



MONTGOMERY

TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

To: Montgomery Township Zoning Board
From: Montgomery Township Environmental Commission
Re: Michael and Jeanine Reilly
Date: March 11, 2024

A. Lot Coverage

1. The Environmental Commission is in favor of reducing the lot coverage in this application. Perhaps the ground under the old patio should be restored by plowing before it is replanted with grass.

B. Variance

1. Is this variance due to factors that don't apply to other lots in the development? Is there a HOA that should have a chance to review the plans and approve them or not? Perhaps they would like the chance to make suggestions.

C. LEED

1. We recommend that the new porch be designed with LEED standards.

D. Lighting

1. The Environmental Commission recommends that any proposed lights should be pointed downwards, shielded from the sides, and as low in elevation and intensity as possible, in keeping with Montgomery's Dark Skies policy. Please be aware that overly bright lights can cause glare and temporarily blind people, reducing visibility; and any lighting at all may interfere with nocturnal pollinators, fireflies, bats, and migrating birds.
2. Yellow light bulbs, which are the least disorienting to wildlife, should be used.
3. The lights should be turned off as early as possible in the evening, they could be set on a motion detector, and the applicant might consider special protocols, such as early closing, or brief shut-offs during spring and fall migration.

4. There is a Model Lighting Ordinance jointly developed by the Illuminating Engineering Society and the International Dark Sky Association that provides guidance on developing a lighting plan that will meet the applicant's needs and protect the wildlife that provides us with so vital many ecosystem services, including pollination and pest control. The Environmental Commission requests that your design follow those guidelines. The International Dark Sky Association provides a lot of information on the least harmful yellow lights and on other issues in their website.

E. Tree Planting Waiver

1. We recommend that the applicant plant a native tree, possibly to replace any missing street trees in front of their house.

F. Energy Conservation

1. We suggest that solar panels be installed on the roof, or a green roof.
2. We recommend that, while the lawn and soil are disturbed for construction, the applicant consider installing a geothermal heat exchange HVAC system. This would save a lot of money and carbon emissions.