

From: Bill Owens <wlo3aia@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 3:20 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Jeff, First United Methodist Church (101 E. Jefferson St.) is considering adding solar panels to its west sanctuary roof. What is the BAR's view of these, particularly on historical structures? Quickly scanning the design guidelines I didn't see any guidance there. Any different approach than the standard COA application? Any guidance you can give me on behalf of the church would be appreciated. Thank you.

Bill Owens

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Bill Owens <wlo3aia@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (1 of 2)

Hey Bill. Quick question: What is your time frame? The BAR will have to review this—it's not complicated, I'll explain in a follow up note in a moment--but if the project is ready to go, I can add it to the September 20 meeting agenda, but we'd have to knock out some paper work tomorrow.

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 4:56 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (1 of 2)

Jeff, Thanks for the quick response. Attached is what I have in the way of graphics so far, provided by Tiger Solar. Other than the application, this is all I could have by tomorrow, though I'm not sure I could technically get the "owners" signature. If there needs to be more detail, we'll have to wait until the next deadline, which is okay. Thanks.

Bill

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 6:12 PM
To: Bill Owens <wlo3aia@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (2 of 2)

Bill: Use the attached application. A few changes since 2016, primarily we no longer require hard copies of drawings. The remaining 2022 meetings and the submittal deadlines are below. Drawings can be relatively simple—what parts of the roof will be covered, how will the panels be attached, location and screening of cables and equipment.

You are correct about the design guidelines offering limited direction re: solar panels—and we know that needs to be addressed. Since 2012, we’ve had only six requests for rooftop installations, but the BAR has approved them all. Attached is the staff report from the most recent request and the following link is to a project reviewed last year. Slightly different projects, with one installing panels on the rear of the house and one on the front, but you’ll see how we addressed/applied the design guidelines.

http://weblink.charlottesville.org/public/0/edoc/799318/2021-08_735%20Northwood%20Avenue_BAR.pdf

Obviously—and you know all this, so forgive me--preservation goals suggest that solar panels not obscure or alter historic elements or materials and installed on secondary roofs, if possible. My guess is the BAR will support the panels—mainly because solar panels can be removed, they do not permanently alter the building, and this is a 20th century building, not Monticello—but it’s likely they will prefer them on the north additions, not the primary roof. Wherever they are installed, the other question will be how they impact the slate shingles.

Personally, as an old house owner and from my past construction experience, I’m unconvinced about something that requires *putting holes in a roof*.* So I always advise people that, before adding solar panels, make sure the roof is in good shape and it will be that way for a while. I don’t want to be unfair to the solar companies, but they want to sell panels; the condition of the roof is not their priority. That is, please advise the church to have a crystal clear understanding with the installer about what happens if/when roof repairs are needed.

(* I just looked at how one company installs panels onto slate roofs and I might have to soften my stance a bit. <https://southernlightsolar.com/solar-equipment-products/solar-power-mounting-solutions/solar-power-installations-slate-roofs/>)

Hope that is helpful. Bottom line, I think the BAR will support solar panels, just probably not on the roof of the sanctuary.

Jeff

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, August 31, 2022 6:27 PM

To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>

Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (#3)

Bill: Image below per my second email. Again, I am only guessing what the BAR might say, and we will have several new members in a month, but at least anticipate they will ask if *everything can go on the back roofs*.

If you get me a signed application and check by tomorrow—there is a drop box near the Market Street entrance to City Hall, see below—we can get this on the Sept 20 agenda. We’ll resolve the drawings later, but I must confirm its an application because the public notice letters go out next Tuesday.

With that, I am done for the day.

Jeff



From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 1, 2022 3:03 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (#3)

Jeff, Thanks for your hustle on this. The church isn't in a big hurry so they don't want me to push to get the application in today. We may aim for the next deadline at the end of the month.

I'm not a solar expert, but it's possible the rear roofs may not have enough area with the correct exposure to accomplish what the church wants. Not having any panels on the sanctuary roof may be a non-starter for them. I suspect they're not going to want to go to the expense of having the system designed only to find out they need to alter it for aesthetic considerations. Is there any way to have some sort of preliminary meeting with the BAR to feel out their thoughts on this ahead of making a formal application so the church has some sense of what direction they need to go?

