

HPC

Monroe County Historic Preservation Commission MINUTES

Monday, April 2, 2012 2:00 p.m.

Tavernier Fire House, 151 Marine Ave., Tavernier



Call to Order.

Alice Allen called the meeting to order.

Roll Call.

Alice Allen, Chair

Bert Bender

Jim Clupper

Diane Silvia, Preservationist

Pedro Mercado, Assistant County Attorney

Adoption of Minutes from the March 5, 2012 meeting.

Bert Bender corrected the minutes, changing “going to table this” to “going to move to table this” near the bottom of page 2. With that correction he motioned to approve the minutes of the March 5th 2012 meeting. Jim Clupper seconded the motion.

Applications for Special Certificate of Appropriateness:

1. CAROLINE ALFONSO is seeking approval for a new front deck as a replacement for a previous, smaller, front deck. The subject property located at 120 Sunrise Drive and is legally described as Lot 45 Tavernier Cove, NO 1 PB1-103 Key Largo, Monroe County, Florida having Real Estate Number: 00506380-000000.

Withdrawn from this agenda.

2. THE PIGEON KEY FOUNDATION is proposing to install a new solar system as the first phase of a plan to transition to renewable energy. The subject property is physically located at 44800 Overseas Highway and is legally described as Pigeon Key Lot 1 G-6-46/55 OR15-374/376 OR1541—420/424 (Rest Cov) OR1604-541/45 (Rest/Cov) , Monroe County, Florida having Real Estate Number: 00106120-000000-13-66-31.

Staff presentation.

Diane Silvia presented the staff report, noting the applicable Secretary of the Interior's

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Standards. She recommended archaeological monitoring of all subsurface disturbance resulting from this project and offered to help conduct the work. She also read a review of the proposed project by the State of Florida Division of Historical Resources (see attached).

Applicant presentation.

Mike Puto, Vice Chairman of the Pigeon Key Foundation, presented the project. He explained their current fuel bill is about \$50,000. The Foundation pays all of this and does not receive help from Monroe County. This location will be the most efficient and will allow them to save the two large palm trees. This will be promotional project.

Public testimony.

Stephanie Scuderi asked what the estimated savings would be.

Mr. Puto said we will still have to keep a backup generator, but costs are estimated to go down about 70%. Generators might have to be used to charge batteries. We have gone through six generators.

Board Discussion.

Mr. Bender said he worked on Pigeon Key beginning in 1992. At that time they proposed using Pigeon Key as a solar demonstration project. The generator building is located on the northeast side of the key. At that time they proposed placing panels on the south side of the bridge. Now he feels this proposed location with this project would work best. Solar is being used more and more on historic properties. While the solar collector will be highly visible from US1 it is in a high speed passing area and should have a minimal visual impact. He is in favor of the project and feels it will serve as an example for properly locating a solar collector.

Mr. Puto noted the wiring will be below ground and batteries will be housed in the generator room.

Alice Allen asked how deep will they go to bury the wiring.

Mr. Puto feels it will be no more than a foot. The electric will run along the perimeter.

Jim Clupper said he is in support of the project but also recommends archaeological monitoring. He had excavated an archaeological unit there years ago and encountered numerous artifacts.

Ms. Allen asked how high the structure will be.

Mr. Bender looked at the elevations marked on the site plan and said the lower edge of the

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structure would have to be 5-6 feet high to be above flood.

Ms. Allen asked how many air conditioning units are there now.

Mr. Puto said they have one in the office, one in the aquarium building, and one in the honeymoon cottage where people can stay.

Ms. Allen feels the visual impact will be great. Is there any way this could be placed somewhere else?

Mr. Puto said no because they need this exposure. He feels with the right coverage this will promote Pigeon Key. They are pleased to have more school groups coming out again. They are trying to get this business back.

Mr. Bender asked where is the funding coming from.

Mr. Puto explained they were able to get a loan from BB&T and TDC bricks and mortar grant funding to pay for the project.

Mr. Bender said this is an election year and solar is something you might get a grant for to help pay off your loan.

Motion.

Bert Bender motioned to approve with the condition that an archaeological monitoring plan is submitted and approved by staff and the State of Florida. Jim Clupper seconded the motion and volunteered to do the archaeological monitoring. As there were no objections, the motion carried.

Other Business.

Ms. Silvia said the African Cemetery was nominated to the National Register on March 21, 2012.

Ms. Allen said we have not had solar panels in the Tavernier Historic District probably because it requires a southerly exposure and the abundant vegetation.

Mr. Bender said the decision today does not set a precedent for the District. Energy retrofitting is addressed in the Building Code.

Ms. Silvia asked Mr. Bender if he feels wind power could have been used on Pigeon Key.

Mr. Bender said Henry Helene looked into that years ago and wind is just not reliable enough. He noted that they looked at using turbines at the Bahia Honda Bridge to capture the energy of water currents.

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Ms. Silvia asked Mr. Bender if he had experience with the peel and stick solar panels.

Mr. Bender said yes. They have the advantage of a low profile and no roof penetrations but are black in color. The dimensions do not work with our metal roofing. The technology keeps advancing.

Ms. Allen said we should discuss making some changes to the guidelines at the end of our next meeting. Each member of the Commission should review the guidelines for potential changes.

Adjournment.

As there was no other business, Jim Clupper motioned to adjourn. Bert Bender seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Silvia