

Pierre A. Humblet

From: Henry Cole <cole@mosquionet.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 12, 2012 20:54
To: hdc@royalston-ma.gov
Subject: Lively Solar Panels

Dear Historical Commission, I totally support the action that the Livelys wish to take in putting solar panels on their roof. I wish them lots of sunlight and reduced energy costs. Henry Cole, owner of Stowe House, Royalston Common.

Pierre A. Humblet

From: Bonni Widdoes <bwiddoes@bonniwiddoes.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2012 20:44
To: hdc@royalston-ma.gov
Cc: Andrea & Ken Lively
Subject: Pending application to install solar panels

Terry and I want to support the use of solar panels in the historic district. In this day and age when the transition to renewable energy is of paramount importance to the world community and needs to be supported and hastened, I feel the Lively's should be permitted to install solar panels on the roof locations specified. The panels are not directly in view and are not actually a permanent change to the building, but like an antenna or other appurtenance, can be, and someday probably will be removed and the house easily restored to its original look.

Beyond that, I feel that the Lively's should be commended for being willing to invest so much money in solar panels when electricity costs so little by the month!

Thank you for your consideration of this issue, and have a good, and lively meeting! We are sorry we can't be there in person!

Bonni

15 April 2012

Dear Historic Commission Members:

Thank you for inviting commentary on the application for solar panels. Moving carefully on this matter is important in terms offsetting precedent. I understand that the commission cannot ban such structures, and that careful consideration must be given to each individual application. I feel I have given such consideration for the specific location of the property in question and balanced that with consideration for the Historic District. Based on the *National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Sample Guidelines for Solar Panels*, I urge you to deny the application based on the color of the panels, as the color chosen (blue) is not compatible with the roofing material (black), the panels are not the non-reflective type, and I believe they are not the kind that lay flat, but instead are angled, affecting the profile of the roof.

I understand that the city of Salem, MA is currently allowing solar panels. I would caution against the comparison of a very rural district that of a city district. One of the distinguishing features of our district is its larger land plots, the trees, and the distant backdrop of the sky. In a rural district like ours, the eye is more likely to be drawn upward, toward the roof, as there are less distraction and more space between viewer (i.e. standing on the road) and the house on the property. In a city, the viewer is on a sidewalk, right next to the house, if the person looks up, the sight line is much different and that chance to discern solar panels is limited.

I am attaching a link to the document mentioned in my first paragraph. I draw your attention to number 3 and 4, specifically the bullet point stating: "Use solar panels and mounting systems that are compatible in color to the property's roof materials. Mechanical equipment associated with the photovoltaic system should be as unobtrusive as possible." Black panels are readily available. One can Google "black, non-reflective, flat solar panels" and a number of manufacturers will show up. I urge the current commission to establish a baseline that if the panels are visible at all, that they be black, lie flat, and are non-reflective. Thank you for your service and time on this and other matters in the district.

Paul Tortorella

14 On The Common

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:97ZVbZjiQcwJ:www.preservationnation.org/issues/sustainability/solar-panels/additional-resources/NAPC-Solar-Panel-Guidelines.pdf+&hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESjMogUzORPDeyZEF-3RdtqnYm6iu-K_dkEiOKGhTA2R8G37hUomemU9Ua7HRpoBSIWY33hSWtTKcFfi8LcMa1aYJHxFFDAB8pQ4qGKOJBv6xfJdaSLIUVYp46524csmaf21XZG4&sig=AHIEtbRfTCdpU6pk37DxXFzRDieFcrOJkg&pli=1

Pierre A. Humblet

From: Barbara Stowell <stowell@rcn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2012 17:42
To: pjkpolska@yahoo.com; Pierre.Humblet@ieee.org
Cc: Bob Casinghino
Subject: Solar Panels at 5 On the Common

April 17, 2012

To: The Royalston Historic District Commission

Re: Application for solar panels at 5 On the Common

We are writing to express our concerns about the application to install solar panels at 5 On the Common.

We believe that Royalston's Historic District is one of Royalston's most precious assets and is of great value, not only in terms of property values but also for the almost spiritual benefits it confers on those who live in or visit our town. It is one of the most outstanding Historic Districts in the state, and perhaps the country, lovingly preserved by its property owners over the years, at considerable expense and with lots of sweat and hard work. The Historic District Commission has done an outstanding job since it has been in existence, and members past and present should be commended for their time, dedication and holding to their principals, even when that has sometimes been difficult.

This case is point is one of those difficult times. There appear to be strong feelings on both sides of this issue, and no one wants to alienate their neighbors or damage personal friendships, although we truly hope that that will not be the case.

However, we feel that the proposed blue solar panels will be quite visible, and will indeed diminish the character and appearance of the District in a significant manner. More importantly, if this project is approved as is, it will be a precedent-setting action. Will an approval not then imply that visible solar panels may be installed on any other structure in the District? Would the Commission have any power to prevent this from happening, once precedence has been set? Yes, one or two panels might not "ruin" the Common, but it is the precedent-setting nature of this decision that is really the issue here.

We do understand that alternative energy sources are important for this country to invest in and explore. And we understand that other historic districts all over the country are grappling with this very issue. However, the solar technology industry is growing and rapidly changing. Perhaps in the near future there will be black panels that will almost be invisible on a shingled roof. Would it be possible to table this vote for a period of time, in order to re-examine all alternatives, and determine which, if any, solar panels would have the least impact?

