

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
December 9, 2021 – Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm**

Roll Call

Present: Chair Noel Weidner and Commissioners Asha Andriana, Monique Chase, Sarah Doherty, Lou Garapolo, Rebecca Houze, and Rachel Will
Absent: Commissioners Nicole Napper and Andrew Elders
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

Agenda Approval

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

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

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

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2021-53: 128 Pleasant St (Tom Murtha):** Certificate of Appropriateness to alter windows on the side and rear elevations on a house on a corner lot (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

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

Jon Hague, the architect, and Tom Murtha, the homeowner, were present. Mr. Hague said they are doing an interior renovation of the kitchen and the plan is to open up more light in the space.

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

Commissioner Garapolo said the alterations will be minimally visible and will match existing, so he is in favor. Commissioner Chase agreed and asked if the infilled windows will have siding to match existing. Mr. Hague confirmed that the siding will match. Commissioner Andriana said she likes the proposal.

Commissioner Houze asked what material the other windows are and if they're original. Mr. Hague said they are original wood windows, some with aluminum storm windows. The proposed aluminum cladding will match the existing windows and the trim around will be wood. Chair Weidner asked if there are any divided lights on the existing windows and Mr. Hague said no. Mr. Murtha said they intend to paint the aluminum green to match the trim on the existing windows. Commissioner Houze said the project is being done sensitively and she agrees with it. Commissioner Doherty agreed and Chair Weidner said it is in keeping with the Guidelines.

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

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Will, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- B. HPC2021-54: 518 Belleforte Ave (Mitch and Hilary Murdock):** Certificate of Appropriateness to build a new one-story addition including a screened porch at the side/rear corner of the house (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

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

Pat Magner, the architect, as well as Hilary and Mitch Murdock, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Magner said the intent is to blend the addition into the house. They want to be sensitive to what is there but cannot replicate it exactly; for one, the stone block foundation you just can't get anymore. But they will keep the character. He said he can't imagine any point where you'd be able to see the skylights as they are either obscured by the screened porch of the garage. Ms. Murdock said they moved into the house a couple years ago and de-converted it from a two-flat. She said they look at this next stage as being able to complete that project and they plan to be here for a long time.

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

Commissioner Garapolo asked if the trim on the screened porch openings will match the window surrounds. Mr. Magner said it will. Commissioner Garapolo said the new addition will be differentiated, which is one of the Guidelines, and the only visible element is the screened porch. He said it is compatible and he supports it. Chair Weidner said he agrees with the differentiation and that the addition is appropriate and minimally visible. Commissioner Chase asked if the bay will be kept and Mr. Magner confirmed it will. Commissioner Chase said she likes this detail.

Commissioner Houze said it is clear that this design takes the standards into account. She said she appreciates the thought that went into the skylights and the nods to the historic elements. Commissioner Doherty agreed and said it's keeping in the character of the house while making it more usable.

Motion by Commissioner Will to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Will, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- C. HPC2021-55: 742 N Marion St (Anastasia and Todd Valentine):** Certificate of Appropriateness to alter windows on the side elevations, remove a side door and replace with window, and build a rear, two-story addition (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

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

Drew Nelson, the architect, was present. Mr. Nelson said they will reuse the demolished brick at the back along the base of the addition. The rear addition will be somewhat visible from the side. He said he prefers Hardie board because it is more durable. They are also adding a new side door on the south side, which will be the entrance to the new mudroom.

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

Chair Weidner asked the Commission to discuss the siding first. Commissioner Garapolo said he is not in favor of Hardie board but doesn't mind the dimensions shown. He recommended LP Smartside over Hardie board. Mr. Nelson said he doesn't like the woodgrain LP and asked if smooth is recommended. Commissioner Garapolo agreed smooth is appropriate. Mr. Nelson said he can do that. Commissioner Doherty said she is happy to see the reuse of historic brick. Commissioner Houze asked staff about the period of significance for the district. Planner Trexler said the period of significance ends in 1941 and this house was built in 1941. Chair Weidner said this is not a Queen Anne with a small reveal so the wider is fine. He suggested the smooth LP Smartside if the owners are open to it.

