

City of Spartanburg Historic & Architectural Review Board
Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 5:30 PM
Zoom Meeting Minutes

The Historic & Architectural Review Board (HARB) met via Zoom on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 5:30 P.M. The following Board Members were in attendance: Brad Steinecke; Dr. Melissa Walker; Dr. Anne Rodrick; Dr. Rhiannon Leebrick; Meg Reid and Kenneth Brown. Kathleen Crowley was absent. Representing the Planning Department were Martin Livingston, Community Development Director, Nan Zhou, Planner I, and Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Steinecke, the Chair called the Meeting to order and said there were six Board Members of the current seven Member Board present, which constitutes a quorum; and they could continue with the Business before the Body. He had each Board Member introduce themselves for the Zoom Recorder.

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed, and is in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the City of Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance. And our first item of business is going to be the approval of the Agenda.

Dr. Walker moved approval of the Agenda for tonight's meeting and she was seconded by Dr. Rodrick. The motion as approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

Disposition of the Meeting Minutes from the July 8, 2021 Meeting

Dr. Rodrick moved approval of the July 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes; and she was seconded by Dr. Leebrick. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

Old Business – None.

New Business:

Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Works – Request for approval to install roof solar panels on a property in the R-8/SFD zone district located at 485 Hampton Drive in Hampton Heights Historic District (TMS # 7-16-02-180.00). Mark Olencki Applicant and Property Owner / Alex Hilbert, Firefly Solar – Contractor.

Mr. Livingston presented the request as follows: Chairman, Members of the Board; Staff has received a Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Works, a request to install solar panels on property in the R-8, Single Family District zone located at 485 Hampton Drive in the Hampton Heights Historic District. Mark Olencki, Applicant and Property Owner; and Alex Hilbert, Firefly Solar, Contractor.

The project site is located on an approximately 8,400 square foot lot at the Hampton Heights Historic District. The site is located between Hampton Drive and South Spring Street. The site currently contains one single family home that was constructed in 1935. It can be described as a small one-story bungalow, with side gables, a prominent front chimney and porch. The owner would like to install a set of solar panels on the north facing rear roof, orienting to the east. The design consists of 13 panels (6' x 20') which will measure approximately 120 square feet in area. They will not be visible from Hampton Drive. The panels will be seen from South Spring Street and will not extend past the roof line.

Analysis

Zoning Ordinance and Historic Design Manual Consistency

The project site is located in the Hampton Heights District which has design guidelines for development. These guidelines are outlined in the Design Manual for the City of Spartanburg Historic Districts and Landmarks. The purpose of the Manual is to provide property owners guidance for the preservation and protection of historic and architecturally valuable districts and sites in the City. The project is also subject to Section 510 of the City's Zoning Ordinance, Historic Preservation. This section allows the Board to review applications involving historic structures and districts and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the Standards listed in the Ordinance.

The project site has a zoning designation of R-8/SFD, Single Family Zone District, which allows for single family dwelling units. Section 501.4 of the City's Zoning Ordinance was amended in 2016 to provide guidance on solar panel installation in historic districts. The **Guidelines for Solar Panels** indicate that the overall objective is to preserve character-defining features and historic fabric while accommodating the need for solar access to the greatest extent possible. The Guidelines reference two specific standards from the Secretary of the Interiors Standards; **1)** the retention of the historic features of a property and that the removal of materials or alteration of features that characterize a property shall be avoided and, **2)** that exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials and that new work shall be differentiated from the old.

The proposed project is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and the Manual in that the panels will not destroy the historic character of the house. They will not be visible from the Hampton Drive Street, and due to the dark (Black) color of the panels they will not distract from the defining characteristics of the home. The panels will not overwhelm the house due to the low profile (two inches). The panels will be professionally installed so as not to damage the roof and can be removed at any time for repairs. Furthermore, the roof shingles are not a character defining feature of this home. The front porch and front chimney feature are considered defining architectural elements of this residence, and will not be impacted by the proposed solar panel installation.