Also, if this particular installation of solar panels is due to financial concerns, perhaps there is some way that funds could be made available or raised to lend a hand instead? We would be glad to participate in such an effort.

We feel that visible solar panels on Royalston Common should not be approved at this time, without further study and perhaps larger town involvement. Blue solar panels will irrevocably and negatively impact the historical look and feel of our beautiful and well-preserved Historic District.

Thank you for offering this opportunity for our input and for considering our concerns.

Sincerely,

Dwight & Barbara Stowell

On the Common

Proposal for solar panels at 5 On The Common

Royalston Historic District Commission

April 17, 2012

Dear Sirs:

I have reviewed the application on the Royalston Historic District Commission website for installation of solar panels at 5 On The Common. I am an abutter to that property. It is clear that most of the panels will be visible from the roadway. Their blue reflective appearance will make them quite distinct. I believe the overall appearance will be prominent and intrusive, and detract significantly from the Common's historic appearance. Ecologic friendliness should not be an excuse for the desecration of a historic district. Therefore, I do not support approval of this proposal.

Sincerely yours,

Theresa A. Quinn
11 On The Common
Royalston, MA

Pierre A. Humblet

From: kplively@verizon.net
Sent: Friday, April 20, 2012 6:03
To: pierre.humblet@ieee.org; kplively@verizon.net
Subject: Fwd: Letter of Support

Hi Pierre,

This came in after I left last night, not sure if you received this one.

Ken

-----Original Message-----

From: Les Black
Date: Apr 19, 2012 8:26:07 PM
Subject: Letter of Support
To: Ken Lively <kplively@verizon.net>

Hi Ken-

Please convey my hearty support of your photovoltaic solar project at this evening's Historic District Commission hearing.

While photovoltaic cells on a roof may not be historically authentic, the concept of living in harmony with nature is an important part of Royalston's history. The idea of making electricity from the sun may be modern, but the idea behind the idea is as old as our hills.

You have done your best to minimize the visual impact of the panels. As your neighbor, I applaud your efforts and I support your application.

Les Black
15 North Fitzwilliam Road
Royalston
(978) 249-6270

Pierre A. Humblet

From: Elizabeth Farnsworth <efarnswo@mtholyoke.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, April 18, 2012 10:35
To: hdc@royalston-ma.gov
Cc: pierre.humblet@ieee.org
Subject: Letter of support for Lively's solar installation

To the Historic District Commission:

We write in strong support of Ken and Andrea Lively's proposal to install a solar array to provide energy for their house at 5 On the Common. We installed a solar array in 2003 at Tory Farm (163 NE Fitzwilliam Road), which has functioned flawlessly and currently supplies approximately 85% of our electrical demand. During these times, it is increasingly critical to adopt energy sources that lessen our dependence on non-renewable resources and reduce our carbon footprint. Solar technology is a very efficient energy alternative, which has a low aesthetic and environmental impact.

The Lively's have rigorously researched all energy and design alternatives and have determined the optimal installation that will meet their energy needs without detracting from the historical character and value of their house. The majority of these panels will be installed on the roof of their barn. Solar panels installed on the roof of their house will integrate well with the existing architecture (they will not change the roof line and only occupy the upper level of the roof) and will be only minimally visible from street level, especially when the trees are in full foliage. This installation will provide an exemplary demonstration that sustainable energy is compatible with historical architecture.

We hope you will approve the Lively's proposal to sensitively integrate improved energy sources with their historically significant house.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Farnsworth and Aaron Ellison
Royalston, Massachusetts
18 April 2012

Pierre A. Humblet

From: kplively@verizon.net
Sent: Friday, April 20, 2012 6:03
To: pierre.humblet@ieee.org; kplively@verizon.net
Subject: Fwd: Lively application

Morning Pierre,

Here is Andy West's letter.

Ken

-----Original Message-----

From: "West, Andrew (MA19)"
Date: Apr 19, 2012 6:57:45 PM
Subject: Lively application
To: "kplively@verizon.net" <kplively@verizon.net>
Cc: "kawest.00@gmail.com" <kawest.00@gmail.com>

Dear historic commission,
I cannot attend tonight but want to comment. Overall I am in favor of the Lively's application. There are a few concerns. The height above the roof should be as low as possible to minimize the viewability. Also, I would ask that the border material be black if possible.

Most importantly the commission should proceed carefully with respect to precedent and adopt a formal policy as soon as possible.

Sincerely
Andrew West
12 S. Royalston RD

4/19/2012

Re: Lively Solar Application

Dear HDC,

This letter is in reference to the application for solar energy panels being installed on the Lively's home. After review of their application I am in favor of their proposal. I believe that the panels have limited affect on the overall historical integrity of the property. When you take into consideration other factors that are not necessarily "historically accurate" such as telephone poles and electrical lines, I feel this is an envitable result of changes in how we will be provided with power in the future. With the eventual disappearance of fossil fuels for energy usage, alternative power resources must be allowed for such as solar and wind systems. It appears the Lively's have taken into consideration as much as possible the rules in regards to viewing from a public way, therefore I am in favor of the installation of this system.

Thank you,

Mark and Susan Smith

7 S. Royalston Road, Royalston, MA 01368