



123 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois 60302

Date: October 21, 2020

To: Iris Sims, Plan Commission Chair

From: Rebecca Houze, Historic Preservation Commission Interim Chair

CC: Craig Failor, Village Planner
Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner
Jay Keller, Space Architects + Planners

Re: **Historic Preservation Commission Review—835 Lake Street**

The Historic Preservation (HPC) reviewed the proposed new Planned Development at 835 Lake Street during their meeting on October 8, 2020. 835 Lake Street is within the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District and is within 250 feet of a designated Oak Park Landmark (Unity Temple) at 875 Lake Street. The existing building at this location is not historic and is considered a non-contributing building within the historic district.

The Oak Park Historic Preservation Ordinance requires the HPC to review any proposed planned unit developments within historic districts or within 250 feet of an Oak Park Landmark (7-9-10). As part of this review, the HPC considers anticipated effects of the proposal on the historic district and landmark, and the long-term compatibility of the proposal with the character of any affected historic resources and their long-range preservation. The HPC's evaluation also uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, as amended in the Ordinance, and the HPC's Architectural Review Guidelines (7-9-12). The Ordinance requires the HPC's evaluation to be provided to the Plan Commission for consideration.

The HPC received three letters from the public and heard two public comments regarding the proposed project. All expressed concerns about the proposed design, including that the color palette is too monochromatic, that the color is too similar to Unity Temple, and that the building is out of scale.

The HPC's comments regarding the proposed building at 835 Lake Street included the following:

- The scale, height, horizontal elements, materials, and overall setback, were found to be generally appropriate and compatible with the historic district.
- Several Commissioners expressed the importance of protecting Unity Temple, including during construction, but felt overall that the applicant has addressed this.
- Massing: One Commissioner said the massing is large in comparison to the neighboring buildings, which are much daintier and have a delicacy of architectural style.
- Shadows: Commissioners felt the issue of shadows on Unity Temple has been appropriately addressed. One Commissioner expressed concern that the new building will, however, have an impact on the sunlight for the building to the east, but this will improve by the greater setback proposed.

- Color palette: Several Commissioners recommended that a change in color palette be considered to better reflect the adjacent buildings, as noted in the public comments. One Commissioner noted that the current design does incorporate several different colors and materials.
- Windows: One Commissioner expressed concern about the amount of glass and potential glare. Another Commissioner mentioned that the window frames as rendered in the drawings look uncharacteristically bold and chaotic, meaning irregular in appearance.
- Impacts: Commissioners felt the applicant appropriately addressed potential impacts.
- One Commissioner encouraged energy-efficient features, such as roof gardens, as they continue Oak Park's history of progressive architecture.

The HPC thanks you for your consideration of these comments during the public hearing process. Please contact Susie Trexler, HPC staff liaison, at (708) 358-5443 or strexler@oak-park.us if you have any questions.