Summary

The project meets all the required standards for historic districts, and the findings for approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness are attached. Staff recommends approval based on the Findings listed below and the attached Conditions of Approval.

Findings

Certificate of Appropriateness, Section 510.6 (C)

1. *The character and appropriateness of the design –*

The proposed panels do not interfere with any of the character defining features of the home. Their low profile (two inches) ensures that they are appropriately designed so as to not seem out of character with the neighborhood.

2. *The scale of the buildings –*

The proposed panels will maintain a low profile (two inches) and will not overwhelm the house or site. Furthermore, their dark color paired with the darker colored roof will help to minimize their appearance and any potential bulk.

3. *The texture and materials –*

The panels will be made of tempered glass with AR coating, and the frame of the panel is made of anodized aluminum. While this is clearly different from asphalt shingles, they will somewhat blend into the roof primarily because of their placement and angle.

4. *The relationship of such elements to similar features of structures in the immediate surroundings –*

The proposed panels will have a low profile and will not alter the pitch of the roof. As such, this will allow the house and site to remain compatible with the surrounding homes.

5. *If the property is in a Historic District, the extent to which the alteration or construction would be harmonious with the Historic District –*

Due to the pitch and location of the panels, they will blend in harmoniously with the District. A staff survey of Hampton Heights revealed at least one home with solar panels. Furthermore, as the photovoltaic industry continues to progress, it is likely that more homeowners will come to rely on solar panels in the near future.

This report was prepared by Nan Zhou, who's our Planner, and then there are also Conditions of Approval. The permit will be exercised within six months, that's one of the conditions of approval. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Livingston shared his screen and went through the presentation; showing and explaining slides in order to better illustrate the request.

Board Questions for Staff:

Mr. Steinecke asked if there were any questions for Staff at this time. There were no questions. Mr. Steinecke asked the Applicant if he had any comments that you'd like to make about this that you feel like would affect our judgment of it.

Mr. Mark Olencki: I don't think so. I think everything was clearly portrayed, and, as you can see from one of the graphics, the neighbor right next to me also has put panels in, probably a year or two ago. And the only other thing is that my son, 28, was just thrilled to know that I'm keeping up with trying to save the planet.

Mr. Steinecke asked if there were any questions for the applicant. There were no questions. Well, hearing none, we can now take an opportunity to allow the public. If anyone from the public is here to weigh in on this and would like to speak, this is your opportunity to do so now.

Mr. Livingston: Mr. Chairman, I don't see any raised hands or comments in the chat.

Mr. Steinecke: All right, then I will close the public hearing and allow for Board Deliberation on this. Does anybody have any comments that they'd like to make or clarifications that they're interested in getting.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Livingston, to your knowledge, how many other houses in Hampton Heights have the solar panels.

Mr. Livingston: I can think of offhand at least three.

Mr. Brown asked did they all come through the HARB.

Mr. Livingston: Yes.

Mr. Steinecke said there's at least one that's on West Hampton as well, and Mark's saying that the neighbor of his next door has one as well. There are a handful. I remember there was a discussion at one point, the ordinance was amended to allow for this process so that we could weigh in on that. For what it's worth, I feel like that the choice to have these panels go on the backside of the building was a really sensitive one to keeping the view of Hampton Drive, the primary facade, pretty clear of that, so I thought that was a good choice.

Mr. Brown: Okay. Thanks.

Mr. Steinecke said if there's no other discussion, we can entertain a motion.

Dr. Rodrick moved approval of the request as submitted; and she was seconded by Dr. Leebrick. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good. Looks like we have unanimous approval. Mr. Olencki, you are good to go with this. I look forward to hearing more about your clocks, and we'll talk more about any archival collections that you might have later on. Take care.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good. And we have one other item of new business, I see. Mr. Livingston, if you'd like to proceed, go ahead.

Certificate of Appropriateness for Major Works – 173 Carlisle Street (TMS#7-12-14-289.01) in the Hampton Heights Neighborhood – Owner/Applicant is seeking approval to replace windows with a similar style window on a property located in the R-8/SFD zone district. Applicant and Owner – Tommy Diangikes.

