologies.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Recorded by Barbara Kurze, Senior Preservation Planner