

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
February 14, 2019 - Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Council Chambers, 7:30 pm

Roll Call

Present: Chair Christopher Payne and Commissioners Tom Abrahamson, Jennifer Bridge, Sandra Carr, Lou Garapolo, Laura Jordahl, and Noel Weidner
Absent: Commissioners Darrick Gurski, Rebecca Houze, David Sokol, and Aleksandra Tadic
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner
Attorney: Gregory Smith, Klein, Thorpe & Jenkins

Agenda Approval

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to approve the agenda; Second by Commissioner Weidner; Motion approved 7-0.

Minutes

Commissioner Jordahl noted that the minutes for January 10, 2019 included her as both present and absent. She was present at the meeting. Planner Trexler will edit the minutes to reflect this.

Motion by Commissioner Bridge to approve draft minutes for January, 2019; Second by Commissioner Jordahl; Motion approved 7-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC 2019-3: 811 N East Ave (Kimberlee Smith):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story rear addition, demolition of one window, and addition of one window (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project and said that the applicant attended the January 23, 2019, Architectural Review Committee meeting. The ARC discussed the use of Hardie board siding on the addition and determined that it is acceptable in this case as it differentiates from the stucco original house. The Committee also agreed that the window alterations on the north elevation and step down of the roof comply with the Architectural Review Guidelines.

Kimberlee Smith, the architect and homeowner, was in attendance. She stated that she has no additional comments but will answer questions.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to open the discussion; Second by Commissioner Bridge

Commissioner Carr said that the side yard is narrow and the addition is the appropriate scale. Commissioners Jordahl and Garapolo agreed that the addition as proposed appears to meet the Guidelines. Chair Payne concurred and noted that the step down of the roof differentiates the addition and makes it less visible. He also said that the siding complies due to the location of the addition.

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition and widow alteration as proposed. Second by Commissioner Jordahl. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- B. HPC 2019-4: 818 Gunderson (Donna Hemphill & Ken Gram):** Certificate of Appropriateness for an interior remodel necessitating the addition and alteration of windows on the side elevations (Gunderson Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project.

Lesa Rizzolo, architect, was in attendance. She noted that all of the windows on the front façade will be retained.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to open the discussion; Second by Commissioner Weidner.

Commissioner Garapolo asked for specifics about the new windows. Lesa Rizzolo said they will match the historic and be of wood construction. They will be one-over-one light windows.

Chair Payne said that the window changes will be minimally visible and he supports the application.

Motion by Commissioner Bridge to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the window alterations as proposed. Second by Commissioner Weidner. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- C. HPC 2019-5: 611 Randolph Street (Good Shepherd Church):** Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition on the south side of the church including an accessible entry (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project, explaining that the location of the addition was determined in order to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act. Planner Trexler said that the Guidelines recommend added bay windows, when visible from the street, should be typical of the style of the building and the Commission should discuss this item.

Nevin Hedlund, the architect, was in attendance. He explained the project, noting that the addition aligns with the transept and will be a gathering place in addition to an ADA approved entrance.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to open the discussion; Second by Commissioner Carr.

Commissioner Garapolo asked about the roof type. Nevin Hedlund said that the main roof of the addition will be covered in asphalt to match existing and that the roof over the bay window will be standing seam metal.

Chair Payne expressed concern that the new entry may replace the original entry as the main entrance to the building. He asked about the congregation's plans. Nevin Hedlund said the church

does not plan to abandon the original entrance. He explained that a combination of functional and aesthetic needs drove the design. They originally looked at adding a ramp but it would not have worked well due to the necessary length. He said they worked to use existing elements in the addition. Commissioner Carr said that the proposed walkway will direct people to the main entrance; they will have to go to the side to get to the new entrance.

Commissioner Garapolo said that this is a sensitive solution to the need for accessible entrances. The existing front steps also highlight the original entrance.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition as proposed. Second by Commissioner Carr. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- D. HPC 2019-6: 728 N Elmwood Ave (Jesse Driscoll and Emma Salustro):** Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement of three basement windows of side elevation and addition of egress window on front elevation (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project.

