

Dear members of the Wilton historic property commission,

My name is John Burke representing Sapientia Association Inc., owner of 33-37 Church Street. This application accompanies a variance request submitted to the ZBA on 3/24/21. The request is to vary the front yard setback to allow for placement of an AC condenser unit on the side of the church structure near the cellarway. (see photos)

The property in question is 37 Church Street. The church building (Georgetown United Methodist as former) is located at the corner of W. Church Street and Church Street. It is a special use permitted in R-1A zone and is located in Historic District #6.

My associates are seeking to perform a much needed upgrade to the church's HVAC system. A building permit proposes to replace the old and poorly functioning air handler and oil burner in the cellar to provide heating and cooling using existing ductwork. Work would be done by the Branchville Oil Company. The church is seeking to include AC as several parishioners are elderly with asthma/breathing problems. AC with dehumidification becomes necessary for the summer months. The system would require an outdoor condenser. An approximate 9x9 SF area would need to be leveled, an equipment pad laid, and a unit placed. (see spec sheet) The unit is small and compact with dimensions as follows: Heil® 5 ton condenser: 28-11/16 " high, 31-3/16" wide and 31-3/16" deep. Proposed pad is 3'x3'.

The location of the condenser around the church structure is limited. It cannot go on the South side or by the West side (back door) because it would block the easement and driveway, and be a hazard to moving vehicles. The East side is the front of the church and main entry doors. It was esteemed that placing the condenser near this location (church front flower beds) would be the greatest eyesore. However, at the North side, there is a row of arborvitae bushes which could conceal the condenser from view. It would also provide the shortest run of condenser piping (direct access into the cellar). The possibility of the Northwest corner was considered (also in the setback) but we believe it would be more visible here and more difficult to conceal. (see photos attached). If located at this corner, the electrical and refrigerant line would need to run along the foundation and would be an eyesore along the entire length. The foundation's crawl space tapers off to <12" height at the West end which makes it inaccessible. Under the foundation, it would not be possible for the contractor to secure the lines to the structure as per code.

We believe that the "smallest impact" location for the condenser is at the side of the cellarway, hidden behind arborvitae. It will not protrude further than the existing cellarway, thus not increase the existing nonconformity to front yard setback.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Burke  
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