

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
May 14, 2009 Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Room 101 – 7:30 pm

ROLL CALL

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

Chair Bassett-Dilley introduced new Commissioner Christina (Chris) Morris. Ms. Morris works for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and has experience in providing Commission training. He noted that she will be a welcome addition to the Commission.

MINUTES

Motion by Heitzman to approve the April 9, 2009 meeting minutes as submitted. Second by Niermann. Motion approved 8-0.

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

None

REGULAR AGENDA

- B. **HPC 09-12: 553 N. Marion Street (Verstraete/Street)** – Certificate of Appropriateness for rear and side additions/window alterations (Historic Landmark): **Forwarded from the Architectural Review Committee.**
Property owners Andrew Street and Kaatje Verstraete and architect Garret Eakin were present.

Chair Bassett-Dilley introduced the application. The Architectural Review Committee had the following comments at their April 22 meeting:

- There were some concerns with the rear deck/porch in terms of its size and design. The ARC was agreed that a separation is needed between the rear deck and the house, preferably 3-4 feet. It can be connected to the house but must appear separate. Consider placing the deck on the ground which seems more appropriate based on its size.
- Retain and repair the basement windows unless it can be shown that they require replacement.
- Re-examine the design of the proposed rear French doors. The design appears too contemporary for a Victorian house.
- Consider appropriate screening for the mechanical units.

Garret Eakin, architect, stated that he is abstaining from the review so he may present the application for his clients. He provided an overview of the Schneider House, which is a c.

1899 Queen Anne that is a Historic Landmark. The design of the house hasn't changed much over the years. The coach house was removed. It is a frame structure with cedar siding, a steep pitch roof with asphalt shingles and a stone foundation. Most of the windows were replaced with new wood windows. The windows in the tower are original.

They are proposing two small additions – an 8'6" x 8' mud room on the south and an open porch on the rear that overlooks the back yard and provides access to a new patio to the south. This is a corner site and the new owners would like some privacy. French doors off the kitchen with sidelights provide access to the "bridge" onto the rear porch. The porch design takes its cues from the house – shape, front porch columns. They also propose to move two windows in the kitchen on the North elevation. They propose to close up one non-original window on the South elevation for the mud room. They propose to change two door openings on the West elevation (rear) and install French doors with transom and sidelights.

He reviewed the porch elevations. The columns will be smooth 10" Doric columns similar to the front porch and the street side will be screened with lattice. They plan to repair and paint the original basement windows and insert new glass. Porch rail matches the front. The mud room is wood siding with a wood door with glass window at the top. The exterior of the house has been completely restored; it has two art glass windows, nice trim detail and mitered corners. The inset porch at the southwest corner was filled in four years ago.

Commissioner Lempera noted that Historic Landmarks should be restored back to their original design as closely as possible rather than altered.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that the Architectural Review Committee's comments have been addressed. He reviewed the Addition Policy in the Guidelines.

Planner Kaarre noted that the two windows on the North elevation are not the historic materials or openings. He noted that the previous owner, a developer, applied for the Property Tax Assessment Freeze but never completed the process.

Commissioner Heitzman recommended using a stone base on the mud room to match the house rather than all wood.

Mr. Eakin stated that it could be done, but he was trying to differentiate old from new.

Commissioner Heitzman recommended something other than clapboard.

Mr. Eakin stated that he could double the siding scale on the base.

Commissioner Lempera stated that he is not happy with the mud room addition. It doesn't seem to be in character with the house. He preferred that the rear porch be on the ground rather than raised. The owners did take their comments seriously, but he questions the new shape of the porch. It seems contrived trying to match the original. He discussed the visual distinction in the Guidelines.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that the Architectural Review Committee discussed the porch and made specific recommendations which have been addressed. He asked for other thoughts on whether it meets the idea of compatibility in the Guidelines.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that the porch is beautiful and he prefers it at house level. One will be able to stand and look out at the yard.

Commissioner Morris asked what the Architectural Review Committee's determination was at its meeting on whether the project met the Guidelines.

Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that they felt it didn't meet the Guidelines at the time.