Jesse Driscoll, homeowner, and Roseanne McGrath, architect, were present. Jesse Driscoll said that he appreciates the historic nature of Oak Park but that they want to make their basement usable and egress is therefore required. Roseanne McGrath said that she previously worked on an addition for this house that was approved by the Historic Preservation Commissioner in 2008. She noted that the window will be a casement window, matching existing window types. She explained that the configuration of the house necessitates that the egress window is on the front façade but will be at the basement level. The window will be Marvin wood and they will match the muntin size to the historic windows.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to open the discussion; second by Commissioner Weidner.

Commissioner Jordahl asked if the plantings currently in the front yard will be kept. Rosanne McGrath said they will be. Chair Payne said that the front yard is also slightly sloped, which helps conceal the proposed window.

Motion by Commissioner Abrahamson to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the window alterations/addition as proposed. Second by Commissioner Weidner. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- E. HPC 2019-7: 832 S Elmwood Ave (Pat and Sarah Gibbs):** Certificate of Appropriates for a two-story rear addition including a new ground-level entrance (Gunderson Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project, stating that the applicant previously attended the ARC meeting on January 23, 2019. The Committee discussed the potential reuse of brackets from the rear elevation that would have to be removed

for the two-story addition. The Committee agreed that new brackets should not be created. In addition, the applicant proposes both a two- and one-story addition. They will build only one of the options but have not yet determined which.

Bob Bell, the architect, was present. Bob Bell explained that there are two sets of plans as the homeowners have not yet decided whether they want a two- or one-story addition.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to open the discussion; second by Commissioner Bridge.

Commissioner Garapolo asked about the brackets and Bob Bell explained that not adding brackets will differentiate the original house from the new addition. Bob Bell also noted that he isn't aware of other Gunderson houses with similar brackets. Commissioner Jordahl said that as the addition is in the rear, there will be limited visibility. Chair Payne said it will be somewhat visible but agreed that not adding brackets to the addition will help differentiate the addition from the original house.

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the two additions as proposed. Second by Commissioner Abrahamson. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- F. HPC 2019-8: 600 N Ridgeland Ave (David Phelps):** Certificate of Appropriateness for removal of clay tile roof and replacement with asphalt shingle (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project. The applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on January 23, 2019, proposing replacement of the clay tile roof with Certain Teed Presidential Shake. The Committee determined this did not meet the Guidelines due to the shape. Several alternate recommendations were provided.

David Phelps, homeowner, was in attendance. David Phelps said that clay tile roofs deserve additional study. He cannot afford to replace with clay tile and very few high end asphalt shingles are available that match the needs of the Architectural Review Guidelines. He believes that the Presidential Shake is the best option, due to its quality and thickness, but expressed that he would go with one of the two other proposed options if preferred by the Commission.

Motion by Commissioner Bridge to open the discussion; second by Commissioner Weidner.

Commissioner Weidner said that he discussed this proposal with the homeowner prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Abrahamson said that he imported someone from out-of-state to replace his clay tile roof, so this is an option that may save money. David Phelps said he has not been able to find a viable option and the labor is the more expensive part. Commissioner Weidner asked for more information about the cost breakdown and David Phelps explained that the rate is per tile. He can repair portions but is concerned that would be a short-term solution only.

Chair Payne said that the Architectural Review Guidelines say the new roof material should match in shape, color, and style, but there aren't asphalt shingles that truly match clay tile. He asked for

the Commission's thoughts on the original Presidential Shake option. Commissioner Jordahl said if the material is being changed, there should be some latitude if there isn't anything that replicates the historic material. Commissioner Carr said she prefers the Sherwood Forest shingle option as the color and rounded shape reflect the original green tiles. David Phelps said his problem with the Landmark Pro shingle is that it is very thin. There are very few green shingles with high quality and thickness. Commissioner Garapolo agreed that the bulk and shadow of the original roof is important but felt that the original asphalt shingle suggestion was not appropriate.

Commissioner Abrahamson asked about precedent for clay tile roof replacement and Chair Payne said that asphalt shingle has previously been approved to replace clay tile. Commissioner Jordahl said they should emphasize that none of the options will replicate the existing.

Motion by Commissioner Abrahamson to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement of the clay tile roof with any of the options presented by the homeowner in their proposal. Second by Commissioner Jordahl. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- G. HPC 2019-9: 851 Columbian Ave (New Age Ventures):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story, rear addition and renovation including side addition for stairs and new entryway, new windows and doors, and rear deck (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview of the project, noting that the applicant attended that January 23, 2019, Architectural Review Committee meeting. The applicant adjusted their plans to address the Committee's concerns, which are outlined in the staff report. She requested that the Commission review the changes to the front entrance as this was a concern of the Architectural Review Committee.

