

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
February 8, 2024 at 7:30PM – Meeting Minutes**

Roll Call

Present: Chair Lou Garapolo and Commissioners Asha Andriana, David Bates, Monique Chase, Scot Mazur, Amy Peterson, Ron Roman and Mark Weiner
Absent: None
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner
Attorney: Courtney Willits, Elrod Friedman LLP

Agenda Approval

Motion by Commissioner Peterson to approve the agenda. Second by Commissioner Mazur. Motion approved 8-0.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Peterson to approve the minutes from January 11, 2024. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 8-0.

Motion by Commissioner Weiner to approve the minutes from January 18, 2024. Second by Commissioner Mazur. Motion approved 8-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2024-3: 150 N Cuyler Ave (Phillip Cunningham):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a two-story rear addition including a small dormer and rear porch (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler provided a summary. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on January 25, 2024. The ARC felt the addition to be appropriate with the exception of work on a front window, which has been removed from the scope of work.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, introduced himself and said he is available for questions.

Motion by Commissioner Peterson to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Chair Garapolo asked if the garage work is included and Mr. Wollmuth said no, they are incorporating recommendations from the ARC and will come back later for review of the garage.

Commissioner Peterson asked how much further the rear porch will project to the side than the front porch and Mr. Wollmuth said three feet. He said this depth is to fit a table and have reasonable circulation.

Chair Garapolo asked if the AC units will be located near the back of the house and Mr. Wollmuth confirmed. He said they will be located behind the bay, though the design is on-going.

Chair Garapolo said they appreciate the incorporation of ARC comments and addition is in-keeping with the house. He said the materials are complimentary and the roof slope relates to the roof slope of the house.

Commissioner Roman made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Peterson. Motion approved 8-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Mazur, Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Roman, Commissioner Weiner, and Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

- B. HPC2024-4: 412 N Grove Ave (Kaufman):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a side, screened porch addition near the rear of the house (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler provided a summary. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on January 25, 2024. Based on feedback, the applicant has redesigned the chimney to be internal on the addition and provided a rendering to give a sense of massing as viewed from the street.

Motion by Commissioner Roman to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Mazur.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present. He said this is a screened porch addition. The occupiable space will be at-grade for privacy, but the roof will match the height of the porch roof. He said they made some significant changes since the ARC meeting. The chimney is now internal. The base of the addition will be stone to link it to the house and the upper part will be painted wood. That's consistent with many sunrooms and conservatories in the sense of not having horizontal siding.

Commissioner Roman asked why the addition will be on the side and not the back. Mr. Wollmuth said there's a driveway and garage, so you really can't go towards the back. He showed the site plan and said the garage starts at the end of the paving. There's a very generous side yard. Commissioner Roman asked if this will be unheated with exception of the fireplace and Mr. Wollmuth confirmed.

Chair Garapolo said at the ARC he was concerned it would overwhelm the house, but the 3D rendering shows it's so far back that it's in proportion with the house. He said he appreciates the drawing and the addition will be compatible. He said eliminating the stone chimney was a good choice. He said there was discussion of the windows, but as they are screens, he doesn't see a problem.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the building behind the house in the photo is the neighbor's garage and Mr. Wollmuth said it's the garage of the neighbor behind them.

Commissioner Roman made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Chase. Motion approved 8-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Mazur, Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Roman, Commissioner Weiner, and Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

C. 321 Home Ave (Jacqueline Bassett), Ridgeland Oak Park Historic District:

- a. **HPC2024-5:** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish historic garage.

Chair Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler provided a summary.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present. He said the garage is 15 feet deep, or 180 inches. A Honda Civic is 179 inches, so you really can't use it as a garage. He said he provided a detailed cost breakdown for repair. That's just making the garage structurally stable. The garage has no lateral bracing, and a good wind could push it over. The west side has a full garage door and the east side has a lean-to that results in a full interior wall opening. The existing slab is in such bad shape, they would need to lift the garage. Working under that would be a premium, and the contractor was really hesitant about liability. He said he provided more context photos and that this is one in a line of replaced garages going 2-3 houses in both directions.

Motion by Commissioner Roman to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Chair Garapolo said he was concerned about the structural engineering report at the ARC meeting, but he noticed the engineer honed in more and discussed the garage, not just the lean-to. The additional photos were helpful. He said we don't always get this kind of a detailed cost break-down, but it does help to see. It shows there's quite a bit needed to bring the garage back.

Commissioner Peterson asked if there are any salvageable materials and Mr. Wollmuth said it would be tough. The siding has many layers of paint, probably including lead, and the sills are rotted out.

Commissioner Chase said they have definitely demonstrated it should be torn down.

Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 8-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Mazur, Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Roman, Commissioner Weiner, and Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

- b. **Advisory Review:** Proposed addition to non-historic garage.