Mr. Livingston: Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, we have a request for the Board of Architectural Design and Historic Review, regarding a certificate of appropriateness for major works at 173 Carlisle Street in the Hampton Heights neighborhood. The actual address is 171 Carlisle Street under the tax maps. However, this is a duplex and so the unit to the right is 173 Carlisle Street. The owner applicant is seeking approval of a certificate of appropriateness for the replacement of existing wood windows, with wood windows on property located in the R-8 single family district. The applicant and owner, Tommy Diangikes.

The property, a Spanish Mission style duplex of approximately 4,700 square foot lot, built around 1936 (Author Vivian B. Fisher in the book, "Hampton Heights of Spartanburg: Its History, Houses and People", lists the home as constructed in 1927) It is located on Carlisle Street in the R-8 single family district in the Hampton Height Historic District Neighborhood.

The structure is undergoing renovation repairs. The owner is requesting to replace deteriorating wood windows with new wood windows of a similar style and format. The existing wood windows are generally nine over one wood windows downstairs and six over one wood windows upstairs. One upstairs window or is one over one, and the condition suggests that it was damaged or deteriorated. The owner is requesting approval to replace the deteriorated wood windows with Marvin wood windows.

The project site is located in the Hampton Heights Historic District, and therefore the Design Manual for the City of Spartanburg Historic Districts and Landmarks requirements apply. The projects is also subject to Section 510 of the city's Zoning Ordinance, Historic Preservation. This section allows the Board to review applications involving historic structures and districts, and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness subject to the standards listed in the ordinance.

The project meets most of the required standards for the historic districts, and the findings for approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness are attached. Staff recommends approval, subject to review by the Board of a few key issues and the attached Conditions of Approval.

Findings

Certificate of Appropriateness, Section 510.6(C)

1) **The character and appropriateness of the design.** The owner is requesting to replace existing deteriorated wood windows with Marvin wood windows of a similar style and pattern. The replacement windows are a major works and the Hampton Heights Historic Guidelines recommend repairs versus replacement where possible. A replacement of the windows with a similar style and format would meet the design requirements, and inspection of the windows have determined that several windows can be repaired, which is recommended versus replacement. Two windows, which are six over one style, located upstairs, may be too deteriorated to be repaired and may need replacement. The window sills are too deteriorated to be repaired in a few of the properties situations downstairs. The window sills on the exterior are too damaged to be repaired.

2) **The scale of the building,** this is not applicable to the replacement and installation of windows.

3) **Texture and materials.** The installation of wooden windows should be considered an improvement to the existing deteriorating windows and are complementary in design and material to the existing windows on the property, and throughout the Hampton Heights neighborhood. Repairs of other windows and window parts should also be complementary in design and materials.

4) **The relationship of such elements to similar features of structures in the immediate surroundings.** The existing wood windows are unique and distinct to this property. Nine over one and six over one windows are not commonplace throughout the neighborhood or in this area of the community. A replacement of deteriorated wood windows, similar style of the existing windows, and repair of other windows, would maintain the conditions of the property long-term.

5) **Harmoniousness with the district.** The requested changes would be harmonious within the district, would not significantly alter the character and nature of the district. The proposed new windows will blend harmoniously with the existing neighborhood and the Hampton Heights Historic District due to its design and location on the property.

The Board will review and consider for approval of the following: Approval of the replacement of the existing deteriorated wood windows with true (authentic) wood divided lite windows. Repair of other existing windows on the property. And I will share my screen, go through the presentation.

This is located at 173 Carlisle Street. The actual address is 173. The tax map location is... It's actually on the tax assessor's role is 171 Carlisle Street. This is a duplex, a two story duplex. R-8 single single-family district. It's one property off of South Spring Street between South Spring Street and Hydrick Street on Carlisle Street.