Jose Alvarado, the architect, was in attendance. He addressed the changes made to the entrance, explaining that the bump-out will be two stories to accommodate a stairwell and the front door will be moved slightly. Windows will also be replaced.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to open the discussion; second by Commissioner Bridge.

Commissioner Jordahl asked if the existing windows are original and Jose Alvarado said very few original windows remain.

Commissioner Weidner said he reviewed the plans prior to the ARC meeting and approves of the removal of the chimney. He asked if all Committee concerns were addressed and Jose Alvarado said they were. Commissioner Carr, who attended the ARC meeting, said that the plans are much improved and she approves of the designs for the back deck.

Chair Payne said that the ARC was concerned about the chimney but this has been removed. The entry design is now much simpler, as requested. He expressed support for approval of the application.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition and alterations as proposed. Second by Commissioner Carr. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

H. HPC 2019-2: 1014 and 1018 Pleasant St Hearing (Alan Rossell): Certificate of Appropriateness for Demolition, public hearing (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Payne opened the public hearing. Attorney Smith swore in the speakers.

The property owner/applicant, Alan Rossell, was in attendance. Mr. Rossell said that a developer wants to buy the property from him. He explained that they are located on the edge of the historic district and he has owned the properties since before the Historic Preservation Ordinance. He does not think the block meets the description of the district in the National Register nomination. The lots differ in size and setbacks and match other non-contributing buildings. He owns the only single-family house on the block. He does not feel that removing these two properties would detract from the area. Mr. Rossell said that the writers of two letters regarding the contributing status of the properties (Doug Kaarre and Amy Hathaway from IHPA) are not present for cross-examination. He said he wants to submit for economic hardship.

Chair Payne received as evidence: the staff report and the accompanying documents in the packet submitted to the Commission. Chair Payne asked if there are any expert witnesses. None were identified. Mr. Rossell said it is a deficiency to base the decision on letters and he asked if the letter writers could attend. Attorney Smith asked when this was asked for. Planner Trexler verified that this was asked about a month ago. Attorney Smith asked Mr. Rossell if he is aware of a process in the Ordinance to subpoena witnesses. Mr. Rossell said he is not aware of a process. Attorney Smith said he is not aware of one either.

Three members of the public provided testimony. One was in favor, one was neutral, and two were opposed to demolition.

Gabriel Whitehouse said he was in support of Mr. Rossell. He thinks the houses lack yards and cohesiveness. He owns a unit next door and thinks demolition and replacement of the buildings would improve property values.

Jim Cutil said he also lives next door to the properties. He thinks the process is lacking and they should know what will replace a building before the demolition permit is approved.

Bruce Lehman, who also lives on Pleasant Street, said that he does not want these houses demolished. He thinks that any new buildings would not be as unique as these and we should not squander our inheritance. He noted that he is speaking on behalf of several neighbors, as well.

Mr. Rossell responded to the comments, stating that there are no plans because the process does not require them but that the Commission would get to approve plans.

Philip Grossman, representing Kushner Management, owner of Mills Park Apartments, said that his client is against demolition of these two buildings.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to close the hearing, second by Commissioner Abrahamson.

Commissioner Weidner said that based on the 2016 meeting notes, opportunities were given to homeowners to speak up at the time of the district's creation and Mr. Rossell did not participate.

Several Commissioners said that the buildings are contributing to the district. Commissioner Jordahl said they have been contributing since 1983 and if the owner had concerns, they should have said something sooner. Commissioner Carr noted that there is no expectation for better buildings given the zoning of this location. Chair Payne said that it is clearly stated in both Doug Kaarre's letter and the letter from the State Historic Preservation Office that the character of the buildings has not changed and they are in good condition. He also said that the Commission does not appear to have purview over new construction on these lots.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to instruct the staff to prepare a resolution denying the Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the buildings at 1014 and 1018 Pleasant Street. Second by Commissioner Bridge. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

I. Historic Landmark Hearing, 640-44 Madison St (Essex Foley Family LLLP): Historic landmark hearing for the Hill Motor Sales Company (1924/1927).