Chair Weidner asked about the door removal. Mr. Nelson said the door doesn't have a canopy and he wonders if it was added later but doesn't know. Commissioner Will asked about any signs in the brickwork and if the fireplace is original. Mr. Nelson said it would be hard to tell if they cut out the bottom of the door. He said this is the formal living room and the existing chimney is original. The fireplace is at an angle and they will be straightening it. Commissioner Garapolo said the rear elevation looks nice. He said he doesn't have a problem with the door removal or how the windows are treated.

Commissioner Chase asked if the brick soldier course above the windows is existing. Mr. Nelson said yes. Commissioner Chase said that is the most character-defining part, over the actual locations of the windows. Chair Weidner said the windows are aligned and they weren't necessarily aligned before. Mr. Nelson confirmed and said the kitchen window was lower. Chair Weidner said he doesn't have any problems. Commissioner Will asked if the brick infill will be toothed in or will read as vertical joints. Mr. Nelson said they intent to use brick from the back to infill these windows and the brick will be staggered in so it won't be noticeable.

Commissioner Houze said she doesn't have a problem with replacing the door but that she was wondering about the smaller window on the second floor. She said she's ok with the window changes because the tops of the windows are aligned. The first-floor windows look good.

Mr. Nelson said they will hold off on the trellis until they do landscaping and asked if this will be an issue. Commissioner Garapolo said this is not part of the Commission's review but he likes how it was handled. Commissioner Andriana said she had a similar thought to Commissioner Houze about the smaller window but it makes sense. She said she doesn't have a problem.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project with the condition that the siding be LP Smartside. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, Commissioner Will, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- D. HPC2021-56: 227 N Lombard Ave (Trent and Michele Jurewicz):** Certificate of Appropriateness to add a rear, two-story addition; add a dormer on the north elevation; alter windows on the side elevations; add a chimney; and replace the stucco porch columns and alter the railings to meet code as part of a porch restoration (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

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

Bill Scholtens, the architect, as well as Trent and Michele Jurewicz, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Scholtens explained the deterioration of the porch and the project details. He said they are proposing new wood columns that will match the size of the existing columns and will replicate the paneling on the existing newel posts. He said they will selectively demo the porch and if they find the original molding under the stucco, they will recreate the columns to match.

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

Chair Weidner noted that Commissioner Will is departing early and asked that she provide comments first. Commissioner Will said she likes the thought on the porch, particularly the due diligence on the columns. She agreed that the columns were probably originally wood and the design proposed makes sense. Windows are often altered on historic buildings and should be done sensitively, which appears to be the case. She said she doesn't have any issues.

Commissioners Houze and Garapolo agreed that they like the approach to selectively demo the columns. Commissioner Garapolo said for the railings, he prefers Option B as it is much closer to what is there currently. You can't tell it it's higher or lower, it looks good. Commissioner Houze agreed on both points and said the metal will be less visible. Chair Weidner asked about height specifics and changes with each option and Mr. Scholtens explained. Mr. Scholtens said Option B is the same as existing but is slightly higher so the metal railing doesn't go above the newels. Commissioner Doherty said she prefers Option B and finds option A to be really heavy. Chair Weidner and Commissioners Andriana, Garapolo, and Chase agreed that they prefer Option B.

Commissioner Will left the meeting at 8:30PM.

Chair Weidner asked staff about any precedent for adding chimneys. Planner Trexler said she reviewed HPC records back ten years and only found one example of a project adding an external chimney. This project was reviewed and approved in 2010 and was for a brick chimney. Mr. Scholtens said the neighboring house has a wood-clad chimney. Theirs is near the front and the one proposed is near the rear but a similar aesthetic. He said they would bring it to the ground and recreate the Lannon stone base.

