



# Historic District Commission Minutes

**Wednesday, December 14, 2022 Meeting**

**Town Council Chambers, 125 Main Street, East Greenwich, RI  
HYBRID IN-PERSON & REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM**

Present: Matthew McGeorge, Chairman; Gregory Maxwell, Vice Chair; Karl Megules and Neal McNamara.

Staff: Bruce Lofgren, Assistant Town Planner; Christina Marseglia, Planning Analyst, Andrew Teitz Legal Counsel.

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Mr. Matthew McGeorge, Chairman of the Commission, started the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge read the procedures into the record as follows: Each person addressing the Commission will state his/her name for the record. Although the Commission does not generally swear in applicants or their representatives, all witnesses are responsible for providing the HDC with true, accurate, and complete information. The applicant or the applicant's representative shall present the request before the Commission along with arguments and material in support of the application. HDC members will then have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and ask questions which are pertinent to the application. All other persons wishing to speak in favor of or against the application will then be asked to do so. All speakers are asked to avoid repetitive comments and confine their comments to those which are relevant to the application at hand. Cross examination by the general public may be allowed only if the Commission feels it would be appropriate and useful. All questions from the floor will be directed through the Chair only. After all of the relevant facts have been heard, the Chair will call for a motion. Once the motion has been made and seconded, the HDC only will discuss the motion followed by the Chair's call for a vote. Only active members of the Commission shall vote. The alternate will sit as an active member with full voting rights only when a regular member is unable to serve at any meeting. During the discussion among voting members, no further testimony from the floor will be accepted unless specifically requested by a Board member. Every effort will be made to render a decision this evening. The minutes of this meeting will be on file in the Planning Department within 14 days. Certificates of Appropriateness granted this evening will be available in the Planning Department within two (2) days of this hearing. The hearing of any HDC application which has not yet started before 10:30 p.m. will not be heard this evening and a special hearing date will be scheduled. This rule, however, may be waived by a majority vote of the Commission. All decisions of the HDC are final and legally binding under the authority of Article XI of the East

Greenwich Zoning Ordinance and Article 45, Section 24.1 of the RIGL. All decisions of this Commission may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Review.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge added the HDC considers local standards as well as Federal guidelines when reviewing applications and noted this is a collaborative process between the Board and the applicant. Mr. Matthew McGeorge explained the sequence for review of applications and its helpfulness to understand how the process works before the Board hears the applications. He noted each application is reviewed in of itself; the Commissioners receive the applications prior to the actual meeting in order for each Board member to review the content. The Board members identify properties and character defining features and historical and architecturally significant to the district that are taken into consideration. When applicants come before the Board there is a discussion in order to better understand the project at hand and answer questions that arise. The Board determines the standards that apply; hearing applications in this type of forum allows the Board to discuss alternatives, offer suggestions and provide support for the applicant to hopefully have a successful outcome and possibly save money.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge introduced the Board members and Staff present and read the application items into the record.

### **Historic District Commission Hearings – 6:30 PM**

#### **1. Brian Inocencio**

**47 Melrose Street; Map 085 AP 001 Lot 248**

**Proposed Work: Install (25) roof-mounted solar panels – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to install a roof mounted 10kW DC Solar array system consisting of twenty- five (25) panels.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #4 and 5 apply to this application. *Standard 4* states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. *Standard 5* states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

In addition to the general standards that apply, the Commission shall also apply Section 260-62(A)(4) Plan Review of Solar Panels, the HDC will consider building-mounted or building-integrated systems; ground-mounted systems are prohibited in the downtown historic district. Solar panels should be placed in areas that are least viewable to the public. Installations that would alter the characteristic features of a historic structure should be avoided. Panels should not be visible above the roofline and panels installed on flat -roof buildings should be set back from the edge. Where solar panels and other appurtenances will not be visible from any public way, they shall be eligible for Administrative staff review and approval (consistent with Section 260-62(c) of the Zoning Code) rather than a review by the full Historic District.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings published in 2011 speaks to the use of solar technology. The table below provides examples of appropriate treatments versus examples that could negatively impact a building's character.

Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Matt Sly of Isaken Solar, represented the applicant and advised that they have reviewed all options on the placement of the solar panels and is proposing to place the solar panels on the front of the home due to cost. He also goes on to explain that choosing any area on the home will result in doubling the panels and will be less effective.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge states that he does not see an issue with the application and calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Gregory Maxwell and seconded by Neal McNamara to approve the application to install a roof mounted 10kW DC Solar array system consisting of twenty- five (25) panels. Also, Gregory Maxwell stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard 4 & 5, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

## **2. Kevin Moran**

**126 Peirce Street; Map 085 AP 001 Lot 202**

**Proposed Work: Install (11) roof-mounted solar panels – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to install a roof mounted 4.25kW DC Solar array system consisting of eleven (11) panels.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #4 and 5 apply to this application. Standard 4 states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. Standard 5 states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

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Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Dexter Hofhines, represented the applicant and advised that the solar panels will be placed on the east side of the home and will not be visible.

Vice Chairman Gregory Maxwell asks about the roof material of the home in which Mr. Hofhines states that the roof is rubber membrane and the panels will be low profile.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Karl Megules and seconded by Gregory Maxwell to approve the application to install a roof mounted 4.25kW DC Solar array system consisting of eleven (11) panels. Also, Karl Megules stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard 4 & 5, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

### **3. Michael & Judith Maloney**

**173 Spring Street; Map 084 AP 002 Lot 101**

**Proposed Work: Install (14) roof-mounted solar panels – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to install a roof mounted 5.6kW DC Solar array system consisting of fourteen (14) panels primarily on the south side of the dwelling.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #4 and 5 apply to this application. Standard 4 states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. Standard 5 states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

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Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Michael Maloney, Applicant reiterated the project and stated that the only viable way of placing the panels are on the south facing exposure, visible from the street.

Gregory Maxwell asks the question “Do you know where they will be placing the meter?” In which, the applicant states that it will be in the front of the home near the side entrance, right next to the existing meter.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Gregory Maxwell and seconded by Neal McNamara to approve the application to install a roof mounted 5.6kW DC Solar array system consisting of fourteen (14) panels. Also, Gregory Maxwell stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard 4 & 5, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

#### **4. Brian Kortz**

**24 Liberty Street; Map 075 AP 003 Lot 090**

**Proposed Work: Install (17) roof-mounted solar panels – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to install a roof mounted 6.21kW DC Solar array system consisting of seventeen (17) panels primarily on the south side of the dwelling.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #4 and 5 apply to this application. Standard 4 states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. Standard 5 states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

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Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Brian Kortz, Applicant reiterated the project.

The board had no comments.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Karl Megules and seconded by Neal McNamara to approve the application to install a roof mounted 6.21kW DC Solar array system consisting of seventeen (17) panels. Also, Karl Megules stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard 4 & 5, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

## **5. Kyle Walters**

**95 West Street; Map 084 AP 002 Lot 100**

**Proposed Work: Removal of Chimneys – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to remove both non-functioning chimneys below the roof-line and repair the roof.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #1, #2 and #5 apply to this application. Standard 1 state original materials and architectural features shall be maintained or repaired whenever possible rather than replaced. Standard 2 If existing materials have deteriorated beyond repair the new materials shall match the originals in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. Standard 5 states New construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials, and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Kyle Walters states that they had a company originally come out to seal the chimneys, but noticed that they have significant water damage. He also comments that the integrity of the brick is crumbling and that they are currently working with the construction company to bring the chimneys below the roof line to avoid further water damage. He currently does not have the specs of the faux chimneys but he is working with the company to create this.

Gregory Maxwell asks if the chimneys are being used and Kyle states that when he moved into the home the house was remodeled and the chimneys were placed behind the wall.