Chair Payne opened the public hearing. Attorney Smith swore in the speakers.

The property owner, Steve Foley, was in attendance. Mr. Foley described the recent history of the property. He said that it has been expensive to maintain and prospective buyers are scared away by potential historic status. There has been no interest in the property for 13 years.

The nominators, Frank Lipo and Frank Heitzman, gave a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Lipo said that the property meets multiple criteria in the Historic Preservation Ordinance. The IHPA said that the building is furthermore eligible for the National Register under Criterion C. Of the 69 Oak Park landmarks, only two are commercial buildings. While one of these is an E. E. Roberts building, it was later altered. Mr. Lipo stated that this building has been identified as important for ten years and preservation should be part of the redevelopment.

Frank Heitzman presented a brief history of the building and "auto row." He explained that the property meets six of the eight criteria:

1. *Significance as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social development or heritage of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States*
 - a. Auto sales
3. *Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social heritage, or other aspect, of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States*
 - a. F.A. Hill, Jr., E. E. Roberts, and E. C. Roberts
5. *Embodiment of those distinguishing characteristics of significant architectural type, or style, or engineering specimen*
 - a. Commercial auto showroom with Spanish Colonial Revival details
6. *Identification as the work of a builder, designer, architect, craftsman, engineer or landscape architect whose individual work is significant in the development of the Village of Oak Park, the State, or the United States*
 - a. Designed by E. E. Roberts and E. C. Roberts
7. *Contains design elements, detail, materials or craftsmanship that make the property or building structurally or architecturally innovative, rare or unique*

- a. Automobile showroom with Spanish Colonial Revival style; innovative structural bowstring truss
- 8. *Representation of an architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social theme, style or period, expressed in distractive areas, districts, places, buildings or structures that may or may not be contiguous*
 - a. Automobile row on Madison

Mr. Heitzman said the building is also over 50 years old and retains sufficient integrity as required by the Ordinance.

Three members of the public provided testimony. They were for, against, and neutral on landmark status.

Deborah Mercer said it would be a tragedy to lose this building as there are not a lot of historic or distinctive buildings on this section of Madison. Ms. Mercer said that Oak Park preserves houses but should also preserve businesses.

Melvin Cole said that he lives behind the building. He noted there are other E. E. Roberts buildings and said that this building has been vacant for far too long. It is not in good shape.

Kathy Wyman said if landmark was being sought 10-12 years ago, she would have supported it, but it has been too long. She mentioned the proposals for new buildings on this lot and the lot across the street, and said that she appreciates the design of the proposed senior center. She said that the combination of a senior center and grocery store would make this a more walkable area and expressed that if the building is landmarked, the developers may back out. Ms. Wyman said she does not support landmark status if the building would not be used.

Planner Trexler read the list of exhibits into the record. Exhibits include comments submitted by the public, the nomination form, and the nomination report and supplementary materials.

Commissioner Garapolo stated that he watched the video of the previous meeting. He said that he felt reuse should be possible.

Commissioner Weidner said that, as mentioned in the last meeting, he believes the building is significant and meets the landmark criteria.

The Commission discussed the levels of preservation possible with landmark status and the process moving forward.

Motion by Commissioner Abrahamson to close the hearing, second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

Motion by Commissioner Jordahl to direct staff to prepare a resolution recommending landmark status to the Village Board. Second by Commissioner Abrahamson. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Abrahamson, Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Jordahl, and Commissioner Weidner and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- J. **Solar Panels at Village Hall:** Discuss proposal to add solar panels canopies over the parking lot on the south side of Village Hall.

Village Planner Craig Failor was in attendance. He explained that the Village Board has discussed putting solar panels on the roof of Village Hall or over the parking lot and has requested feedback from the Historic Preservation Commission on both options.

The Commission discussed the options and agreed that putting solar panels in the parking lot would be preferable. Chair Payne noted that the roof of Village Hall is a character defining feature of the building and solar panels would be clearly visible. The Commission recommended that thought be given to the design of solar panel installation due to the symmetry of the parking lot and landscaping.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission determined that a special meeting will be held on February 21, at 7:30PM, to vote on the requested resolutions.

Commissioner Garapolo was introduced to the Commission.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:30PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Urban Planner Historic Preservation.