Commissioner Limberg stated that it's a beautiful porch design and setting it apart from the house makes a visual distinction.

Mr. Eakin stated that it is compatible and harmonious yet distinct. It is difficult to design something with both qualities. People need a mud room; its essential for making the house work.

Commissioner Vitello stated that its nicely proportioned and harmonious to the house. It is similar to Victorian backyard follies.

Commissioner Morris stated that its sensitively added to the house with minimal contact. The interrelationship between new and existing is handled well.

Commissioner Niermann stated that it's a nice porch with good distinction. The mud room seems tacked on and doesn't please the eye.

Chair Bassett-Dilley noted there seems to be a majority in favor of the belvedere. It's a vast improvement to the house and on the previous design. The mud room doesn't share that language as much. However, it reads as an addition and you can still read the original mass of the house. There is a lack of banding. The base should be stone or columns with lattice. Don't introduce another design element.

Mr. Eakin stated that he doesn't think it should be stone, but wood. Doubling the scale of the siding would work.

Commissioner Morris stated that the mud room shows its architectural and functional character. Historically mud rooms would be very utilitarian. They are not grand spaces. This simple treatment is in keeping with the character of the house.

Mr. Eakin stated that it doesn't need windows or a break-down in scale.

Commissioner Heitzman suggested considering lowering the roof pitch.

Commissioner Niermann stated that he was thinking the same thing. Maybe make it similar to the front porch roof slope.

Mr. Eakin stated that it is a possibility.

Andrew Street, property owner, stated that he is okay with the suggested changes. They love the house but their biggest concern was that the previous developer didn't provide the love and concern it needs. They want to do what's best for the house.

Motion by Heitzman to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for 553 N. Marion Street as submitted. Second by Vitello. Motion approved 6-1.

AYE: Vitello, Limberg, Niermann, Heitzman, Morris, Bassett-Dilley

NAY: Lempera

Chair Bassett-Dilley applauded the owners for doing the right thing as well as hiring a good architect. The Commission's comments on changes are advisory.

C. **Historic Landmarks: Preliminary Determination of Eligibility** – Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for two Historic Landmark nominations.

The property owners/applicants were not present.

Planner Kaarre introduced the Historic Landmark nominations for 1139 Woodbine Avenue and 1019 Chicago Avenue. 1139 Woodbine was constructed in 1929 for Gustaf Benson, owner of Benson Dairy in Chicago. The architect was George E. Pearson. The house and garage have a high degree of integrity. The house at 1019 Chicago Avenue (Robert Parker House) is one of Frank Lloyd Wright's "bootleg" houses constructed in 1892 and has been restored in the last ten years.

The Commission discussed the architectural style of the house. It may have some Neo-classical, Gothic Revival and Italianate details, but the style should be Renaissance Revival. It is an eclectic approach to the Revival styles.

Commissioner Morris noted the "tract houses" of the 1920s that have various architectural elements drawn together. It is an interesting sociological fact. Pearson may have been trying to appeal to the masses.

Commissioner Heitzman stated that it has so much architectural integrity except for the roof.

Commissioner Eakin noted that they are called Jumbalows in Berwyn (giant bungalows).

Motion by Lempera to approve a Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for the Historic Landmark nomination for 1139 Woodbine Avenue under three Criteria for Designation as outlined in the nomination. Second by Niermann. Motion approved 8-0.

Motion by Niermann to approve a Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for the Historic Landmark nomination for 1019 Chicago Avenue under five Criteria for Designation as outlined in the nomination. Second by Morris. Motion approved 8-0.

- D. **2009 Historic Preservation Awards** – Presentation of the 2009 Historic Preservation Award recipients.

Planner Kaarre reviewed the application process. There were 20 nominations and 10 awards will be given out at the May 18 meeting of the Board of Trustees. The judging committee was composed of Suzanne Germann of Landmarks Illinois in Chicago, Jan Mangers of the City of Aurora, Allison Freedland of the Chicago Historic Bungalow Association, and Commissioner Kyle Hickman.