Chair Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler provided a summary.

Chris Wollmuth, the architect, was present. He said they looked into doing a traditionally approved material, but they want to match what is on the house. He said the details on the

eaves are just on the front of the house and the side elevations are much quieter. So they are matching the side elevations.

Chair Garapolo asked about the siding on the house and Mr. Wollmuth confirmed it is cement board with wood grain. Chair Garapolo said this is not what they would recommend.

Commissioner Weiner said he would love to see the detailing on the gable replicated on the garage.

Commissioner Chase said she is excited to see an ADU. She said she likes that they're removing something that can't work and replacing it with something that can.

Commissioner Roman asked about the separation between the garage and ADU, and Mr. Wollmuth said it will be fire-rated. He confirmed it has high-level zoning approval, but they will still need to go to the building department.

D. Public Hearing: HPC2023-44: 430 S Taylor Ave (Janelli Barrow): Certificate of Economic Hardship to demolish contributing building within the Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District.

Chair Garapolo opened the public hearing.

Anthony Garland, the applicant, provided a statement and walked through the submission materials. He said he was born and raised in Oak park and wants to move his family here. He said the house has been noted as not approved for occupancy by Mark Thompson, the Fire Marshall. They didn't feel the inspection encompassed everything. They had a Comparative Market Analysis done that assumes the property is completely finished. He said they get a detailed analysis on repair costs. The truss used for the roof does not meet today's code, so all of that would need to be replaced. A structural analysis would need to be done to determine what can be saved. The cost to do new construction would be about \$540,000.

Planner Trexler read in the evidence.

Chair Garapolo invited members of the public to speak. One member of the public said from the audience that he's in support of the applicant but declined to comment. Planner Trexler said there are no written comments.

Commissioner Roman asked if the quote was to restore it to what it originally looked like or just make it livable. Mr. Garland said the quote is to restore it to when it was built.

Chair Garapolo said the market value indicates a value of \$685,000. The purchase price was way below that number at \$290,000. What was the condition of the house? That's a big difference. Mr. Garland said the house was a nuisance previously. When they bought it, the basement was full of garbage and it looked like someone had been squatting there. The previous owners didn't take care of the house. The neighbor said there were kids selling drugs, and in 2018 someone was shot and killed in the home. It was vacant from that time on. The condition of the upstairs was pretty good. Mr. Garland said their goal was to redo the floors and put a new kitchen in. He said he believes the previous owners just wanted to get rid of the house. It looked like they made a living space in the basement so it was two living areas.

Mr. Hungerford, the applicant's architect, said it was in disrepair, but then the fire happened. There's a hole in the roof. The Village said to board it up. He said because of the label on the

building and the difficulty to over the roof hole, it is still open. He said they appreciate the effort to get it here today, because it continues to fall into disrepair. He said the new building will bring great integrity to the block in a building that will be very resilient.

Chair Garapolo opened Commission deliberation.

Commissioner Chase said she appreciates the point about the roof because they discussed that. She said they have done everything the Commission has asked. She said as much as it makes her sad to lose a house like this, she understands the economic infeasibility and doesn't have any issues.

Commissioner Weiner said he has supported the demolition since day one, but it's very helpful to see the detailed analysis.

Commissioner Peterson said she feels the evidence provided really illustrates what it would cost to repair the house and it is disproportionate to what you could put into the house. The assessment of structural soundness is concerning. After years of not being well-cared-for, and then the tragedy of the fire. She said she doesn't know what other choice there is.

Commissioner Roman said as much as he believes it should come down, the cost estimate seemed excessive. Commissioner Chase said with the numbers they've seen for tile roofs, she thinks it is probably spot on. She said if the applicant tried to do any less than what it was, they would have to come back to the HPC for review.

Chair Garapolo said what they're seeing, since they had a structural engineer, if you're rebuilding the entire structure, you're touching just about everything. He said even if the number is a little high, we're still talking about a lot of money. He said he doesn't have a concern about the cost estimate.

Chair Garapolo thanked the applicants for putting together the application in a relatively short time. He said they received the specifics and the SMA is interesting. As indicated, new construction would be around \$550,000, which is in-line with the market value of the realtor. He said the material submitted is sufficient.

Commissioner Mazur made a motion to approve the Certificate of Economic Hardship for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Weiner. Motion approved 8-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Mazur, Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Roman, Commissioner Weiner, and Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

Commissioner Peterson made a motion to approve the draft resolution with the condition that staff and the Chair make edits to reflect what occurred at the meeting. Second by Commissioner Roman. Motion approved 8-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Bates, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Mazur, Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Roman, Commissioner Weiner, and Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Introductions:** The Commission welcomed new commissioner Ron Roman and provided introductions.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Peterson to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Weiner

The meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.