

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

**Minutes of September 25, 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.*

***Site Walk***

At 6:34 P.M. September 25, 2018 a site walk was held at 145 Chaplin St. Present were HDC members P. Peifer, W. Church, K. Leshay, J. Givens, and D. Cox. The owner Andre Belisle was not present. The site was examined as it relates to the application for the installation of solar panels. The walk ended at 6:41 P.M.

***A. Public Hearing***

The Chaplin HDC held a public hearing continued from their September 11, 2018 hearing on Tuesday, September 25, 2018 at 7:00 PM in the meeting room of the Chaplin Public Library on an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness filed by Andre Belisle to install solar panels at 145 Chaplin St.

The hearing was opened at 7:09 PM. Members Present: Paul Peifer-Chair, Diane Cox, Warren Church, Jean Givens, Kitty LeShay and Cathy Smith-Alternate, and Susan Peifer-Recording Clerk. Also Present: Andre Belisle. Mr. Peifer asked Mr. Belisle if he had the material requested during the last hearing which were visual mockups and pictures of what the installed panels would look like. Mr. Belisle responded he contacted the SHPO and didn't know if he was eligible to get a tax credit for improvements to his historic property and also a federal energy tax credit for the solar panels. He added that he had had a new roof installed in anticipation of the solar panel project which would be covered under the federal tax credit but not if the solar panels were installed on a ground array. The federal tax credit would not cover additional landscaping costs to remove trees for the solar panel ground array. He did not have the requested visual material. Mr. Peifer said it was not the charge of the HDC to be concerned with the financial aspects of the installation. Mr. Belisle said a denial of the roof installation would postpone the project until spring to prepare for a ground array. The site of the side yard ground array would not be visible from the street but would be visible from the Town Hall property which is not in

the Historic District. He added it would not be financially viable. Mr. Peifer said he would want to view the location to confirm it is not visible from the street. He has seen a decline in the antiques business with younger people not interested in antiques and the focus of future generations is “can we live on this site without burning oil”. Mr. Peifer replied that several young families had recently purchased homes in the District. Mrs. Cox added that old houses are less expensive to purchase than new houses. Mr. Church asked if he is presenting the plan for just the roof or also plans for a ground array. Ms Givens asked if he considered installing panels on the apartment wing. Mr. Belisle said there was not enough room for 21 panels on the apartment roof and the roof panel installation as presented would be 97% efficient for \$50,000 as opposed to the ground array which would also be 97% efficient but cost \$70,000. Ms Givens said the Solar Company should offer different options. Mr. Belisle said there were three: the roof, the side yard ground array and the installation on the roof of the apartment. Mr. Peifer offered another continuation of the hearing; Mr. Belisle said to vote on it tonight. The hearing was closed at 7:27 P.M.

## **B. Business Meeting**

Paul Peifer-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:28 PM. Regular members present were P. Peifer, D. Cox, W. Church, J. Givens, K. LeShay. Present but not seated was alternate member C. Smith. Also present; S. Peifer-recording clerk and Andre Belisle

### **1. Approval of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 Minutes**

*Motion made by J. Givens and seconded by D. Cox to approve the minutes of the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Motion approved unanimously.*

### **2. Discussion and Vote on Belisle application**

*Mr. Peifer said the solar panels on the roof are inappropriate and extremely visible from the street especially in winter and the ground array is a viable alternative. Ms Givens commended Mr. Belisle for looking at solar options and funding which showed has seriousness about the project but they are counter to the mandate of the Historic District to be unobtrusive and she was glad there was an alternative installation possibility. Mrs. Cox agreed with Ms Givens and also commends Mr. Belisle but said she would not want to drive down the street and see solar panels on every roof. Ms Givens added that technology changes quickly and future options may be more appropriate to the Historic District. Mr. Church said he would love to see Mr. Belisle get his panels and glad there is an alternative plan and commented there will be different technology in the future such as more efficient solar roof shingles.*

***Mr. Church made a motion to approve the solar panel installation as presented with 21 roof panels. Mrs. Cox seconded. All in favor: 0 All opposed 5, motioned failed, the application was denied unanimously. Mr. Peifer handed Mr. Belisle a copy of the application signed and dated with the denial.***

**3. New Business**

**a. Historic District email contact list**

*Cathy Smith presented a list of email contact info for residents of the Historic District.*

**4. Old Business**

**a. Annual Report to Board of Finance FY 2017-2018**

Mr. Peifer said he submitted Annual Report to the Board of Finance last week.

**5. Adjournment**

*Motion made by W. Church to adjourn, approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Susan Peifer, Recording Clerk- HDC*