

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE  
February 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm**

**A. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Lou Garapolo and Rachel Will  
ABSENT: Noel Weidner  
STAFF: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

**B. AGENDA**

*Motion by Will to approve the agenda. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0.*

*AYE: Garapolo and Will  
NAY: None*

**C. MINUTES**

*Motion by Will to approve minutes of the January 27, 2022. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0.*

*AYE: Garapolo and Will  
NAY: None*

**D. HPC2022-9: 715 Thomas St (Slawek Iesny): Certificate of Appropriateness for window alterations on the side elevations as part of an interior renovation (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).**

Committee member Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler gave an overview. She recommended two items for consideration: retaining the stone sills and headers of removed windows and using clad wood or composite windows with muntins matching those of historic windows.

Tom Donalek, the architect, was present. He said the existing long, horizontal window in the kitchen doesn't work with current needs, but they are glad to keep the header and sill in place and infill to keep the trace of the original window. He said they are trying to keep alterations to the basement windows minimal.

*Motion by Committee member Will to open for discussion; Second by Committee member Garapolo.*

Committee member Will said she agrees with the staff review in keeping the stone sill and using muntins. She asked about the vegetation at the basement level and Mr. Donalek said there is currently overgrown vegetation that will be pruned back. Low landscaping will largely cover the area from view of the street.

Committee member Garapolo agreed on the sill and muntins. He asked whether railings would be required because of the depth of the window wells. Mr. Donalek said no and explained that they will be three feet from the floor on the interior and less than two feet from the bottom of the well to grade.

*Motion by Committee member Will to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the recommendations to retain the sill/header and use muntins. Second by Committee member Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0.*

*AYE: Garapolo and Will*

*NAY: None*

- E. HPC2022-10: 834 N Elmwood Ave (John and Ann Barkley):** Certificate of Appropriateness for rear porch enclosure conversion to mudroom (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Committee member Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler gave an overview. She noted that the enclosure builds off of an existing rear porch enclosure.

John Schiess, the architect, as well as John and Ann Barkley, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Schiess said the original porch enclosure was most likely done in the 1960s or 70s and they took cues from that and wrapped the material around. He said nothing is irreversible, given that the porch was already enclosed.

*Motion by Committee member Will to open for discussion; Second by Committee member Garapolo.*

Committee member Will asked about the existing material and enclosure history. Mr. Schiess said they are consistent with materials used in the 1960s and 70s. He said it is wide, painted, wood siding and they are looking to approximate and continue it. This will fit in with the existing addition rather than having two separate additions and the view is very limited from the public right-of-way. Committee member Will asked if the new material will be painted wood and Mr. Schiess said it will.

Committee member Will asked if they are open to adding muntins to make the windows square. Mr. Schiess said the homeowners are open to it but they are contemplating other improvements and it's a budgetary consideration. Mr. Barkley said they would like to continue to be good stewards of the house but they are on a fixed income. Committee member Garapolo said he doesn't have a problem with the wood enclosure matching what's existing but he's not following the concern with the window. The window will be new. He said it's not very expensive and he would strongly urge the added mullion. Mr. Barkley said if everything else is fine, they will put the mullion in.

*Motion by Committee member Will to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application with the condition that a mullion be added on the side window. Second by Committee member Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0.*

*AYE: Garapolo and Will*

*NAY: None*

- F. 1113 Paulina St (Tiffany and Rey Nungaray):** Discuss proposal to add open front porch in front of previously enclosed porch (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Committee member Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the historic porch was enclosed in 1957 and has been incorporated into the living room. The homeowners wish to retain this and add a new, open porch in front.

Debra McQueen, the architect, as well as Tiffany and Rey Nungaray, the homeowners, were present. Ms. McQueen said the enclosed porch was seamlessly incorporated into the small living room. The intent is to recreate the porch the way it would have been. It will line up with the house directly to the west. The rest of the houses have different setbacks but it is consistent with the feel of the block.

Committee member Will asked what was referenced for the detailing and if there are historic images or similar buildings nearby. Ms. McQueen said her house on Ontario has a very similar porch and the detailing is simple. The intent is to use simple square columns, crown molding, and details from the existing house.

Committee member Will asked if they have historic photos and Ms. McQueen said no. Committee member Will recommended doing some research so it's not just conjecture. Committee member Garapolo agreed and asked about zoning requirements. Ms. McQueen said zoning requirements will be met and explained there is a provision based on the adjacent houses.

