

New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: August 21, 2013

Location: 1300 Perdido Street, 7th Floor, Conference Room A

Called to order: 1:04 p.m.

Adjourned: 2:25 p.m.

Commissioners present: Alonzo Knox, Sonny Shields, Marlene Jaffe, Jason Stopa, Jesse LeBlanc, Greg Hackenberg, Calvin Alexander, Stephen Peychaud.

Commissioners arriving after beginning of the meeting:

Commissioners absent: John Deveney, Karen Coaxam, Ed deMontluzin

I. Review of existing solar panel guidelines

The Staff reviewed the existing guidelines for solar panels.

II. Commission and Staff Approvals of Solar Panels

A. 2012

B. 2013, January – August

The staff reviewed the statistics for solar panel applications for the first half of 2013. A photo of each property where the staff approved applications that met the guidelines were presented.

The staff stated that 60 of the 80 applications, or 75% met the guidelines and were approved at the staff level.

III. National Alliance of Preservation Commission Recommendations

A. Sample Guidelines for Solar Panels in Historic Districts

IV. Review of other Commission Solar Panel Policies

A. Only allow solar panels when they are not visible from the public right-of-way

1. Charleston, SC
2. Providence, RI
3. New York, NY
4. Washington, D.C.

5. Boston, MA

B. Allow solar panels in minimally or “not easily viewed” locations

1. Pittsburgh, PA
2. Baltimore, MD
3. San Antonio, TX

C. Unclear what is allowed

1. Denver, CO
2. Alexandria, VA

V. Proposed Revisions

The staff presented a proposal for possible changes to the guidelines. The proposal divided the applications into categories based on visibility from the public right-of-way.

VI. Discussion

Several members of the audience spoke in support of maintaining the existing guidelines and following the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

A member of the solar panel industry, Mike Murphy of Solar Alternatives made a statement and answered Commissioners’ questions.

After some discussion about how the Commission could amend or refine their guidelines, several Commissioners, including Jason Stopa, Marlene Jaffe and Sonny Shields stated that they were not in favor of changing the guidelines.

Following the discussion, no motion was made. There being no further business to discuss, the Commission meeting was adjourned.