

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
December 10, 2020 – Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:00 pm**

Roll Call

Present: Interim Chair Rebecca Houze and Commissioners Jennifer Bridge, Sandra Carr, Sarah Doherty, Lou Garapolo, Noel Weidner, and Rachel Will
Absent: Monique Chase and David Sokol
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner
Attorney: Greg Smith, Klein, Thorpe & Jenkins

Agenda Approval

*Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the agenda. Second by Commissioner Bridge.
Motion approved 7-0.*

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the minutes for November 24, 2020. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. Advisory Review: 436 N Elmwood Ave (Nicholas Sahm):** Advisory Review for new garage, existing garage not historic (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Interim Chair Houze introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Nic Sahm, the homeowner, was present. He introduced himself and the project.

Commissioner Garapolo asked about the height of the new structure in comparison to the house. Mr. Sahm said it will be shorter than the house. Commissioner Garapolo said it looks like a positive addition on Chicago Ave. Commissioner Carr agreed. She said she likes the detail and the similar banding to the existing garage and house. She approved of the location of the stairs on the south so they are not noticeable.

Chair Houze asked about the size of the proposed garage in comparison to the existing and Planner Trexler showed the submitted site plan. Commissioner Carr noted that it will be about 50 feet from the house. Commissioner Weidner clarified that the coach house will be six feet further in but will be the same width. Chair Houze appreciated the design's effort to incorporate banding details to match the house..

The Commission discussed the proposed material. Commissioner Garapolo said the DryVit will look like stucco and will match the house. He said it is a better material for this part of the country. Mr. Sahm said they are using DryVit to meet the insulation requirements.

- B. Landmark Hearing: 609 Linden Ave (Anthony and Dietra Millard):** Public Hearing on the Landmark nomination for 609 Linden Ave (the MacArthur House) (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

The witnesses were sworn in by Attorney Smith. Planner Trexler gave a brief overview of the nomination.

Anthony and Dietra Millard were present on behalf of the project. They summarized some of the history of the house. Ms. Millard said it is their hope that the landmark includes the entire property.

Commissioner Doherty asked if the coach house is original to the house. Ms. Millard explained that the coach house was built before the house and was originally associated with the Todd House, which neighbors the property to the west.

Chair Houze closed the question portion of the hearing and stated that the Commission should now deliberate.

Commissioner Weidner said he agreed with the criteria under which it is being designated. He said it retains integrity and is eligible. Mr. Millard asked that it be referred to as the "Telfer MacArthur House," to clarify which MacArthur the house belonged to. Planner Trexler said this change has already been made in the draft Resolution, so it will be adopted as such if the Commission agrees.

Chair Houze said the property meets the criteria listed and said it is a good candidate for a historic landmark in Oak Park. She said she was happy to see the Wright Plus documents in the report.

Commissioner Weidner asked about the numbering of the criteria in the resolution. Planner Trexler and Attorney Smith clarified that it is just a list and the Ordinance sections are specified in the item.

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the resolution recommending the building as an Oak Park Landmark to the Village Board; Second by Commissioner Weidner. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

- C. HPC2020-47: 178 Forest Ave (The Nineteenth Century Charitable Association):** Certificate of Appropriateness to add an interpretive sign in front of the building (Oak Park Landmark and Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Interim Chair Houze introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on February 26, 2020.

Robin Wienke and Edith Schaefer, of the Nineteenth Century Charitable Association, and Nick Sinadinos, of Nicholas Associates, were present on behalf of the project. Mr. Wienke explained the project. He said 25,000 people visit their building each year and many more people walk by but do not know its history. The proposed sign will tell more about the building.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said the follow-up materials follow the ARC's recommendations and the sign appears to be compatible. He asked how a wheelchair would approach the sign. Mr. Wienke said there is a plan to pave in front of the sign so it can be approached. Commissioner Bridge said the material is fine but the sign will be exposed to sunlight from the west and blue is a highly fading color. She recommended confirming that there is UV protection on it. Mr. Sinadious said the sign will be high-pressure laminate with is UV protective. He said the typography will be white on dark teal, which will have a strong contrast. He said the teal will match the door. He clarified that the large type is cream but the small type is white. Commissioner Will asked the material of the base of the sign and Mr. Sinadious said it will be painted aluminum.

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

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

- D. HPC2020-48: 838 N Kenilworth Ave (Chris Gladfelter):** Certificate of Appropriateness for the expansion of an existing basement window to create an egress window (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Interim Chair Houze introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Chris Gladfelter, the homeowner, was present on behalf of the project. He summarized the project. He said they are creating emergency egress and bringing the building up to code. The proposed window would extend below the existing window but will not be higher. It would be accessible through a window well. He said they are looking to create a playroom or family room in the basement.

Motion by Commission Garapolo to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Weidner.

Commissioner Weidner asked which elevation the window is on. Mr. Gladfelter said it is the north. Commissioner Carr asked about the trim and Mr. Gladfelter said they will match the trim and extend it downward. Commissioner Carr said she would prefer a triple-light, possibly just across the top, but said it likely won't be very visible. Commissioner Garapolo said he would like to see the historic design replicated as all the other windows have this design. Mr. Gladfelter said they can do this. Chair Houze asked for clarification about the sidewalk and Mr. Gladfelter said this is not the main entrance. He explained that the window well will be cut out of the sidewalk. The Commission discussed the window's location with respect to the property line.