Thanks.
Bill Owens

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 1, 2022 3:54 PM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (#3)

At the Sept 20 meeting, I can informally float this to the BAR and get a sense of any concerns. We can touch base after that and figure out the next steps.

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 1, 2022 4:49 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (#3)

Thank you. Feel free to use the two photos I provided. Please let me know if you need anything further. Thanks.

Bill Owens

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 7, 2022 5:54 PM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church (#3)

Bill: Two questions I anticipate from the BAR, if you can help me out.

Is the slate original?

What kind of slate? (relative to life-cycle)

Thanks,

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 15, 2022 3:28 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Jeff, Sorry for the delay getting back to you. I wanted to contact Martin Roofing who maintains the church's roof to confirm the answers to your questions. Their response was they believe the slate is original to the church and that it is Buckingham Slate.

In the interval, I also met with the church and Tiger Solar to clarify any details of the project. Their desire is to place approximately 220 solar panels on the roof with the goal of making the church close to net-zero for its electrical needs. They are willing to break up the panel arrays or spread the panels over multiple roof surfaces as required to address any visual concerns. The two initial images I provided to you were based on the thought that the two locations shown where the least visible roofs from the street. However, the church is more than willing to consider other or additional roof areas. The important goal is having enough panels to reduce their electrical bill close to zero.

Please let me know if you have any other questions or concerns as you approach the BAR meeting next week. Thanks for your help.

Bill

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2022 8:27 AM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Perfect. Thank you.
Have a great weekend.
Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2022 4:08 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Jeff, Were you able to get any insight or opinions on the solar panels from the BAR last night?
Thanks.
Bill

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Friday, September 23, 2022 12:25 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Jeff, I'm trying to get the church's application prepared for Tuesday's submission deadline. Do you have any further guidance from the BAR or should I just go ahead and submit the images you've already seen? Thanks for your help.
Bill

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 23, 2022 1:20 PM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Yes. Sorry, been a busy week.

BAR is not opposed to solar panels on the roof, but the questions were more related to the slate roof and how it will fare during installation of the panels and later maintenance/upgrades.

Might be easiest to watch the meeting video, link below. The discussion is from 04:41:00 to 04:52:00. (It was a long night and my exhaustion shows.)

<https://boxcast.tv/channel/vabajtzezyv3iclkx1a?b=nvdouryu5aooH1orqwxd>

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 3:41 PM

To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>

Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Jeff, Confirming you received the BAR application and fee yesterday. Submittal documents to follow shortly. Thank you.

Bill Owens

From: Werner, Jeffrey B

Sent: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 3:57 PM

To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>

Subject: RE: Solar panels for First United Methodist Church

Got it.

Jeff

From: Werner, Jeffrey B

Sent: Monday, October 17, 2022 3:24 PM

To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>

Subject: RE: BAR Packet for Oct 18 (FUMC)

I've got you my list with three others. Currently we have 15 requests to attend in-person. That accounts for all but two I expected to hear from, so we should be OK.

If tomorrow we hit the limit, I might ask you to choose only one or two to join you, but we'll see what happens.

By the way, I talked about your project with a friend involved in commercial-scale alt energy. Told him my concern was less about the historic building, but almost entirely the impact of [non-roofer] work activity on a slate roof and the unknown costs that might follow. He agreed most solar companies just want to sell panels, and aren't worried about the long-term integrity of the roofs under them. (I don't mean to disparage anyone, but it's a question I have yet to hear fully answered: When the roof leaks or needs to be replaced, who pays to remove and reset the solar panels?) He suggested the congregation weigh all opportunities—and costs—to achieve their goals, and that might include off-site options that avoid the roof uncertainties—and costs. Obviously, Dominion Power has a program, but he suggested contacting Solar United Neighbor (www.solarunitedneighbors.org/virginia/).

