

Town of Bedford
Historic District Commission Minutes
August 3, 2021

A meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission was held on Tuesday, August 3, at the BCTV meeting room at 10 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford.

7:00 PM Call to Order

Jillian Harris opened the meeting: Welcome to the August 3, 2021, meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission. Unfortunately, tonight we don't have a Chair or a Vice Chair so as staff liaison, I will start the meeting off and then I will hand it over after our election of officers. Steve MacDougall will be appointed as a voting member tonight.

Present: Chris Allen (regular member), Joe Vaccarello (regular member), Jillian Harris (Assistant Planning Director, staff liaison), John Quintal, (Planning Board liaison), Steven MacDougall (alternate member).

Absent: Lisa Muskat (Vice Chair), Lori Radke, (Town Council member), Denise Ricciardi (Town Council alternate member).

AGENDA REVIEW:

First order of business: Election of Officers

Second order of business: Raenor Lakin (Applicant) & Nichole Alosa (Owner) – Request for ground-mounted solar array located at 99 Bedford Center Road, Lot 20-106, Zoned R&A.

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MOTION: Mr. Vaccarello motions to accept the agenda. Mr. MacDougall seconds the motion. ALL IN FAVOR – unanimous. Motion carries. Agenda is accepted.

New Business

Election of Historic District Commission Officers: Ms. Harris stated The Historic District Commission is required annually to elect its officers, including a Chair and a Vice Chair. The HDC Commission Chair oversees all meetings of the Commission and coordinates with the HDC staff liaison. The Vice Chair carries out those duties in the absence of the Chair. Unfortunately, Theresa Walker who was our Chair has moved out of Bedford. We're sad to see her go and we thank her for all her service to the town and for chairing the Commission the past few years. With that, I would ask for a motion to make a nomination for a new Chair.

MOTION: Mr. MacDougall would like to nominate Chris Allen, if he's willing. Mr. Allen is agreeable to the nomination. Mr. Vaccarello seconds the motion. ALL IN FAVOR – unanimous. MOTION carries. Mr. Chris Allen is elected Chair.

Chair Allen takes lead of the meeting.

Raenor Lakin (Applicant) & Nichole Alosa (Owner) – Request for ground-mounted solar array at 99 Bedford Center Road.

Chair Allen invites the property owner to come forward and give the Commission an overview of the project.

Nichole Alosa: I'm Nichole Alosa, this is my husband, Gary. We own 99 Bedford Center Road and we're here for approval of solar panel array.

Chair Allen asks can you give us a sense of where this would be located on the property? Ms. Alosa says, absolutely. If you can see, that's my property in the shadow. The pink part underneath is my house, then of course a pool in the back. The black that you see is the array in the back where... it looks kind of ... maybe I'm off on the way it's going? I think it's tilted a little bit more, but the idea is that I generally (no offense to anyone who has them) I just don't like them on the roof. I'm just not a fan. My parents sold solar panels in the eighties and those things were just like... when you were talking about the tracking I was like, I remember those things being just monstrous and damage and things like that and it just causes more problems and I'm not a fan of how it looks. At the end of the day, I wanted to put them where no one can see them, me, the people driving by, whatever. I don't know. I just think solar is a good idea. I like the whole idea of the environmental energy. So, where they're located is kind of like, if you're... do you guys all live in the area? Do you know it well? If you were walking down the sidewalk, would you know where I.... So, as you're walking down the sidewalk after you see the culvert that comes down from the church (which is all those rocks). That's kind of where my property starts. There's a tree line there. It's not super thick, but it's up above that tree line far enough that that won't affect it. I don't have to cut anything down. Eventually I guess things are getting old and there's power lines and things so at that point I might have to. But not for this job or anything like that. Nothing needs to change. It's just a matter of, in all reality (not that I would ever do that), but you could probably do it and not anybody would ever know they were there, is my theory. I think maybe if you were--not from the church parking lot, but if you come down into the church's location, they don't mind. They actually-- it was funny. They called the same company I did and got a bid two years ago and so I wasn't able to object to theirs and I don't think they'll object to mine. I think we're all good. I don't know how anybody else feels about it.

Chair Allen says that's a helpful description. Can you give us a sense of the dimensions of the panels?

