

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
September 12, 2019 - Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Council Chambers, 7:30 pm**

Roll Call

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

Agenda Approval

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the agenda. Second by Commissioner Houze. Motion approved 6-0.

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the minutes for August 8 and August 27, 2019. Second by Commissioner Tadic. Motion approved 6-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. 408 N Kenilworth Ave Landmark Nomination (George & Myrtle Mason):** Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for 408 N Kenilworth Ave (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

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

Jack Lesniak was present on behalf of the applicant and noted that the homeowners, George and Myrtle Mason, were in the audience. They have owned the house for 50 years. He explained its history, noting that the 1890 foundation is visible in the basement and it is a unique story because it was remodeled in 1910 by Tallmadge and Watson.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Sokol said this is an interesting house because it involves two sets of prominent local architects. This adds a dimension not seen in other nominations. Commissioner Houze agreed and asked if the nomination is for the interior as well. Mr. Lesniak said they are just nominating the exterior. He said that the only thing left from 1910 on the interior is the entry vestibule. The interior was remodeled in 1930.

Commissioner Sokol applauded the owners for nominating the property. Chair Payne agreed. He said it is a remarkable house, is beautifully kept up, and would be a great addition to Oak Park's landmarks.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo that it is likely that the nominated building may meet at least one of the criteria for designation. Second by Commissioner Sokol. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- B. HPC2019-50: 212 N Harvey Ave (Brett & Sarah Williams):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a rear, second story, one-room addition on existing first story (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview, including that the applicant attended the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on August 8 and the Architectural Review Committee meeting on August 28. At that time, the Commission expressed concern about the window on the front elevation of the addition. The applicant changed the window to a double-hung sash and the Architectural Review Committee had no additional recommendations.

Brett Williams, the homeowner, was present. He said the main concern previously was the window on the front elevation of the addition and this has been addressed.

Motion by Commissioner Tadic to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Garapolo said all suggestions were followed by the applicant and he supports the project. Several Commissioners and Chair Payne expressed agreement.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Tadic. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- C. HPC2019-54: 741 Fair Oaks Ave (Matthew Clink):** Certificate of Appropriateness to replace slate roof with asphalt shingles and remove decorative chimney brace (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview and noted that the applicant previously received a COA to replace the slate roof in 2018 but the COA has expired as more than a year has passed. In addition, the new application includes the removal of the chimney brace; it is recommended that the decorative piece on the brace be reused if possible.

Matt Clink, the homeowner, was present. He explained that they had to replace the roof on the garage first so the house roof was delayed. He said they will reuse the decorative piece on the chimney brace if possible.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Houze.

Commissioner Sokol asked about the material of the chimney brace. Mr. Clink said it is wrought iron and showed the Commission a photograph of the brace.

Commissioner Garapolo asked what the factor is on whether it will be reused and Mr. Clink said reuse will be determined by the integrity of the piece, which they won't know until they take it off the roof.

Rebecca Houze noted the cost differences and asked if they would use slate if the cost was equal. Mr. Clink said that they would and said this is one part in five years of restorative work. They will redo the copper gutters and carpentry work. They recently redid the garage with the same asphalt shingles and are happy with how it looks.

Chair Payne recommended that if they cannot reuse the decorative piece on the bracket that they replace it with a similar element and get staff approval. It should be similar material and replicate what's there currently. Mr. Clink agreed to do so.

Commissioner Sokol said he would like to see slate but he understands the cost concern.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for roof replacement with the condition that the decorative piece on the bracket be reused or replaced with a similar element to be approved by staff. Second by Commissioner Tadic. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- D. HPC2019-55: 321 N Harvey Ave (Rajani & Vijay Raghavan):** Certificate of Appropriateness to repair front porch including adding a post and replacing wood with composite decking (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

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

Vijay Raghavan, the homeowner, said he is available for questions.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Sokol.

Commissioner Garapolo said the new railing doesn't match the original. The post in the middle wasn't there previously. He asked why the post was added and Mr. Raghavan explained that the composite material doesn't stretch as long as wood. Commissioner Garapolo said he has problems with the added post and with the material. The original design should have been followed and wood should have been used.

Commissioner Tadic said the material makes it look unfinished. Commissioner Carr said it will look better with post caps but noted that the posts are a step higher than they were originally. Chair Payne said the porch was already replaced so he is less concerned about the floor and stairs but more concerned about the spacing of the balusters. He said the Guidelines allow new materials but they must replicate the historic materials. He asked what will be painted. Mr. Raghavan was unsure. Planner Trexler said in their application, the applicant said they would paint the existing columns and trim to match the new railings. She noted that the columns are composite. Commissioner Houze asked if the composite material takes paint well; the homeowner did not know.

