

**Town of Chaplin, Connecticut
Historic District Commission**

Minutes of September 11, 2018

These unapproved Historic District Commission meeting minutes are forwarded to the Chaplin Town Clerk in a draft format. These minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Commission. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at the next regularly scheduled meeting, voted upon and noted in the meeting minutes.

A. Public Hearing

The Chaplin HDC held a public hearing on Tuesday, September 11, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the meeting room of the Chaplin Public Library on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness by Andre Belisle to install solar panels at 145 Chaplin St.

The hearing was opened at 7:03 PM. Members Present: Paul Peifer-Chair, Diane Cox, Warren Church, Cathy Smith-Alternate, and Susan Peifer-Recording Clerk. Also Present: Andre Belisle and Bill Giglio. Mr. Peifer read the meeting protocol and legal notice printed in The Willimantic Chronicle on 8/31/18. Mr. Belisle stated he is devoted to the preservation of antiquities for future generations and made the comparison that making changes that are reversible in the restoration of antiques is similar to installing solar panels on a historic home in that they are also reversible and do not change the historical nature of the home. Mr. Peifer spoke about other owners in the District who adapted plans for solar panel installation to minimize visual impact. Mr. Belisle stated the plan to install the panels on the roof would have a 20 year payback and the alternative plan to have a ground mount would entail a 40 year payback and the expense would make the project cost prohibitive. C. Smith asked if the project cost should even be considered by the HDC. Mr. Belisle stated the HDC approval of solar panels on the Chaplin Library/Senior Center already impaired the District according to state statute. Mr. Peifer read C.G.S. Sec. 7-147f which states; "No application..... of renewable resources shall be denied unless the commission finds that the feature cannot be installed without substantially impairing the historic character and appearance of the district. Mr. Peifer said the solar panels on the Town building were installed without prior approval from the HDC and the building is a modern building within the Historic District. Mrs. Smith asked about reimbursement available for the project and if moving the panels to the side was not as efficient. Mr. Belisle said the angle of the sun is critical and a ground mount array costs more money and gets shade from a tree. Mr. Church asked Mr. Giglio to go over the plan. He said the plan was to install 21 panels on the roof. He spoke about the different designs of panels, triple black such as used on the Town building and an anodized aluminum with a blue cast. Some styles are less visible

depending on the surface they are installed. Mrs. Smith reiterated the Library was done without HDC approvals. S. Peifer spoke as a citizen stating that we can't always afford what we want and the Historic District is an important feature of Chaplin and should be preserved and if you allow solar panels on the front of the house, then all bets are off. Mrs. Cox said the solar panel installation on the front of the house would open the situation to any and all changes to the historic district such as the ability to regulate other architectural changes to buildings. Mr. Belisle reread statute part about "substantially impairing" contending the District was already substantially impaired by the Library solar panels. Mr. Church asked what kind of panels were planned. Mr. Giglio said they were 365 watt panels and created more energy than similar sized older panels. Green NRG was willing to use panels that minimized their visual impact. Mr. Peifer asked Mr. Giglio if Green NRG could generate some visual mockups and pictures of what the installed panels would look like and design plans of the alternative placement. Mr. Peifer also asked if these plans could be ready by a continued hearing date of September 25, 2018. Mr. Giglio indicated this request would be possible. A site walk was suggested immediately before a continued hearing. Mr. Church made a motion to continue the public hearing to September 25, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the Library Meeting room. Mrs. Cox seconded; approved unanimously. Mrs. Smith made a motion to hold a site walk at 145 Chaplin St. September 25, 2018 at 6:30 PM. Mr. Church seconded; approved unanimously. The hearing was suspended at 8:00 PM.

B. Regular Meeting

Paul Peifer-Chair called the meeting to order at 8:03 PM. Regular members present were P. Peifer, D. Cox, W. Church. Alternate member C. Smith was seated for J. Givens. S. Peifer-recording clerk.

1. Approval of May 1st, 2018 Minutes

Motion made by W. Church and seconded by D. Cox to approve the minutes of the May 1st meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

2. Discussion and Vote on Belisle application

Item tabled to next meeting September 25, 2018

3. New Business

- a. Reappointment at BoS meeting 6/7/18 of regular member Paul Peifer; term 9/1/18-8/31/23 and alternate member Paul Siege term 9/1/17-8/31/22. Mr.**

Peifer explained he was reappointed for a five year term and the term of Mr. Siege was changed to stagger the expiration dates of the alternate members.

b. Annual report to Board of Finance FY 2017/2018

P. Peifer said he noticed some discrepancies in the legal ad line item on the budget report and that this has been corrected by Valerie Garrison at Town Hall. He will submit the annual report in a timely manner.

c. Discuss Ct state sponsored benefits for Historic District residents.

Cathy Smith and Diane Cox along with several other residents of the Historic District attended a seminar sponsored by the Mansfield Historical Society on the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Tax Credit program for owners of historic houses listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. The tax credit provides a 30% return on expenses associated with rehabilitation, including remodeling, repairing and energy saving improvements. Connecticut makes \$3,000,000.00 available each year for this program. There was discussion on how to get this information out to the Historic District residents. Mrs. Smith offered to compile a list of names, addresses and emails to be used to contact the residents. The subject will be added to "Old Business" at the Special meeting to be held September 25th, 2018.

d. Vote to have Historic District map to be filed as official map.

P. Peifer said the Town Clerk requested the HDC adopt the 4/78 map of the Historic District be the official map of the District. C. Smith motioned, W. Church seconded to declare the 4/78 map of the Chaplin Historic District the official map and be put on file at the office of the Town Clerk. Motion approved unanimously. D. Cox mentioned that Bruce Raymond has been working on a detailed map of Chaplin.

e. Election of officers

C Smith motioned and D. Cox seconded to reelect the existing slate of officers to a one year term: P. Peifer as Chairman, W. Church as Vice-chairman and D. Cox as Secretary. Motion approved unanimously

f. Set 2019 meeting dates

Mr. Peifer presented a set of dates for HDC regular meetings in 2019. C. Smith motioned, W. Church seconded to approve the following dates: February 5, May 7, September 9 and November 11, 2019. Motioned approved unanimously.

4. Correspondence: The only written correspondence received was the request for the annual report from the Board of Finance.

5. Old Business *None*

6. Adjournment

Motion made by C. Smith, approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Peifer, Recording Clerk- HDC