



Meeting Minutes

Heritage Commission

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Heritage Commission
Contact: Marygrace Goddu
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Monday, December 6, 2021

12:00 PM

On Site 400 17th Ave SE

Heritage Review Committee

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Davies called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

1.A ROLL CALL

Commissioner Garner arrived late.

Present: 5 - Chair Holly Davies, Commissioner Kenneth House, Commissioner Garner Miller, Commissioner Gary Stedman and Commissioner Sheila Swalling

Excused: 1 - Commissioner Jessica Hull

OTHERS PRESENT

Historical Preservation Officer Marygrace Goddu

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.A [21-1155](#) Approval of Heritage Review Committee October 18, 2021 and November 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The October 18 meeting minutes were approved.

The November 1, 2021 meeting minutes were approved as amended to correct Roll Call to reflect Commissioner Stedman was in attendance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5.A [21-1154](#) Approval of solar installation at 400 17th Avenue SE

Commissioners discussed approval of solar installation; the installation as proposed technically meets the criteria of the Committee's guidelines, which allow placement on the front of the home in instances where other locations are not "viable" ie., do not provide adequate exposure (Total Solar Resource Factor of 80% or higher). However, the City's guidelines are under review, with a suggestion that an additional criterion be included related to the degree to which a street-facing installation alters the character of the home.

The proposed installation calls for 13 panels, set in a stair-step configuration along the angled sides of the roof form. The panels are crowded closely, particularly on the left (west) roof, with 10 panels on the west and three on the east where the available roof surface is smaller, also in a stair-step pattern to follow the roof angle.

Chair Davies suggested that Commissioner Swalling bring discussion on the solar design to the full Commission as a case study for discussion of aesthetics and the degree to which it should be a consideration in solar placement, and strategies for such consideration.

The Commissioners present agreed to continue the discussion of possible amendments to the Solar Guidelines at the December meeting, continuing into January if necessary.

Discussion points included:

- The stair-stepped pattern is problematic; a visual, aesthetic concern with the angled roof.
- It would be difficult to deny a solar installation based only on concern about that configuration.
- With no criteria about aesthetics, when would the Committee ever deny a permit?
- Other south-facing houses on the street have steep roofs with angular lines that would also require stair-stepped placement to optimize the use of the south facing roof surfaces.
- Could the Committee find ways to encourage placement with cleaner lines, and no stair-stepped placement? Is that reasonable or do-able?
- Will the Solar industry begin to develop custom shaped panels?
- If it's possible for a homeowner to realign panel placement to eliminate the stair step, the Committee could encourage it, but it's difficult to ask them to remove panels to improve aesthetics alone.
- The placement of the inverter and emergency shut-off should be as minimally visible as possible. Typically, placement is required on a side or rear elevation. This placement is proposed at the front elevation, but against a side-facing wall. Keeping it low to the ground and painting it to match the home will help to hide it in this visible location.

Chair Davies moved, seconded by Commissioner House, to recommend permit approval for proposed street-facing solar installation at 400 17th Avenue SE, with proposed amendments to Solar Installation Guidelines. The

motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Chair Davies, Commissioner House, Commissioner Miller and
Commissioner Stedman

Excused: 1 - Commissioner Hull

Abstained: 1 - Commissioner Swalling

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.