The 2009 Historic Preservation Awards will be presented to:

1. **725 CLINTON AVENUE – ADDITION**
Cliff and Joan Brady (*owners*)
James Michael Vanderheyden (*architect*)
Heartland Construction Group (*contractor*)
2. **310 S. CUYLER AVENUE – REHABILITATION**
Robert and Sheila Heilman (*owners*)
3. **213-215 S. ELMWOOD AVENUE – STEWARDSHIP**
Ronald and Cynthia Becker (*owners*)
Maria T. Roche & Associates (*architect*)
Swenson Construction Company (*contractor*)
4. **209 FOREST AVENUE – STEWARDSHIP**
Craig Iseli and Holly Van Deursen (*owners*)
Manske • Dieckmann • Thompson (*architect*)
JTG Contractors (*contractors*)
5. **308 S. GROVE AVENUE – RESTORATION**
Michael and Brooke Baron (*owners*)
Fox Design and Construction (*contractor*)
6. **312 S. GROVE AVENUE – RESTORATION**
Stephen Hempel and Monali Shah (*owners*)
Fox Design and Construction (*contractor*)
Perrino Brothers Painting (*contractor*)
7. **150 N. RIDGELAND AVENUE – ADDITION/RESTORATION**
David and Christine Linde (*owners*)
William Drew Nelson (*architect*)
Bonfiglio Builders (*contractor*)
8. **1033 SOUTH BOULEVARD – RESTORATION**
Paul and Leah Beckwith / Rick and Laura Talaske (*owners*)
John Conrad Schiess (*architect*)
Heartland Construction Group (*contractors*)

9. **838 S. TAYLOR AVENUE – ADDITION**
Loren and Holle Andersen (*owners*)
David Crosby Architects (*architects*)
Innex Company (*contractors*)
10. **320 WISCONSIN AVENUE – REHABILITATION**
GLA Bon Villa Apartments (*owners*)
Errol Jay Kirsch Architects (*architects*)

E. **Architectural Review Guidelines** – Discussion of Potential Updates Continued from the March 12, 2009 meeting.

Chair Bassett-Dilley introduced the discussion. They discussed the definitions at the March 12 meeting. It might be more productive and efficient to break the Guidelines up by section among the Commissioners. It would help to streamline the review process rather than going through point by point. Each Commissioner will review their section(s), flesh out the issue and bring recommendations back to the full Commission. Look at precedents in other communities as well.

The Commission discussed overall process. A completed draft will ultimately be brought before the Village Board for comment and direction. Following assignment of sections, the Commission will hold a special meeting in August to discuss recommendations. They will start at the June meeting discussing the Window Policy.

Planner Kaarre will email the like to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions website where they have guidelines for communities around the country. Those sections not assigned tonight will be included in that email.

Assignments:

Chair Bassett-Dilley: Garage Policy, Site Features, Sustainability/Energy Efficiency (new)

Commissioner Limberg: Roofing Policy

Commissioner Heitzman: Window Policy, Masonry Repair Policy, New Addition Policy

Commissioner Eakin: New Building Policy

Commissioner Lempere: Paint Policy, Mechanical Units

Commissioner Morris: Sign Policy, Awning Policy

Commissioner Niermann: Siding and Soffit Policy

They discussed the potential of on-line meetings and gotomeeting.com.

OTHER BUSINESS

Architectural Review Committee: Report on April 22, 2009 meeting. Chair Bassett-Dilley reviewed the items discussed at the meeting. The meeting notes were provided to the Commission.

217 S. Euclid Avenue: Chair Bassett-Dilley stated that he will follow up with Trustee Johnson on the penalty issue.

227 S. Oak Park Avenue: Commissioner Lempera asked for an update on the window changes. Planner Kaarre stated that no work had been done yet, but the owner had agreed to maintain the overall window trim opening.

Microfiche Machine at Village Hall: Planner Kaarre noted that the machine is working again and the building permit archives can once again be accessed.

Illinois Association of Historic Preservation Commissions: Commissioner Heitzman noted that the IAHPC meeting will be held on Saturday, May 30, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. at Pleasant Home in Oak Park.

ADJOURN

Motion by Eakin to adjourn. Second by Niermann. Motion approved: 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm. Minutes prepared by Doug Kaarre, Urban Planner.

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