

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
April 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Council Chambers – 7:30 pm

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chair Tom Bassett-Dilley, Bob Lempera, Jeff Limberg, Kate Susmilch, Frank Heitzman, Kyle Hickman, Garret Eakin
ABSENT: Kristen Diamond, Carmen Vitello, Drew Niermann
STAFF: Doug Kaarre, Urban Planner

MINUTES

Commissioner Lempera amended the minutes.

Motion by Heitzman to approve the March 12, 2009 meeting minutes as amended. Second by Susmilch. Motion approved 7-0.

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **HPC 07-52: 644 Madison Street (Foley-Rice Cadillac)** – Preliminary determination of eligibility for Historic Landmark designation – Request to table consideration for 180 days: **Continued from January 8, 2009.**

Motion by Susmilch to approve the Consent Agenda with the following condition: The application is tabled for 180 days or until the sale of the property. Second by Heitzman. Motion approved 7-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

- B. **HPC 07-09: South Blvd. and Home Avenue (SoHo)** – Planned Development for a mixed-use project (250 feet from a Historic Landmark): **Revision of materials and color scheme to a project approved by the HPC on March 8, 2007.**
Architect John Schiess was present representing the property owners.

John Schiess, Metropolis Architects at 905 Home Avenue, stated that he was retained by the current developer. This project came before the HPC during the Planned Development process as it is within 250 feet of a Historic Landmark (Pleasant Home). It is not located in a historic district. During that review the HPC reviewed and approved the design and materials. The original developer and property owner has since changed to his current client. They wish to change from the originally approved brick Norman brick to a modular brick. Norman brick is longer than a modular brick but the same height. The current owners have a different take on the context. The brick colors and textures essentially remain the same. As this is a minor change to the Planned Development, staff could approve. However, they forwarded it to the Commission for comment. The current developer redesigned the floor plans. He presented the project, which includes condos, retail and townhouses. There are three brick colors. The turret radius would work better with modular

brick. They have made some modifications to the penthouse stair design and changed the material from stucco to cement board.

Commissioner Lempera asked why the elevator shafts are taller.

Mr. Schiess stated that the floor to ceiling height has changed 7 inches due to the addition of elevator shafts.

Commissioner Susmilch asked if there were any other height changes.

Mr. Schiess stated that the main roofline increased 2 inches. The bridge remains in stucco. The south elevation of Building 2 was revised. The east elevations of Buildings 3 and 4 were revised. There is a net increase of 7 inches and a change in the parapet height. He reviewed the list of approved materials. He provided samples of the new material colors. He does not have the original samples from the original developer.

Chair Bassett-Dilley asked why they were proposing new colors.

Mr. Schiess stated that they are not necessarily trying to relate to the colors across the street. The color rendering shows the colors a bit closer to their intent.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that modular brick is more historic and will look better. He's not a fan of cement board.

Commissioner Lempera stated that the minor revisions to the elevations were okay.

Commissioner Eakin stated that the white material on the townhouse stands out strongly and should be muted.

Mr. Schiess stated that he agrees. They went through 30 colors and this is the best. He will continue to look for a more muted color and will come back if necessary. The brick size is the most important approval tonight.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that the proposed color palate is sensitive and he has no issues with using modular brick. He's not concerned with the color changes.

Mr. Schiess stated that they will be using the same mortar color through-out. He will provide the change in floor-to-ceiling heights in a drawing.

Commissioner Lempera stated that there are similar color changes across Home Avenue.

- C. **HPC 09-08: 801-809 Madison Street (Walgreens)** – Planned Development application for the redevelopment of the Collins Building to include an addition for a Walgreens store.
Attorney Gregory Melnyk, architect Ted Theodore, and preservation consultant Jean Follett were present representing the property owner.

Gregory Melnyk, attorney representing the property owner Midwest Property Group, stated that originally two years ago they wanted to tear the building down and build a typical Walgreen's store. Suggestions were made to preserve the building. They had many meetings with the Madison Street Coalition, residence groups and Village staff. They want to maintain the historic character. On March 2 they had a meeting with all neighbors within 500 feet. 25 people came and viewed the same drawings you have tonight. There was overwhelming support for the façade treatment and they felt the addition fit in well. There were no objections to the proposal and end product.

Ted Theodore, Camburas & Theodore architects, provided an overview of the history of the site and construction of the Collins Building. His firm is mainly commercial and works with major companies like Walgreen's in most major municipalities. The two west buildings will be demolished and replaced by an addition. The historic facades on Madison and Oak Park will be salvaged. The goal is to bring back the original window bays. The building is basically in good shape but needs restoration work. He provided alley views and aerial views showing what will be salvaged and what will be demolished. They are removing 20 feet of the Oak Park Avenue façade in order to widen the alley and allow for a drive-through window. There will be a new 1,000 s.f. retail unit in the corner. Walgreen's will be 12,766 s.f.

They have had numerous meetings with different constituencies and the main message was that the addition should not match the Collins Building. They are creating a dialogue with the building and took cues from its design. The height of the addition is to its cornice, the brick indentations match, and the second story windows match the clerestory over the entrance and first floor window heights. Staggered masonry walls screen the parking lot. The display windows will be pedestrian friendly with color and b/w back-lit silk-screen images six feet high. You will see into the store through windows in two sections and above the signage. The second floor double-hung windows will be replaced – the interior wall will be hung back 6 feet to create a high space that will be lit at night. All new windows will be anodized bronze frames and clear anodized on the addition.

Commissioner Lempera inquired about the existing second-floor windows.

Jean Follett, preservation consultant, stated that they were originally wood one-over-one, but had already been replaced.

