

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
March 11, 2021 –Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:00 pm**

Roll Call

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

Agenda Approval

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

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the minutes for February 11, 2021. Second by Commissioner Houze. Motion approved 7-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2021-10: 219 S Cuyler Ave (Ashley Kawuki):** Certificate of Appropriateness to add new front stairs with a landing and to turn the enclosed porch into a screened porch (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the architect attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on February 25, 2021. The architect has updated the plans to reflect the recommendations of the ARC, including keeping the stairs at the side but adding a landing, and retaining the mullion pattern when converting the enclosed porch to a screened porch.

The applicant was not in attendance. Chair Weidner agreed to hear the application without the applicant present.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said the railing is also lighter as recommended. He said the project reflects the recommendations of the ARC and he has no concerns. Commissioner House asked if the window frames would be reused or recreated. Commissioner Garapolo said this was not discussed. Chair Weidner asked staff and Planner Trexler said her understanding is that it will be new wood in the same pattern. Commissioner Doherty said the attached email says 3-over-1, but she thinks they

mean 3-over-2. The Commission agreed this should be included in the motion to make sure it is the right pattern.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed with the condition that the 3-over-2 window pattern be replicated as existing. Second by Commissioner Sokol. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- B. HPC2021-11: 300 N Taylor Ave (Melissa and Kimball Ingram):** Certificate of Appropriateness for infill of exterior door, new mudroom addition, and new deck for house on a corner lot (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview and corrected the report, stating that the side door provides access to the basement, not the kitchen.

Tim Eberline, the architect, was present on behalf of the project. He summarized the project for the Commission. He clarified that the side door takes space from the kitchen due to the stair going to the basement. The homeowners would like that additional space and are concerned about the door for safety reasons, due to the house's location on a corner lot.

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

Chair Weidner recommended that the Commission address the door first. Commissioners Garapolo and Houze agreed that some acknowledgement of the door should be maintained. Commissioner Houze said the door is important for explaining the interior configuration of the house from the exterior and how it was built. Commissioner Carr agreed and recommended keeping the trim and infilling with stucco. She said it's especially important since it is on a street façade.

Commissioner Houze said this house is a nice example of the bungalow architectural type. She said she does not have any objection to the addition and deck; they are tasteful and harmonize well with the house.

Commissioner Garapolo asked if the mudroom will have stucco cladding. Mr. Eberline confirmed. Commissioner Sokol said he had no comments. Commissioner Carr said the addition and deck are appropriate and she has no concerns.

Chair Weidner said the project fits within the Guidelines. Mr. Eberline agreed to retain the casing of the door and said they would infill with stucco. Commissioners Sokol, Garapolo, and Houze said they are comfortable with the architect's solution.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed with the condition that an element of the door surround be retained. Second by Commissioner Carr. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- C. **HPC2021-12: 528 N Grove Ave (Ted and Lauren Bach):** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage and build a new garage (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting on February 24, 2021. The ARC recommended providing additional documentation of the state of the existing garage, specifically photos with a level to show any lean of the walls.

Bob Bell, the architect, was present on behalf of the project. Mr. Bell gave a project summary and introduced Lauren Bach, the homeowner. He said the house has 2 3/4" clapboard with 4" trim. The garage is shown with 8" trim with bullseyes matching the house. He said the maintenance of a non-wood product is appealing to the homeowners.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said in the past, the Commission has encouraged wood material for the siding to ensure it is in keeping with the house. Hardie board is a different dimension and doesn't relate to the historic houses. He suggested wood material matching the profile of the siding on the house. Mr. Bell agreed it should be the same dimensions.

Several Commissioners agreed that the shingling on the gable end to match the house is a nice touch. Commissioner Houze said the garage is clearly deteriorated and if it needs to be rebuilt, she appreciates that the design is in keeping with the roof pitch and character of the house. Commissioner Carr agreed. She said matching the 2 3/4" exposure is important and she thinks that is possible with LP Smartside. She said there is a hierarchy of appropriate materials: wood, LP, Hardie board, then vinyl. She said she is fine with LP. Commissioner Houze agreed and said wood would be best.

Commissioner Chase asked if the garage will have the same two-tone color scheme and Mr. Bell confirmed. Commissioner Sokol said he does not prefer Hardie board but it has been approved before. Chair Weidner said he agrees with Commissioner Carr's hierarchy of materials. He thanked the applicant for the photos with the level and that they show how much the garage is leaning. He said it is very minimally visible from the street and backs up to another more modern garage. Replicating the bulleyes and shingles are nice details.

The Commission discussed whether the siding material should be a requirement.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for garage demolition and replacement with the recommendation that LP Smartside with a matching profile be used and that wood would be preferred. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- D. HPC2021-13: 403 N East Ave (Jakob Eriksson):** Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement of wood columns with synthetic stone columns (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) meeting on February 25, 2021. She gave a summary of the ARC's recommendations.

Jakob Eriksson, the homeowner, was present. He described the project, including the deterioration of the existing columns and the replacement material he selected. He said the synthetic stone proposed will look very close to the original columns.