Matthew McGeorge comments that the chimney's do not appear to be an exemplary piece of masonry craftsmanship but would like to referee the faux chimneys.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Gregory Maxwell and seconded by Neal McNamara to approve the application to remove both non-functioning chimneys and replace with faux chimneys on the condition that Matthew McGeorge and Gregory Maxwell referee the faux chimneys. Also, Gregory Maxwell stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard 1, 2 & 5, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

## **6. Matthew St Ours and Brendan McLaughlin**

**16 Castle Street; Map 085 AP 001 Lot 115**

**Proposed Work: Construction of a roof-top deck, installation of a new door, and validation of unauthorized exterior work including a roofline modification and removal of chimney. – FINAL**

**PROPOSAL:** The Applicant is requesting to frame a new door opening with access to a new floating back structure over the existing rubber roof which is to be replaced and installed properly. New shingled half walls to be used as safety rails and a small gable is to be built off existing ridge to accommodate new door. The applicant is seeking validation for the roof line change and unauthorized work for exterior modifications.

**STANDARDS:** Commission Standards #1 #3 #4 #5 & 7 apply to this application.

Standard 1 state original materials and architectural features shall be maintained or repaired whenever possible rather than replaced.



Standard 3 Replacement of missing architectural features shall be based on research knowledge – demonstrated by the applicant – of their original appearance, substantiated by historical photographs, drawings, or other evidence

Standard 4 states all proposals for additions and architectural changes shall be appropriate to the original design of the building or to later changes which have historic significance of their own. Standard 5 states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district.

Standard 5 states new construction includes substantial additions or modifications to the exterior of existing buildings. The design of new construction need not be an exact or modified copy of historic styles and could be totally different in concept. However, all proposals for new construction shall be compatible with the surrounding buildings in size, scale, materials, and siting, as well as with the general character of the historic district

Standard 7 states Exterior siding must be appropriate for the building to which it is applied. Vinyl and other modern composition sidings which may damage historic buildings are not appropriate and shall not be approved.

Chairman Matthew McGeorge introduced the project.

Robert Calise, represents the applicant and states that the chimney is longer operational and hasn't been for at least 8 past years. During the interior remodeling and demolition, the structural integrity of the chimney was compromised. He intends to replace it with a faux chimney either using the existing brick or something in-kind.

Gregory Maxwell asks about the roofline and Robert Calise states that he is unsure when the subtraction of the roof line occurred but stated that the intention is to convert the space into something usable but also for storage access. He also asks if the space is insulated, whether the cheekwalls will be cedar shingles, and if the chimney cap will be wood. The applicant replies that the space is insulated, cheekwalls will be cedar shingles, and if the chimney cap will be wood.

Andy Teitz mentions the door that is replacing the window and asks the board to comment on it. Gregory Maxwell states that the proposed door and application as submitted is fine.

Matt St. Ours stepped forward and stated that they are trying to improve the cutout on the top floor that was done by the prior owner. Matthew McGeorge states that it is important to follow the procedures in which Andy Teitz reiterates the same.

Mr. Matthew McGeorge calls for a motion to approve the application.

A motion was made by Gregory Maxwell and seconded by Neal McNamara to approve the application to remove both non-functioning chimneys and replace with faux chimneys on the condition that Matthew McGeorge and Gregory Maxwell referee the faux chimneys. Also, Gregory Maxwell stated that the proposed project meets the relevant standard #1 #3 #4 #5 & 7, apply to this application.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

### **Historic District Commission Business - After Hearings**

1. Minutes: Review and approval of the December 14, 2022.

A motion was made by Matthew McGeorge and seconded Neal McNamara to approve minutes December 14, 2022.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

2. Election of Officers – Andy Teitz advises that a vote is needed on Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary, although not a formality. Neal McNamara, Karl Megules, Matthew McGeorge and Gregory Maxwell all voted Matthew McGeorge as Chaiman. Neal McNamara, Karl Megules, Matthew McGeorge, and Gregory Maxwell all voted for Gregory Maxwell as Vice Chairman. Neal McNamara, Karl Megules, Matthew McGeorge, and Gregory Maxwell all voted Neal McNamara as Secretary.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

3. Board and Staff discuss the possibility of solar applications being administratively approved.

Matthew McGeorge makes a motion for staff to investigate what they mechanism for codifying staff review of solar applications at the next HDC hearing.

The motion was passed unanimously 4-0.

**Adjourn 7:17 p.m.**

For additional information, please contact the Planning Department.