Chair Houze asked if a clad wood window was considered. Mr. Gladfelter said they can switch to a clad wood window and said this might be necessary to get the three-light pattern. Commissioner Carr showed a sketch of a recommended design with a three-over-one light pattern. Commissioner Weidner said an egress window makes sense. He approved of the design proposed by Commissioner Carr and said it should be clad wood. The Commission discussed storm windows and screens and how the window depth might change the appearance. It was agreed that the conditions proposed were still appropriate.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the egress window with the conditions that it be clad wood and that it feature a three-over-one glass pattern. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

- E. HPC2020-49: 303 N Cuyler Ave (Joe and Emily Shields):** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage and build a new garage (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Interim Chair Houze introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Brett Williams, the contractor, was present on behalf of the project. He gave a presentation on the state of the current garage. He said that the building is not secure, the garage doors are compromised, and the roof is structurally under-rated. A lot of structural elements would have to be replaced, as well as all of the concrete, the roof, and the siding. He described the proposed new garage and said they proposed Hardie board with a 4-inch reveal but the homeowners are open to a 3-inch reveal. He said cedar siding does not make financial sense for the homeowners.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said as the garage is on a corner lot, it will be very visible. He said a smaller reveal on the siding would be best and he does not think 4-inch Hardie board is appropriate. He asked if the windows will match the windows on the house. Mr. Williams said they would. He said most of the windows on the house do not have divided lights.

Mr. Williams asked if LP siding would be appropriate and if smooth or textured cement board would be preferred. Commissioner Carr said the Commission previously agreed that LP is better as it is a wood product and can match the 3-inch reveal. Chair Houze asked for details about the reveal options and Mr. Williams said it is possible to do 3 inches with Hardie board or LP, it just takes more material with Hardie board because you have to increase the overlap.

Chair Houze said she does not like to see these garages go but can tell it's not in good shape. Commissioner Carr said she doesn't mind the dormers and the proposed garage is appropriate. The 24-inch overhand is good and bringing the eaves down makes it not look as big. She said the window proportions don't look as vertical as they do on the house, but that may be because the sketch is just showing the trim. She said she hates to see the old garages go but this is appropriate as it matches the house, especially if they use 3-inch siding.

Chair Houze asked if the footprint is the same and Mr. Williams explained it is slightly larger. Commissioner Weidner agreed with previous comments that it's too bad to see another of these historic garages go. He said the underside of the roof looks pretty nice and this is a prominent corner. He said the design looks appropriate. Commissioner Bridge agreed and said the 3" LP siding is more appropriate than the Hardie board.

Motion by Commissioner Carr to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the garage project with the condition that the siding be LP with a 3" reveal. Second by Commissioner Bridge. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

- F. HPC2020-50: 315 N Euclid Ave (Stephen and Mary Jo Schuler):** Certificate of Appropriateness for dormer alterations including a balcony addition to an existing dormer on the side elevation, a new dormer on the side elevation, and a dormer expansion on the front elevation (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Interim Chair Houze introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the applicants attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on December 1, 2020.

Tom Bair, the architect, and Stephen and Mary Jo Schuler, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Bair gave a summary of the history of the house and described the proposed project. He said the attic is a home office and the homeowners want additional light and ventilation.

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Weidner thanked the applicant for providing the items requested by the ARC. He said the goal was visualizing the impact from the street. Commissioner Carr said the side dormers are appropriate but she is not sure about the front dormer expansion. She said it is not centered with the window below. The existing dormer is centered. Commissioner Garapolo agreed and said the proposal on the front bothers him. Right now, the attic window aligns with the window on the second floor. He said it makes sense why the window on the north is not symmetrical and it is not visible from the street. The alterations to the southern dormer improve the proportions as the glass doors are set back. Commissioner Garapolo said he understands the proposed railing will match the porch but it looks heavy visually. Mr. Bair asked for clarification on the railing. Commissioner Garapolo said it is not a height issues, just the balusters are too visually heavy. Mr. Bair said he understands and can make the top of the railing one piece rather than two. Commissioner Will said the examples show airy, gingerbread-like railings but this is a heavy, porch railing. Mr. Bair said he can make the design airier.

Chair Houze agreed about the dormer on the front elevation. She said the front is the focus of the guidelines. She said the balcony railing could be lightened but she doesn't mind it. She recommended splitting the project up in an approval.

Mr. Schuler said the existing dormer is not perfectly centered over the second-floor window.

Commissioner Garapolo recommended voting on the side dormers but not approving the front.

Mr. Schuler said the Queen Anne style is not all symmetrical. Commissioner Garapolo said the front of the house is historic and shouldn't look like a different house. Commissioner Weidner said the south elevation is busy, which is typical of Queen Anne, but the front has a balanced formality and the dormer contributes to that. Chair Houze said the proposal is a conjectural feature and what the Commission tries to do is preserve the façade in its historic state. Mr. Schuler said this adjustment does not radically alter the house. He said they have put \$1.5 million into the house, trying to make it relevant and current. He said it is frustrating as this is not a big adjustment and they invest a lot of money in the Village. Commissioner Bridge said she understands the frustration, but this is a primary

façade of the house and the house is protected as a contributing resource to the historic district. She said this is a significant alteration to the historic fabric.

Mr. Bair asked if a reduction in the size of the dormer would work. Commissioner Weidner said the scale of the dormer currently fits with the scale of the house. Commissioner Garapolo agreed.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed project with the conditions that the front dormer not be altered and the final railing design be approved by the HPC or the ARC. Second by Commissioner Will. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- **New Commissioners:** Chair Houze introduced the two new Commissioners, Rachel Will and Sarah Doherty.
- Commissioner Garapolo provided an update on the Plan Commission meeting he attended as a representative of the HPC. The Commission discussed the design review process and agreed that more discussion was needed.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Weidner to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Bridge. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Bridge, Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Weidner, Commissioner Will, and Chair Houze

NAY: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.