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

Chair Weidner thanked the applicant for responding to the ARC. Commissioner Carr said she has not used this material but is familiar with GFRC. She asked how the columns will be made and if they will have seams. Mr. Eriksson said there will be a small gap where the base attaches. The column fits into the ring at the base. It will not have any seams. Commissioner Carr said that is good, the original intent was for a smooth column. Chair Weidner asked about the range in thickness of the walls. Mr. Eriksson said it depends how tall the column is, but a crane will be needed to put them up due to the weight.

Commissioner Sokol said the Commission would like to see wood, but it is not realistic with modern day wood. This is a practical and well-thought-out solution. He said he approves. Commissioner Garapolo agreed. Chair Weidner agreed that it seems to be well-thought-out.

Chair Weidner asked for details of the effort made to repair the columns. Ms. McQueen gave a summary of the repair effort. She said she spoke with two contractors who do a lot of restoration. Because the staves are coming unglued, the idea of taking the columns apart, gluing, and re-lathing is not feasible. They found it beyond what could be reasonably done. She said generally she works with columns that are more substantial. However, there is nothing unusual about the column type—they are classic Tuscan columns.

Commissioner Houze said there needs to be a reason that the columns can't be repaired or replaced in-kind. She asked about the use of present-day cedar. Ms. McQueen said that it is not the same wood it was 100 years ago. It is a soft wood anyway and would deteriorate quickly, especially at the base. Mr. Eriksson said using wood would double the cost, not including the maintenance. Commissioner Houze asked about the weathering of the columns. Mr. Eriksson said there is a lifetime warranty and the company has been around a while. He said lead paint is not particularly shiny. Ms. McQueen said paint also gets duller when outside. Mr. Eriksson said the rough texture looks more realistic, while the smooth might look like plastic. Commissioner Houze said it is hard to lose the wood columns, but this is a well-considered solution.

Chair Weidner confirmed with Mr. Eriksson that the column has a taper and asked how they will match the existing columns. Mr. Eriksson said he would prefer to use a stock column. He said he has measurements of the new columns, and if he can move forward with the project, he may be able to get a contractor to take more measurements of the existing columns. Chair Weidner said if they are the wrong dimension, the taper will not look right. Mr. Eriksson agreed. Commissioner Garapolo said the Commission can specify that the dimensions match existing with reasonable tolerance. The Commission discussed what would be reasonable and agreed staff could review and take it to the

ARC if there were concerns. Ms. McQueen said they will make every effort to get the measurements as close as possible.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the column replacement with the condition that the new columns be as close as possible in measurement to existing columns, with final approval by staff. Second by Commissioner Houze. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- E. HPC2021-14: 420 N Marion St (Wellie Partners, LLC):** Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition at the rear and side of the house (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

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

Marland Hobbs, the owner, and Aaron Valentin, the architect, were present on behalf of the project. Mr. Hobbs introduced the project and Mr. Valentin explained some of the architectural details and said he has a 3D model available.

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

Commissioner Carr said she would definitely recommend using wood siding. Commissioners Garapolo and Sokol agreed. Commissioner Garapolo asked if the project is in accordance with zoning requirements and Mr. Valentin confirmed that it is.

Commissioner Garapolo said it is an ambitious project and is well thought-out. He said he likes the subtle differences so it does not match the existing building, but all the detailing is appropriate. It is nicely done. Commissioner Sokol agreed.

Commissioner Houze asked to see the 3D model and Mr. Valentin shared the model with the Commission. Commissioner Doherty asked about parking and Mr. Valentin explained that it will be on the first floor and will be screened from the street by a garden wall and planter. He provided siding details and said they will align the reveals with those on the historic house. They will match the reveal width of the historic siding and will use cove (scalloped) siding on the skirt on the second floor. The height of the third floor is stepped down to ensure that the roof height on the addition is lower than that of the house.

Chair Weidner asked about access and parking. Mr. Valentin explained the layout and the Village requirements. In response to questions, Mr. Valentin explained that the stairs will likely be rebuilt and will be separated from parking with a load-bearing masonry wall.

Commissioner Houze said she appreciates the attention to detail. Commissioner Carr said she is impressed with how it blends in and that the peaks and gable ends are appropriate. She said she appreciates the wood siding and details. Chair Weidner asked for confirmation that the height of the addition is lower than the existing house; Mr. Valentin said it is and if it were any lower, it would impinge on the floorplan.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition as proposed. Second by Commissioner Sokol. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- F. HPC2021-15: 432 S Humphrey Ave (Jason Wagenmaker):** Certificate of Appropriateness for gable and dormer additions as part of an attic renovation (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

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

Dave Walker, the architect, was present on behalf of the project. He explained the proposal and the context of the building. He said there is a parking lot to the south of the property and the lot is north of an alley, so this exposes the south elevation. They considered this exposure in their design. The windows will be Marvin windows and will match the existing windows. They are proposing Hardie board but are comfortable using LP Smartside if preferred by the Commission.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said one of the requirements is that dormers are no more than half the roof area visible from the street and asked if this will be met. Mr. Walker said the dormers are approximately half the roof area. Commissioner Garapolo said the applicant should verify this to staff. He said he prefers wood products to Hardie board and would recommend that for the dormers. Mr. Walker said they are fine with that.