Commissioners Tadic and Sokol said they agree with Commissioner Garapolo. Commissioner Sokol said this would likely not have been approved as completed.

Chair Payne recommended that the applicant submit a new Certificate of Appropriateness application with revisions to meet the Guidelines. He noted that they may attend the Architectural Review Committee to discuss details.

The Commission took no action.

- E. HPC2019-56: 532 N Ridgeland Ave (C. Thor Martin):** Certificate of Appropriateness to alter an existing dormer and porch enclosure (Frank Lloyd Wright Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview and stated that the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on August 28. The applicant has now submitted two alternatives for the porch enclosure, one that retains the existing window pattern and one that includes a picture window similar to one within the porch.

Thor Martin, the homeowner, was present. He addressed the alternatives for the front windows. He said the posts are not historic and lining up an interior wall to the posts limits the design. He believes that the picture window option is appropriate as the existing windows are not historic and there are examples of similar windows in his neighborhood. He noted photos submitted earlier that day (paper copies were distributed by Planner Trexler at the beginning of the meeting).

Motion by Commissioner Tadic to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Garapolo asked about the ARC's recommendation to keep the spacing of the windows and jog the interior wall. Mr. Martin explained that they evaluated this option and found it did not have good flow and didn't work well for the interior door. Commissioner Garapolo said he understands but he does not support a picture window.

Commissioner Carr asked if the chimney exists currently and will just be repaired. Mr. Martin confirmed.

Commissioner Sokol said he is sympathetic to creating a usable space but also does not support the picture window. Chair Payne asked what the problem is with alternative 1 and Mr. Martin said it cramps the interior front door. He said if they have flexibility, they can create a bank of windows. Chair Payne said it's the regularity, the ribbon look, that's important and not necessarily the location of the posts. He recommended that they redesign with the interior wall where desired and retain a ribbon of windows similar to existing, to be reviewed by staff.

Commissioner Houze asked if this changes the decision made by the ARC and Chair Payne said it keeps with the spirit of the ARC's recommendations.

Motion by Commissioner Tadic to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that a ribbon of windows be retained and the final design be approved by staff. Second by Commissioner Carr. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- F. HPC2019-57: 234 Home Ave (Justin Erkfritz-Gay):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a rear, second story addition on existing first story and alter roof shape (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

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

Denny Burke, the architect, was present. He stated that the homeowners are in the audience. He explained the project and said that they added a piece of trim in an update to the submission in order to differentiate the historic house from the addition.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Carr said she appreciates how the proposed alterations and addition will clean up the appearance of the house from the street. Commissioner Garapolo agreed and said the massing works well but he has a problem with the windows proposed on the front elevation of the existing rear, west addition. The historic windows on the front elevation appear to be tall, double-hung sash windows and the new windows should match. He asked if this is possible. Mr. Burke said they may be able to put in taller windows but may need to flatten the roof so there is not a conflict with the gable. The Commission discussed how the front windows interact with the trim.

The Commission discussed whether the windows should be double-hung sash windows. Commissioner Tadic said they should be as close as possible to the historic windows. Mr. Burke said they prefer casement windows but can break into two lights. Commissioner Sokol said they should have two lights to at least have the appearance of double-hung sash windows.

Chair Payne said he is less concerned about the operation type and more concerned about the proportion. The windows look lower and should be brought up to engage with the trim board.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness from the addition and alterations with the conditions that (1) staff approve the final design of the window and ensure it is proportional and (2) the trim piece be used (as proposed in the submittal update). Second by Commissioner Sokol. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- G. HPC2019-58: 614 N East Ave (Kevin & Gerrienne Hartman):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a rear, two-story addition with second floor porch and rear deck (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Payne introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview and said that the applicant previously attended the Architectural Review Committee in 2018.

Doug Gilbert, the architect, was present on behalf of the homeowner. He explained the project and noted that the stair bump-out on the north elevation blocks visibility of the addition on that side and the addition is marked by the inset porch on the south side. The garage will have stucco siding and will have a gable roof to provide more storage space. The deck projects straight off the rear of

the house. While there is a set of stairs to the side, they are far back and there is a lot of landscaping and a large side yard.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Tadic.

Commissioner Houze asked if the kitchen addition to be removed is original to the house. Mr. Gilbert said it appears to be a later bump-out; the exact age is unknown.

Commissioner Garapolo said he has no issue with the stair from the deck. He also approved of the garage and said he supports the project. Commissioner Houze said she normally doesn't approve of large garages but this is a large lot so the garage is appropriate.