I support solar power, but I can't escape a lesson from 25 years ago when I worked at UVa Facilities Management. I was tasked with coordinating the installation of solar panel at the A-School. The FM director—a retired Army colonel--told me to make it work, that he fully supported the concept. However, he then added this very stern order: *Unless Bill McDonough*

*agrees to repair any leaks, you will **not put any holes in my roof**.* (And now you know why there are no solar panels on Campbell Hall.)

Jeff

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2022 12:05 PM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Link to the meeting video. FUMC discussion starts at 02:08:00.
<https://boxcast.tv/channel/vabajtzezuYv3iclkx1a?b=uzjzbhfohchjty5hs6f>

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 5:31 PM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022
Jeff, Thanks for your guidance thru the BAR process thus far.

Given that both the church's roofer and solar contractor are on vacation the next couple of weeks, it's extremely unlikely we'll have any new information to resubmit in time for the BAR meeting in November. The church isn't in any rush, so they're going to take the deferral last Tuesday as an opportunity to step back and reevaluate the project as a whole, including both the installation approach for the existing slate roof and the provider of the solar panels. As you may have been able to tell, I was disappointed that neither the roofer nor the solar contractor made themselves available to attend the meeting. I think their participation could have addressed some of the board's concerns and potentially prevented the need for a subsequent return. The church is still interested at this point in pursuing the project, but I think having refined details for the December or January meeting is more realistic.

In the meantime, so I can assist the church with their decision making, can you tell me how each board member voted last Tuesday and their contact information along with information on any board member who wasn't there? (Or if it exists somewhere, direct me to where I can find it?) As suggested, we may reach out to those who are potential "no" votes in the future to address their concerns individually as our details evolve. And I suppose that if we find there just isn't enough board support to approve the project, the church may defer the idea indefinitely.

Thanks again for your help.

Bill

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 12:59 PM

To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Bill. List below of the BAR members and email addresses. (We are short one member until Council makes an appointment.) Highlighted yellow are the six who were present for the Oct 18 discussion.

The motion to approve the CoA failed with a 2 – 4 vote.

Yes (to *approve* the CoA): Ronald Bailey, Tyler Whitney

No (to *not approve* the CoA): James Zehmer, Breck Gastinger, David Timmerman, Carl Schwarz.

[...]

Also, I have asked my colleagues in other localities how they have treated panels on slate roofs. One reply so far, from Alexandria:

We haven't had any requests for panels on a slate roof, so have not yet had to address the thorny issue of installation.

We recently created criteria for administrative/staff approvals.

Mounted directly to the roof slope.

Located on later buildings (constructed after 1932).

If the roof will be replaced, an architecturally compatible and appropriate color replacement material should be used so that the solar panels visually blend-in with the roof.

Recommendation that roofing be replaced prior to [solar panel] installation, so that the panels do not have to be removed and reinstalled a short time later.

Any installation that does not meet the foregoing criteria must go to a full hearing of the BAR.

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>

Sent: Monday, December 5, 2022 5:53 PM

To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>

Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Jeff, The church has met with Martin Roofing and Tiger Solar following the BAR meeting and has come up with more practical approach to their solar panel project. They would like to get on the agenda for the January 18th BAR meeting. What is involved with this? Do I need to submit a new application, or since this was a deferral, just request the original application be reinstated?

Thanks for the help.

Bill

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 6, 2022 8:55 AM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Send me what you have. A new application isn't necessary. We'll just call it the *FUMC Solar Project*.

Jeff

From: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 10:49 AM
To: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Jeff, I just received a Zoom invitation for next Tuesday's BAR meeting. You don't happen to know why? I had asked for the church to be on the agenda for the January 18th meeting. I don't have all my new materials together for you yet. Thanks.

Bill Owens

From: Werner, Jeffrey B <wernerjb@charlottesville.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2022 11:28 AM
To: William (Bill) L. Owens, AIA <bowens@wloarchitect.com>
Subject: RE: BAR Meeting 10-18-2022

Not sure what happened, but you can ignore that.

You are set for Jan 18 meeting

Jeff
