

MINUTES
Joint Meeting of the
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION & ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
May 31, 2023

The City of Wyoming Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Architectural Review Board (ARB) met on Wednesday, May 31, 2023 in the City Building Conference Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. by Cathy Ramstetter, Chair of the HPC. Attendance was as follows:

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

MEMBERS:

Gene Allison
Maureen Geiger
LaBecca Hall
Melissa Monich
Cathy Ramstetter, Chair
Jim Walton

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS:

Gene Allison
Mark Browning
Scott Kyle
Dean Lutton, Alternate

ABSENT:

Rachel Kennedy

STAFF:

Megan Statt Blake, Community Development Director

OTHERS:

Mehdi Baladi, 134 E. Mills Avenue
Gail Bason, 126 E. Mills Avenue

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Allison moved to approve the May 17, 2023 HPC-ARB meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Ramstetter. All members voted yes. The motion passed.

CONTINUED REVIEW 134 E. MILLS AVENUE: APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A NEW ROOF AND SOLAR PANEL ARRAY ON A DETACHED GARAGE ON A PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Ms. Statt Blake explained that scope of work has changed from the prior review. The revised application encompasses rebuilding the roof, re-sheathing of the sides as needed, installing new windows and doors, and installing solar panels on the detached garage. The plans show a three-row solar panel array with a fourth row off the rear roofline. Staff advised the applicant to show the entire project to have a comprehensive review since the garage design is predicated on the installation of solar panels.

Mr. Baladi explained the changes to the design in more detail. They added gables, reduced the height and length, and eliminated the cantilever to incorporate the comments from the last review. Mr. Allison asked if the notches at the ridge are staying the same size. Mr. Baladi said the shape is changing which makes them appear smaller.

Ms. Statt Blake referenced the section on accessory structures in the Historic Design Guidelines. It recommends that roofline additions such as mechanical systems, which could be applied to solar panels, in accessory buildings that significantly alter the appearance of the structure from the street should be avoided. If added, consider locating them in the rear and out of view from the street. Mechanical equipment should be low in profile so as not to be visible from public areas.

She explained that in addition to the above design considerations, the Zoning Code addresses solar panels in the Historic District. The Code says that approval may be granted if the proposed installation does not have a significant impact on the character or visual quality that convey the property's cultural significance and the installation will not be a prominent element that detracts from the character-defining features of the building or landscape. The National Park Service in its Technical Bulletin ITS 52 is referenced for guidance, which is generally permissive if historically significant features are not removed.

Mr. Allison asked if there are any other properties in the Historic District that have solar panels. Ms. Statt Blake said there are a few and recalled a house on Grove Avenue that installed solar panels on the garage. In this example, the panels do not face the public right-of-way.

The members discussed the clipped gables and the overhang of the solar panels.

Mr. Kyle said the revised plans are more compatible with the existing structure and neighborhood. He explained that solar panels which cover the entire roof surface typically look better than if there are gaps. He noted that the clipped gables help relate it back to the architectural features of the house, but the gables will not be visible once the solar panels are installed.

Mr. Lutton commended the applicant for the redesign of the garage. The garage is 130' off the sidewalk and the asymmetric roof is not going to be visible from the street but maximizes the number of solar panels that can be installed. He agrees with Mr. Kyle that the clipped

gables do not work with this design, and that covering the entire roof with solar panels looks less intrusive. He does not believe this change has a significant impact on the character or visual quality of the historic property.

Mr. Allison questioned why there is an additional row of solar panels on the back of the structure. Ms. Ramstetter asked how visible it would be. Mr. Baladi said only Ms. Bason will be able to see it from her property. Mr. Lutton said that if the support structure was a gray or a similar color to blend in then it would not be as noticeable. Ms. Bason asked about the overhang and extension of the roof. Mr. Browning responded that the roof will be equal on both sides, and the perspective drawings are misleading.

Ms. Monich agreed this a less obtrusive design than the previous version, and said as a board, we want to help people utilize alternative energy.

Mr. Kyle said the edge of the panel and roof should be the same dimensions, so the shingles are not visible. Mr. Baladi explained the goal is for them not to be visible. Mr. Lutton added the plans show that 7" of roof will be exposed if the 5-panel system is used.

Mr. Browning said he is concerned about allowing the panels to extend above the ridgeline which does not meet the zoning requirements. The drawings lack detail, and he is unsure what will be built. The members discussed using a steeper pitch and raising the ridgeline to eliminate the overhang. Ms. Statt Blake reminded the applicants that they need to submit final construction documents and they must have a building permit before work can begin. The permit for the garage and solar panels can be applied for separately.

Given that this is 130' back from the public way and it is an accessory structure, Mr. Kyle made a motion to approve the revised design without the clipped gables, the solar installation will be in accordance with Section 1181.17, it is installed on the southern-facing roof only, and the final layout is a monocyclic block to maximize roof coverage, seconded by Mr. Browning. Mr. Lutton abstained as the alternate and all other members voted yes. The motion passed.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. Geiger provided an update on the Springfield Pike Safety and Streetscape Plan. She and Mr. Lutton serve on the committee, and they invited all the members to the public open house on June 27, 2023 at 6 p.m. in the Civic Center.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kyle moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Allison. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Statt Blake,
Community Development Director
Secretary of the May 31, 2023, HPC-ARB Meeting

Cathy Ramstetter,
Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission

Gene Allison,
Chair of the Architectural Review Board