Mr. Theodore stated that they will restore the limestone surrounds. Several openings will have historic b/w photos as will the entrance to the second floor on Madison Street. There will be one sign on Oak Park Avenue. The loading dock faces the alley. The last window bay on Oak Park Avenue will be removed. The south façade drive-through lane will have a 9-foot high masonry screen wall at the window.

Materials – They tried to create a dialogue between the historic building and addition and compliment it, not copy the existing building. The Collins Building has limestone and iron-spot brick. The addition will be cast stone, grey brick, dark bronze windows and anodized aluminum windows.

Landscape Plan – there is a south landscape buffer for the drive-through lane and they are adding cedar fencing to the neighboring residential lots. They are adding brick pavers on Madison, bike racks near the front door and new sidewalks on all three streets.

The parking lot entrance will be off Grove Avenue. The loading dock facing south is inside the building behind an overhead door.

The site plan, renderings and history can be seen at www.collinsbuildingredevelopment.com.

Chair Bassett-Dillley thanked him for a great presentation. A lot of thought went into the project. He noted that the second building west was noted as a Structure of Merit in the Madison Street Architectural Survey.

Mr. Theodore stated that the only reason for merit is the terra cotta on the second floor.

Chair Bassett-Dilley asked if they looked at any schemes keeping the building.

Mr. Theodore stated no.

Chair Bassett-Dilley asked why the floors and roof of the Collins Building are being removed.

Mr. Theodore stated that it is a timber frame structure that wouldn't function as retail space.

Ms. Follett stated that the building has low ceiling heights and was originally an L-shape, which was later filled in. The back is in different planes.

Mr. Theodore stated that the merit is salvaging the exterior walls – it needs to be a sound structure.

Chair Bassett-Dilley asked about the cornice material.

Mr. Theodore stated that it is cast stone to match the stone on the Collins Building. All brick and limestone on the street facades will be maintained. The salvaged brick from the Oak Park Avenue south bay will be re-used on the west near the entrance.

Chair Bassett-Dilley asked why they were removing 20 feet of the façade on Oak Park Avenue.

Mr. Melnyk stated that the existing alley is only 15 feet wide, which is substandard. The Engineering Department wanted the alley widened for loading. It is proposed to be 22 feet and allow two-way traffic.

Commissioner Eakin stated that he has an issue with cutting off the end of the building without any articulation. It's a nice scheme overall – the setback of the addition and its relationship to the building; a nice modern look. The biggest issue for him is cutting off the end.

Commissioner Heitzman asked if the original corner window was curved.

Ms. Follett stated that the building was curved but the windows was flat.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that cutting off the end of the building is a poor end to the façade.

Commissioner Susmilch suggested recreating the end. It needs weight and substance to terminate the end. Maybe you can add 4 feet to avoid a shorter end bay.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that clearly from a preservation standpoint they don't want to see any removal of the building, but obviously they need something to happen. The west elevation is very modern. Another suggestion for the Oak Park Avenue end is to put the sign on a clear-cut new piece – modern, to show where the building was cut off.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that the alley being widened for the drive-through lane and loading dock is creating a problem.

Mr. Theodore stated that it's the only place it can go. The truck turning template drove the width of the alley. He likes these ideas and will look at them. He can't put 20 feet back on because the project won't work that way.

Commissioner Susmilch suggested recreating the end.

Mr. Theodore stated that it would be short one window bay.

Commissioner Susmilch stated that a few feet could be added to keep the proportions and the end.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards advise against creating false history.

Ms. Follett stated that the salvaged brick is also critical on the west end.

Mr. Theodore stated that there may be a compromise. He will look at a more sensitive handling of the south end.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that the addition is compatible. The new work lets the historic work shine through the setback, materials and brick indentations. The addition is doing the job and the signage is at a minimum. However, the west elevation has a lot going on which kind of upstages the building. He likes the architecture but it could be simpler.

Commissioner Eakin stated that he likes the steel canopy. Maybe the clerestory windows above aren't necessary. Change the lighting and add richer vegetation in front.

Mr. Theodore stated that they have a lot of landscaping where possible.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that the drive-through canopy and wall seem like an afterthought – it seems stuck on.

Mr. Theodore stated that it's a dilemma. They want to block sound but not box them in. The floating canopy takes cues from the front.

Commissioner Heitzman suggested articulating pilasters in the wall plane under the canopy.

Commissioner Eakin suggested horizontal glass higher up – it's a fortress-like plane.

Overview

- Look at further development of the south termination of the building on Oak Park.
- There were mixed opinions on the west façade. Simplify the façade; it seems overly complex. Mr. Theodore stated that there are voids carved out of the brick, creating a sense of mass and void.
- Integrate the drive-through and south wall with the façade; provide articulation.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that the work brings to life the old façade and will be positive and sensitive to the commercial district. While the HPC would like all of the building to remain, they appreciate the retention of the facades.

Commissioner Susmilch stated that the loss of the use of the second floor should be mentioned. She appreciates the 6-foot setback to create viable second-floor windows. She's excited about bringing new life to the building.

OTHER BUSINESS

Architectural Review Committee: Report on March 25, 2009 meeting. This meeting was cancelled due to lack of agenda items.

Historic Preservation Plan: Planner Kaarre provided an update on the Preservation Plan process. A request for proposals is being prepared. The Village received a \$21,000 Certified Local Government grant which is 70% of the total project cost of \$30,000. They plan to hire a consultant. They are also planning on creating a steering committee and will need several volunteers from the HPC to be on the committee.

ADJOURN

Motion by Susmilch to adjourn. Second by Eakin. Motion approved: 7-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm. Minutes prepared by Doug Kaarre, Urban Planner.

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