Chair Payne said it is a large addition but it reads as a nice scale with the details presented. He agreed that the deck stair is not an issue due to limited visibility. He said the garage is compatible in scale, materials, and design.

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition as proposed. Second by Commissioner Tadic. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- H. HPC2019-59: 202 S Clinton Ave (Stephen Kelley):** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish existing, non-original concrete stoop and build front porch similar to original (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Steve Kelley, the homeowner and architect, was present. He gave a presentation to the Commission on the proposed project. He said that he plans to remove the yellow siding, which is a particle board and is currently falling apart. He will rebuild the porch similar to the 1893 photo presented. He does not believe any of the porches on 200-208 Clinton are original but they do reflect the original layout. 208 S Clinton is an example of a porch that was recently replaced. Mr. Kelley said they will use 6x6 columns and newel post and 4x4 balusters. He showed pictures of 130 S Kenilworth, which he also owns, as an example of a similar porch design with open gable. He said he would like to use Hardie board to replace the particle board.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Houze.

Commissioner Garapolo asked if the gable was originally closed and Mr. Kelley confirmed that it was. Commissioner Garapolo said he could go either way but he approves of the proportions of the proposed porch. Mr. Kelley said he prefers to leave the rafters exposed on porches like this and doesn't want to give a false sense of history. He intends to replicate the size and scale but not create a design that is "too frilly." He confirmed that the goal is to replicate the 1893 proportions.

Commissioner Garapolo said he does not like Hardie board and asked if there is an alternative. Mr. Kelley explained that Hardie board is durable and they plan to work with a historical paint consultant in redoing the color scheme in the next year.

Commissioner Sokol said they are replacing non-original siding with non-original siding and Mr. Kelley confirmed that they don't know what was there originally. Due to the 1979 fire, no historical materials remain.

Commissioner Carr said she prefers the gable closed and noted that the railing only needs to be 36" for a residential building, which will afford a better view from the porch.

Chair Payne said that the Hardie board will be minimally visible and will replace a material that is also not historic. He recommended flat Hardie board, not textured, at 3.5". He said they do not know what was originally in the gable and Eastlake style gables at the time were open. It also keeps the porch looking contemporary. He said he is willing to accept the modification of the gable. Commissioners Tadic, Sokol, and Garapolo agreed.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the porch and siding replacement as proposed. Second by Commissioner Tadic. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- Appoint new Acting Chair

Chair Payne announced that he will be stepping down at the end of his term as Chair on October 4. It was recommended that the Commission appoint a new Acting Chair to serve until a new Chair is appointed. The Commission discussed the rolls of the Acting Chair. Chair Payne recommended that if anyone is interested in serving as Chair, they may reach out to the Mayor.

Attorney Smith confirmed that the Chair appoints members for the Architectural Review Committee and the Acting Chair would not have to run the ARC meetings.

Motion by Chair Payne to appoint Rebecca Houze as Acting Chair. Second by Commissioner Sokol. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, Commissioner a Tadic, and Chair Payne

NAY: None

- Architectural Review Guidelines

Planner Trexler said they are staff is currently reviewing and finalizing the updated Architectural Review Guidelines. They will be presented to the Commission at one of the Commission meetings this fall for approval, after which they will be forwarded to the Village Board.

- Resource database and Oak Park Guidebook

Planner Trexler gave an overview of the database work completed by the historic preservation/planning interns over the summer and said that one of the interns will be completing his final project for his Masters with the Village. This will incorporate both the databased and the guidebook update, which will be in an electronic form, potentially connected to the database in some way. She said the Commission has previously worked on

the Guidebook and if anyone has particular requests or information they should discuss further with staff.

The Commission discussed previous work done on the guidebook update, which included breaking up the Village into quadrants for research. Chair Payne said they also have kept a list of suggested changes to the Ordinance.

Commissioner Houze recommended that there be a printable piece to the electronic guidebook, such as walking maps.

- Historic sidewalks

Planner Trexler provided an update on a temporary sidewalk alteration being undertaken by a homeowner to preserve their historic sandstone sidewalk and noted that this and other homeowners have expressed interest in replacement sandstone pieces from Village storage if available.

- Realtor Event

Planner Trexler asked if the Commission is still interested in pursuing a realtor education event this fall and if so, if they have any recommendations or requests. Commissioner Sokol recommended reaching out to the Oak Park Board of Realtors and suggested the Nineteenth Century Club as a location. Chair Payne said he would come back as a volunteer to assist if needed. The Commission agreed they would like to pursue the event this fall and recommended coordinating with the Board of Realtors on timing.

Chair Payne said there will be a historic home expo in fall 2020 at Unity Temple. He recommended that the Commission should participate in some way.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Urban Planner Historic Preservation.