Chair Weidner said he is not a fan of the wood cladding as it looks like it's from the 1990s. He said maybe a brick chimney would be alright. Mr. Scholtens said they tried to get the chimney internal but the room is too small. Mr. Scholtens asked about potential appropriate alternatives, such as brick or a different expression of the siding. Commissioner Houze asked about the neighboring house and Mr. Scholtens said it was added. Commissioner Houze asked about other houses in the neighborhood.

Michele Jurewicz, the homeowner, said that the neighbors installed their chimney in 2013. She said she has researched her house and a sale listing from the 1940s mentions a fireplace but they don't know where it was. She said they are hoping to recreate that warmth and gathering place. Mr. Scholtens said the existing chimney serves mechanicals in the basement and there was likely a different fireplace somewhere in the house, but they have found no evidence of the location.

Commissioner Houze said the homeowners and architect have been so careful with the plans, it would be worth taking a little more time to think about the chimney and see if they can determine the original location or if there are other models for this particular age of house in the neighborhood. Commissioner Doherty said it would be a major character change for the house and she would want to see differentiation to note that it is not an original element to the house. Commissioner Garapolo said that is a good point and that he doesn't mind adding the fireplace but this one feels like it's from the 90s, all meshed together with the house. It really is a different element. It would look good if it was brick atop a stone base; that would differentiate it. Commissioner Andriana said she agrees with Commissioner Houze's comments and she is not currently comfortable in voting either way. She said they should discuss more and see other options. Mr. Scholtens said there is certainly a precedent for brick and he and the homeowners will talk about it.

The Commission discussed the rear addition. Mr. Scholtens said it will use LP Smartsiding siding to match the wood siding and will be stepped in on both sides. Commissioner Garapolo said it meets the Guidelines. Commissioner Houze said he does not have a problem with the addition. She asked about the proposed new window on the house that appears to extend down to the stone foundation. She said it would be more in-keeping with the rest of the windows if it had a matching sill height. Mr. Scholtens said it draws on a similar window on the front elevation and the desire was to bring more light. The header aligns. He said there is a tripartite window on the south and they have looked into using that design as well. Commissioner Houze said she likes that a lot and that was going to be her suggestion. Commissioner Garapolo agreed and said the window will be the focal point in the dining room and the tripartite solution will be quite elegant. Mr. Scholtens shows the tripartite option to the Commission. Commissioners Garapolo and Doherty said it looks good. Chair Weidner asked about the alignment and Mr. Scholtens said it will align with the existing tripartite window on the other side of the house.

Commissioner Garapolo said the only question is the chimney and recommended that the Commission let the other elements move forward and have Mr. Scholtens return with a further solution on the fireplace. Mr. Scholtens agreed. Commissioners Chase, Doherty, and Houze agreed with this option.

The Commission discussed the dormer windows and what should be included in the motion. It was agreed that an alternate option for the dormer windows be provided showing sills that match the height of the sills on the existing dormer.

Motion by Commissioner Houze to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project with three conditions: revise the dormer windows and chimney to be reviewed by the Commission in January, use railing Option B, and use the tripartite window for the dining room as proposed. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- **APA-IL Plan Commissioner Training.**

Chair Weidner said Commissioners Chase and Garapolo attended the training. Commissioner Garapolo gave a summary of what he learned. He said the focus was public hearings. Be prepared, visit the site, and be courteous. Remain calm and avoid debates even if you may not be in agreement. Votes should be based on the standards and not personal desires. He said that was a good underline as to how the Commission should be approaching items and is certainly what we try to do. The Chair should control the meeting. Even if you know someone, that doesn't necessarily mean it's a conflict of interest; that's more if there's a financial relationship. They also reinforcedL don't discuss projects outside the meeting, and be aware of the Open Meetings Act.

- **New Commissioner**

Chair Weidner said they will be up to ten Commissioners next month, leaving only one vacancy. He said he is pleased the Village President and Village Clerk for making that a priority.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Houze. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Houze, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:05PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.