Mr. Livingston showed and explained slides in order to better illustrate the request as follows: Here is the property that has a tax map address of 171, but it's a duplex, a two-story duplex, one side and the other side. This is a photo of the duplex, terracotta roofs and flat roofs in some locations, photos of the nine over one windows and six over one upstairs. Here, again, a side view of the windows. This window to the top left was one of the most deteriorated windows, and the original request was to replace two windows. This was one of them.

Windows to the nine over one windows showing the details of those windows and then to the rear windows as well. Photos of the windows from the interior, showing some of the deterioration around the wood. Again, another photo of the details of the window. This is the second story six over one windows. Divided light, again, is authentic divided light windows and the windows would have to meet this requirement. And the Board has to approve two items. And I'll answer any questions the board may have.

Board Questions for Staff:

Ms. Reid said: Martin, I understand what you're saying about the duplex. This is for windows in the entire house though, right. Not just one half of the duplex.

Mr. Livingston: This is one half of the duplex. Only one side of the duplex. So, 173 is where they're trying to replace those windows.

Mr. Livingston: The application says 171 and 173. The details that we were provided showed 173.

Ms. Reid: So they would have to come back and ask for 171 in a separate application.

Mr. Livingston: If they want to replace 171 as well.

Ms. Reid: So the plan as it stands right now is only half of the duplex.

Mr. Livingston: That's correct. The owner is here and can explain. I did receive another email that stated they wanted to replace all the windows, but on the 173 side, we can see that some of the windows are deteriorated and should be replaced, other windows probably need to be repaired. I don't know if they're that deteriorated to be replaced. Certainly the Board can advise staff of the decision of the direction they want to take, but based on our review the windows can be repaired. Some of the existing windows can be repaired. Which is the suggestion of the ordinance.

Mr. Brown: I'm having a little bit of trouble understanding how many windows we're talking about and of that number, how many are total replacements and how many were trying to save. Have you got quantity.

Mr. Livingston: Sure. So for replacement, the original application included one set of six over one upstairs, and two sets, that was a double window. And then the downstairs, there were one nine over one window that needed to be replaced. That was the original request.

Mr. Brown: Do we have an idea of how many other windows there are. 10, 12, 15.

Mr. Livingston: I think that our total windows was, I think, 23 total windows.

Mr. Brown: So we're talking three out of 23 in rough terms.

Mr. Livingston: Yes.

Mr. Brown: So the other 20, plus or minus, you, as the staff think can be restored or brought back to their original state.

Mr. Livingston: Yes.

Mr. Brown: And the applicant agrees and is only asking for the three new windows.

Mr. Livingston: No. We sent the applicant the staff report, we didn't get a response back regarding whether they agreed on that, but we certainly can discuss that today.

Mr. Brown I'm sorry. I'm a little confused still. In the staff report, what you said was that we would approve replacing three windows.

Mr. Livingston: Right. That's correct.

Mr. Brown: We would consider, not approve necessarily, but consider replacing three.

Mr. Livingston: That's correct. Replace three.

Mr. Steinecke: Are there a further questions for Martin at this time.

There were not any other questions at this time.

Mr. Steinecke asked the Applicant to address the Board Members.

Tommy Diangikes: We do want to do the full side right now, on the right side of the duplex, and go ahead and replace all the windows that need to be replaced, and if some can be saved, repair those, and then down the line, sometime next year, come back for approval for the other side. Right now, we're just focusing on the right side to repair that and to replace any of the windows that need to be replaced, and some that can be saved we'd be willing to do that as well.

Mr. Steinecke: So I'd just like to get clarification here. So for this application, you're seeking approval for the replacement of all the windows, but assessing at the time, whether they can be repaired or whether they need to be replaced. So for the present moment, you're not really sure of the exact number that you're interested in requesting.

[Editor's Note: Mr. Diangikes was having trouble with his computer and could not be heard at this time.

Mr. Steinecke: All right, are there questions from the Board for the applicant at this time. Seeing none, I suppose we can go ahead and open up the public hearing portion of the meeting. If there's anyone from the public that would like to speak on this matter, this is your opportunity to do so.