Ms. Alosa answers, yes. I just tried to open the document they gave me on my phone. Maybe it's in here. Oh, I had more pictures to show. Okay, I didn't know that he had this many photos. If you want to see the other photos as to where it's going, I can certainly show you some of that. It's kind of up back there above that grass. That's where the tree line is. It goes back there. You can see it's kind of far down from the church, but it's further back from what you're seeing, of course. This is the view from behind the tree line where they'll be placed. This is what they look like. I don't know what else they sent you.

Board Member asks did they tell you how big the array was?

Ms. Alosa answered, it's got to be in here. Oh, it's twenty-four panels. That I know. This is what I'm looking for, the size of the panels somewhere. I want to say at the end of the day, it ended up being like we talked about it being a little under fifty feet by half that. They are about square like that. I'm so sorry. I'm trying to think of what he told me they were. I want to say each panel was like seven feet by ...

Mr. Allen asks, what about maybe how far it is off the ground, maybe relatively shoulder height or anything like that?

Ms. Alosa continued, yes. That's what this does tell us and the level it goes it. The links are sixty-three and seventy-nine inches. Essentially, the top one looks like... and then they go in. It's like two to five feet or four feet off the ground? Then it tilts obviously at the angle to reach the height of the sun from where we are now. It doesn't move. They just stay exactly where they are. The whole thing, like I said, it was a little under fifty feet so just under half a football field is what I'm thinking of when I was standing there trying to picture it. That's what makes me think it's like seven feet. There would be six panels by four panels. So, seven feet times the six was forty-two? This is just what I'm thinking sounds right as I was talking to him. It's about half, so if it was seven, I think it's like three and a half or we'll say four and that was going to be four down, so by like sixteen or twenty? I remember telling myself it would be smaller than fifty by twenty as far as like a swimming pool or something I was thinking in my head.

Mr. Allen replied, alright. That gives me a good idea. Thanks. I'll open it up to other members of the board. Does anyone have any other questions?

Mr. Vaccarello says it's all pretty well documented. Nothing for me. We have no trees. No visibility from the road. I don't have any other questions.

No other questions from the rest of the board.

Mr. Allen notes we do not have any members of the public to weigh in and asks are we still entertaining emails?

Ms. Harris confirms there have not been any emails or correspondence.

Mr. Allen asks for a motion on the application.

MOTION: Mr. Vaccarello moves that the Historic District Commission approve the request for installation of a ground mounted solar array at 99 Bedford Center Road, Lot 20-106, in accordance with the information submitted because the applicant has provided evidence that demonstrates consistency with the Historic District ordinance and regulations, subject to the following conditions:

1. **No tree removal shall be undertaken on the property that will reduce the current screening from the front property boundary.**
2. **Hazardous tree removal shall be permitted with replacement to maintain current screening.**
3. **All work shall be completed by the applicant within two years of the date of the Historic District Commission approval.**

4. **The applicant shall submit photos of the completed work for the file. Mr. MacDougall seconds the motion.**

ALL IN FAVOR – unanimous. MOTION carries.

Mr. Allen said thank you very much for coming in and providing the documentation and walking us through this.

Ms. Alosa said have a good night.

Approval of June 1, 2021, Minutes

Mr. Allen said, with that we can move on to the next item on the agenda and that is the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting on June 1, 2021. I'll ask for a motion on those minutes.

MOTION: Mr. MacDougall moves to approve the June 1, 2021, minutes. Mr. Vaccarello is unable to second the motion as he was not present at the last meeting. Ms. Harris says, since we won't have three votes, we should push those to the next meeting. Approval of Minutes is TABLED.

Communications

Chair Allen asks are there any communications?

Ms. Harris says she doesn't have any current communications, just that it's nice to see everybody in person.

Chair Allen agrees, it's a nice change. It's pretty good. Not having any communications, I'll just open it up. Are there any general comments or concerns from any of the members?

No comments or concerns are stated.

Chair Allen said, with no comments or concerns, is there a motion to adjourn?

MOTION: Mr. Vaccarello motions to adjourn the meeting. Mr. MacDougall seconds the motion. ALL IN FAVOR. Motion carries. The meeting is adjourned at 7:12 pm.

The next meeting of the Bedford Historic District Commission will be on September 14, 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Forcier