Commissioner Sokol said he is familiar with the house. He said its visibility and proximity to Madison St make what is being done very desirable. He said he has no problems other than ensuring the 50% requirement is met. Commissioner Houze agreed that the percentage should be met. She said the rendering looks very balanced and in proportion but some of the drawings in the packet do not; it is unclear how large the dormers will be. Mr. Walker said the sketch was done from a photograph so is fairly accurate. The other sheets may appear exaggerated. He said he will document that the 50% requirement is met. Commissioner Carr said elevations look larger than they actually are. The rendering is helpful. She said this is a clever solution, especially with the gable end centered on the existing bay. Commissioner Chase agreed that the 50% requirement should be confirmed and Commissioner Doherty said the addition appears appropriate.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the dormer additions as proposed with the conditions that the siding be wood or a wood product and that the applicant confirm to staff that the 50% requirement is met. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- G. HPC2021-16: 810 Belleforte Ave (Gopal Balakrishnan and Phobey Cass):** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage and build a new garage (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

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

Gopal Balakrishnan, the homeowner, and Kim Smith, the architect, were present on behalf of the project. They introduced themselves and the project.

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

Commissioner Garapolo asked how the proposal is compatible and said the material is completely different from the house and the deck is visible from the street. Ms. Smith noted the massing and other elements. Mr. Balakrishnan said stucco is too expensive and they are trying to be environmentally friendly. He said they like the idea of Hardie board for practical and visual reasons. The garages at the adjacent houses are vinyl. Mr. Balakrishnan said they hope to put a drum set on the top floor; Hardie board has the best sound insulation as well as fire safety and the environmental impact is less. He said the current garage is wood and the front is plywood.

Commissioner Sokol asked about the deck. Ms. Smith said the balusters can be smaller and more closely spaced. She said it is on the side and pretty far back, so you won't be able to see much of it. Chair Weidner said typically in the historic districts, balusters have tighter spacing and Ms. Smith said they can meet that request.

Commissioner Garapolo said the space should be insulated to handle sound and Hardie board might not make much difference in that respect. He said it is the bottom of the preferred material list; stucco would be preferable to be in keeping with the house. Ms. Smith said stucco is cost prohibitive. Commissioner Houze asked how Hardie board is more sustainable. Mr. Balakrishnan said the stucco was \$10,000 more expensive. Hardie board reuses scrap wood and is biodegradable. It is a composite material. Vinyl goes to landfills and wood requires the felling of trees.

Commissioner Houze asked if the pitch of the roof could be more consistent with the house roof and Ms. Smith said they are limited by Zoning to the 20 feet.

Commissioner Carr said the existing garage was built in 1924 and has 3" lap siding; a wood product like LP Smartside might be appropriate. She said she would like to see more of the detailing. Ms. Smith said the elevations show corner boards, appropriate trim, and tighter spaced siding.

Chair Weidner said he is having trouble seeing how the garage relates to the house. Ms. Smith said it comes down to the volume. It would be better with a steeper roof pitch, but they can't do that. She said they are matching the trim boards and lap siding of the existing garage; other than going right to stucco, there's not much more they can do. Mr. Balakrishnan said they did not plan the garage project for this year but it is leaking and there is rotting wood. He said they are working from home and having noise issues in the house, so need some space. Since they are already building a garage, they saw it as an opportunity to create some additional volume. Chair Weidner said he understands the space concern.

Commissioner Sokol said he is receptive to an alternative wood product. That would go a way towards dealing with the compatibility issue. Commissioners Houze, Doherty, and Chase agreed. Commissioner Garapolo and Chair Weidner said they are not in favor of the project. Commissioner Houze asked if the deck is the issue and Commissioner Garapolo said it is. The Commission discussed

the deck; Mr. Balakrishnan and Ms. Smith said they are open to moving it to the rear. Commissioner Garapolo said that would be a major improvement. Chair Weidner suggested attending the ARC meeting with a revised design. Commissioners Garapolo and Houze agreed.

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the garage demolition and construction of a new garage with the condition that the deck be moved to the rear and the recommendation that the balusters be tightly spaced. Final approval by the ARC. Per homeowner request, demolition of the existing garage is permitted prior to final approval of the new design by the ARC. Second by Commissioner Doherty. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- **HPC Work Plan** – Chair Weidner said he would like to start getting Commissioners involved in different items on the Work Plan. Commissioner Garapolo said he wanted to make sure they are moving forward on the post office. Commissioner Houze asked how this should be done. Commissioner Sokol said they should create an ad hoc committee of three Commissioners to create questions and concerns. It can be people who are not on the ARC. Commissioners Sokol and Garapolo both said they are interested. They asked other Commissioners to reach out if they would like to join the effort.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Sokol to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Houze. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Carr, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Sokol, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.