Mr. Livingston: Mr. Chairman we have Bill Michels would like to speak, and he should be coming up in a minute. There he is. Mr. Michels, you can unmute. Mr. Michels.

Bill Michels: Okay. This is Bill Michels. I live at 259 Hydrick Street, just up the block from this property that's being reviewed tonight. Martin, I appreciate your presentation. I know you worked late last night too, or Tuesday night. I know you're working a lot. My concern is basically that the application was for three windows and now it's for however many windows are necessary without review by the city. I went by that property today. I actually know the person who lives in 171 and I looked at the downstairs window, the exteriors of 173, and I wish the windows in my house had been in that good a shape when I started. Most of those windows require scraping, painting, some recaulking. A couple of them may need some reglazing from cracked windows.

I think it'd be imperative for the Board to review or have the city come back and review each window to find windows that have structural deficiencies. Most of the frames are not structurally deficient, they just need to be rehabbed. And I know a couple of the sills are rotted, that's pretty much standard. You're talking about a flat piece of glass at the bottom of a window that rots over time, and the sills can be replaced without replacing the actual window panels themselves. So I would hope that y'all would review that, not pull any windows that shouldn't be pulled out. That's all I have.

Mr. Steinecke: Thank you, Mr. Michels. Any further comments. Right. Seeing none I will close the public hearing portion of the meeting and open the discussion up to the board for deliberation.

Board Deliberation:

Mr. Brown: This is Ken. Following up on what I was asking earlier, I likewise would feel better knowing that we are approving or okaying a specific number of windows, and if it turns out that there are some that may ultimately have to be revisited than we may have to hear them again, but I don't like giving an open-ended approval where we aren't sure what we're getting.

Dr. Walker: I would agree. This is Melissa. I would agree with that, and I think we do have to be consistent with what we've asked other property owners to do. And we have, in the past, generally approved a specific number of windows, specific windows, and repair of all the others if it's possible to repair them.

Ms. Reid: I will say that I'm really happy to see a cut sheet included and the specific window that they're actually going to be replacing it with, which is a very good window. So I will say while I agree with what

has been said, this is Meg, by the way. I forgot to say. While I agree with Melissa and Ken, but it is really helpful to see the thing they are considering putting in, and it is a really good product, and Neely's is as a trusted installer, obviously. So that's more of a comment, but I like seeing the sheet, again. But I think we could get a little bit more specific about how many repaired versus replacing.

Mr. Steinecke: This is Brad. I'll point out too, that the guidelines do say that deteriorated beyond repair is the threshold that these things have to meet and that there is a preference for original windows when it all possible, given the characteristics of the old glass and just the overall interest in preserving what's original to the structure.

It strikes me that this is just a little bit of a jumping the gun a little bit. I think that overall the proposal is pretty strong in terms of what's been proposed, it's just that the precise number and documenting the windows that are being sought to replace are in fact deteriorated beyond repair.

Well, if that's where we are, do we have any motion. We have a comment from Mr. Diangikes here. Would it be better to just vote on approval for the ones beyond repair. My comment on that would just be that I think in the past have asked for just photographic evidence that they are in fact deteriorated beyond repair, and if you're at a point where you're not really sure which ones you're going to go for or not, it seems like it'd be better to seek that repair beforehand, and then come back to us with which ones you'd propose to replace.

Dr. Walker: This is Melissa. I have a question for Martin. Martin, you identified three windows that you deemed were, or someone on staff identified three windows, that were definitely beyond repair.

Mr. Livingston: Yes.

Dr. Walker: Then I guess I would move to approve replacing the three windows that city staff has deemed to beyond repair; and she was seconded by Ms. Reid. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 to 0.

Mr. Steinecke: It looks like we have unanimous approval for the three windows that staff has determined are deteriorated beyond repair. Mr. Diangikes, I think if you find as you're going through this that there are additional ones that have problems and you can show those to us, we can revisit that in a separate certificate of appropriateness.

