



Legislation Text

File #: HPC Res. 2023-006, **Version:** 1

Meeting Date: May 3, 2023

To: Members of the Heritage Preservation Commission

From: Reeve Needham, Assistant City Planner

Certificate of Appropriateness for Accessory Structure at 519 Division St S. - Northfield Armory.

Action Requested:

The Heritage Preservation Commission is asked to review and approve the Certificate of Appropriateness (HPC Resolution 2023-006) for an accessory structure (pergola with solar panels) at 519 Division St. S. - Northfield Armory.

Summary Report:

The applicant, Derek Meyers of Imminent Brewing, has applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The applicant proposes to construct an accessory structure, pergola to be roofed with solar panels in the future, on the patio to the south. The solar panels will be used to power the building. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to remove the existing gate posts and move the sign to the pergola, and requests to move the existing wall sign higher above the pergola if necessary. The property is located at 519 Division St S. and the historic inventory form is attached. Attached is the supporting documentation and plans.

The Northfield city ordinances outline, in Chapter 34 - Land Development Code, Section 8.5.8, the Heritage Preservation Commission's Certificate of Appropriateness process and approval criteria. The HPC shall consider the following in evaluating an application for a certificate of appropriateness for a zoning certificate and/or building permit. Criterion (A) below must be met and criteria (B) through (G) shall be considered:

Criteria A, For all applications, the proposed action fully complies with all applicable requirements of this LDC;

Findings: The proposed action complies with the LDC. Accessory structures have required setbacks (1/2 the principal building setback), height limitations (20 ft.), and maximum size (50% of the principal building area) within LDC 2.10.2(H). Building-mounted solar energy systems are a permitted accessory use within the Downtown (C-1) District. The standards for the solar energy systems in LDC 2.10.4(H) include:

- Height: Building mounted solar energy systems shall not exceed the maximum allowed height in any zoning district.
- Setbacks: The collector surface and mounting devices for building mounted solar energy systems shall not extend beyond the required setbacks of the building on which the system is

mounted.

- Visibility: Building-mounted solar energy systems shall be designed to be flush-mounted with the roof when facing the public right-of-ways other than alleys. The color of the solar collector is not required to be consistent with other roofing materials.

In addition, as of April 2023, the LDC requires that Solar energy systems on buildings within designated historic districts or on locally designated historic buildings (exclusive of State or Federal historic designation) will require a conditional use permit and the accompanied Historic Preservation Committee review. The applicant is aware and will meet any necessary planning requirements.

Criteria B, That the proposed action is in harmony with the purpose of the H-O district for sites located in the H-O district;

Findings: The proposed action is in harmony with the intent of the H-O district. Within the LDC Section 2.5.3, Historic Overlay District (H-O) purpose is defined “(a) Safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, visual or architectural history; (b) Protect and enhance the city's appeal to residents, visitors and tourists and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry; (c) Foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past; and, (d) Promote the preservation and continued use of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of the people of the city.”

- a) The proposed change is to add an accessory structure, which would not impact the historic Northfield Armory building.
- b) The proposed changes will enhance the building's appeal to residents and visitors.
- c) The proposed changes will highlight the beauty of the historic Northfield Armory building.
- d) The proposed changes promote the continued use of the historic Northfield Armory building.

Criteria C, That the proposed action would complement other structures within the H-O district for sites located in the H-O district

Findings: The changes will complement other structures within the H-O district. The new pergola will further activate the patio and highlight the sustainability of the building and other historic buildings.

Criteria D, That the proposed action is consistent with the Downtown Preservation Design Guidelines for sites located in the H-O district, and consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties for sites located within or outside the H-O district;

Findings: The changes are consistent with the Downtown Preservation Design Guidelines, as follows.

- Materials: The pergola will be constructed from wood, a commonly used material in the historic district.

- **Solar Panels:** The Downtown Design Guidelines state “Necessities such as... solar panels ... are contemporary features in downtown Northfield. They can seriously impair the visual qualities of historic architecture if improperly located. All added elements should be located on the roof or to the rear of buildings in the district and screened by appropriate plantings or fencing. Solar panels and television aerials should be situated as far out of public view as possible.” The lot has a unique shape and the front yard is considered Division St. The proposed solar panels will be located on the roof of the pergola, not affixed to the building, and in the rear of the lot.

Criteria E, Consideration should be given to the amount and quality of original material and design remaining in the building or structure when applying criteria, guidelines and standards;

Findings: Not applicable.

Criteria F, For new construction, the building or addition should be compatible with: (i) scale, texture, materials, and other visual qualities of the surrounding buildings and neighborhoods; (ii) the height, width, depth, massing and setback of the surrounding buildings; and (iii) the amount of solid wall to window and door openings, and the replacement of window and door openings, should be proportional to that of the surrounding buildings and neighborhood;

Findings: The accessory structure will be shorter in height than the building.

Criteria G, Consideration shall be given to clear cases of economic hardship or to deprivation of reasonable use of the owner's property.

Findings: Not applicable.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed project per the supporting documentation with the condition that any additional planning and building code requirements be met.

Attached is a resolution draft for the HPC to review. If there are any proposed changes, HPC members can make edits.

Alternative Options:

The HPC can approve the COA with conditions or deny the COA, both of which would require additional findings as justification within the resolution.

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timeline:

The applicant intends to construct the pergola this summer. The solar panels would not be added until a later

date.