Mr. Livingston: Mr. Chairman, what we'll do in the Certificate of Appropriateness, we'll identify the specific windows that need to be replaced in the document that we would provide to Mr. Diangikes and the Board Members to sign.

Update on Staff Approved Minor Works since the July 8, 2021 Meeting:

Mr. Livingston went over the Staff Approved Minor Works that were approved since the July 8, 2021 Meeting.

Ms. Reid asked when it is a good time, could I ask a procedural question.

Mr. Livingston: Sure.

Ms. Reid said she asked this last year of Rachel and I didn't get a clear answer, and I'm wondering if we can follow up and circle back to it now. If there is a condition of approval that says that the work has to be done or started within six months, is it the responsibility of... Whose responsibility is it to bring that up. I see some things around the neighborhood that have not been started and it's been over six months. Would it be helpful for us to bring those in from old business, or is that unhelpful and middling.

There's a big house on Hampton, I know Brad would probably know the number off his head, the yellow one, that was supposed to have a big repair done that we approved and I have not seen anything move, and so I wondered who's the onus on for following up on that.

Mr. Livingston: We can follow up on it if necessary. We can go back every month and take a look at what's not been approved. We can probably also include it on our calendar. But certainly if you see one that the deadline has not been reached yet, or you see one that's approaching the deadline, please let us know, and we can follow up with the building inspector.

They get a copy of any major works that's been approved by the Board and the deadlines are included in that document for the building official as well. If they walk in the day before the deadline, they will get a permit, but if they walk in a day after the deadline, building inspection staff is going to be looking for our major works.

Ms. Reid: Would that deadline be triggered off of our approval or off of something else that follows our approval.

Mrs. Roland said usually, we have the findings completed by the next day, so it'll be six months after that.

Ms. Reid said Thank you.

Staff Updates:

Mr. Livingston said regarding vacancies; I think Council is still reviewing the vacancies and will probably be providing staff with updated membership as soon as those are completed.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good. I'd like to extend a welcome to the new staff member. Miss Zhou, welcome. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? Where you coming from and what are brought you here.

Miss Zhou: I come from Auburn, Alabama. I graduated from a Master of Community Planning from Auburn University just two months ago. And what brought me here is the hospitality of Mr. Martin and the work, of course. Thank you.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good. Well, thank you for coming. We look forward to working with you further and hopefully one of these meetings we'll be able to meet you in person.

Mr. Livingston: Mr. Chairman, also included in the packet is a letter from Brad Sauls. Unfortunately, they did not approve our grant to take a look at the Historic District Guidelines. We're going to try to submit another grant next year. They did recommend that we try again next year. Unfortunately, there was a lot of competition for the funds this year.

Then finally, Hampton Heights should have street signs next week and Beaumont should have street signs a week after that, if I can get a response from the neighborhood.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good. That's excellent.

Mr. Livingston: Also, watch out for a rezoning request for a property that's on the national register. I'm sure there'll be some discussions about the differences between the national, local register and how it protects properties from demolition.

Mr. Steinecke: I tuned in to the, not this most recent City Council meeting, but the previous one, in which there's the first reading for the Church of the Epiphany. Did it make it through its second reading; and is that now in effect.

Mr. Livingston: It has been approved. Yes.

Mr. Steinecke: Very good.

Dr. Rodrick: Added to the list of Local Registered properties.

Mr. Steinecke: Excellent. All Right, well, if there are no other items of discussion... Well, I suppose we have to decide if we're going to continue on with Zoom for our September meeting or if we're interested in meeting in person. The Council chambers, last I heard, were available to us, but I suppose not just the Council chambers, because of an expense associated with the other venue. Y'all have a feeling one way or another about this.

After the Board Members gave their opinions on the matter it was decided to continue on with Zoom for the time being. Let's just take it month by month. See how we feel. There being no further business; the meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.


Brad Steinecke, Chair

Minutes edited by Julie Roland, Administrative Assistant