Committee member Garapolo asked if the porch will remain open underneath. Ms. McQueen said if they use something it would be similar square balusters to the railing. Committee member Garapolo recommended that this be shown in the drawings and that all porch materials be called out.

Committee member Garapolo asked how the roof will relate and Ms. McQueen explained that it has a low pitch and is constrained by the windows on the second floor. She said it is an evolved hip shape and will be rebuilt to all be one roof. Committee member Garapolo said this would be a nice addition to the house. Committee member Will agreed and recommended doing a little more research and explaining some of these items in a presentation to the Commission to alleviate some of the questions.

- G. 205 S Harvey Ave (Josh and Megan Abrego):** Discuss project including alterations to windows and a new rear addition as part of a larger renovation project (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Committee member Garapolo introduced the project and Planner Trexler gave an overview. She referenced some of the proposed changes and recommended the Committee specifically consider the addition of the chimney, the porch railing height, and the window changes.

Josh Abrego, the homeowner, was in attendance. Mr. Abrego said the prior owner was not a good steward and it has been vacant for over 30 years. The entire house will be a complete gut remodel.

Committee member Will asked about the siding and Mr. Abrego said the previous owner replaced the siding with a composite material, which they will be replacing the LP Smartside. Committee member Will asked about documentation and Mr. Abrego said it is based on the neighborhood and noted the siding will be approved administratively.

Committee member Will asked about the proposed window addition and Mr. Abrego said they are adding it to balance out the front of the house. He said it is hard to tell if there may have been a window there at some point. They are raising the windows to meet current code. He said when you look at the framing, the windows were at a different height previously. Committee member Will asked if most of the changes they're seeing are from the 2003 renovation. Mr. Abrego confirmed and said the only historic thing is the porch. Committee member Will asked when the house was listed as contributing and about the historic record. Planner Trexler said it was listed prior to 2003. She noted the historic photos, the apparent neglect, and the lack of correct permits for work. Mr. Abrego said stories from the neighbors also reflect that work was done without permits. Committee

member Will said the historic photos show the wood siding and fish scaling, so that's appropriate. The front windows do not appear to have been altered significantly and doing so will change the character of the front of the house.

Committee member Will asked about the existing windows on the second floor room and Mr. Abrego said there are two small windows that open; the larger window is fixed so there is limited airflow. Committee member Garapolo recommended evaluating all possible other solutions, such as putting the master bedroom in the front and the two bedrooms in the back. Committee member Will suggested making the fixed window operable as that would be less noticeable.

Committee member Garapolo recommended leaving the third-floor window where it is and said he has a similar one. It's not very usable but it is expressed on the exterior. He said he is concerned about removing that window.

Committee member Garapolo said the chimney is for a gas fireplace, so doesn't need a full chimney expression. There is no record of a chimney there. He asked if there is another way to provide the gas fireplace without the chimney. Mr. Abrego said there is a coal fireplace that ran inside. The reason for the bump-out is so they don't lose living room floor space. Committee member Garapolo said he understands but that it is a fairly major impact. He recommended moving it to the interior.

Committee member Will recommended keeping the windows in their original position and size as much as possible. The window area is a defining-feature of old homes. Mr. Abrego said it's not entirely clear that the windows are at their original heights. Committee member Will noted the photos from the 1950s and 1960s, which show them lower. She said providing photo documentation from the interior demolition would be helpful. Mr. Abrego said his main concern is the front window addition and raising the sills. The cost of tempered glass adds up and he is worried about the safety of children.

Mr. Abrego asked for feedback on the north elevation. Committee member Garapolo said he does not have a problem with the window relocations. He recommended that the stair change is likely required to meet code as there is a minimum headroom required and recommended describing the need for the change this way. He said the ceilings are high and wondered if the proposed windows could be taller. Mr. Abrego said the stairs are going up three levels, so that limits the windows. The small windows are in bathrooms.

Committee member Will said not one of the windows is in its original location or size on the north elevation and she understands the stairs, but that doesn't explain the other windows. She said historic preservation is about balance.

Mr. Abrego asked about the process for teardowns and Planner Trexler explained that this would need a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission. As it is not permitted by the Ordinance, the Commission would not be able to approve and the application would have to be appealed to the Village Board or a Certificate of Economic Hardship pursued. Mr. Abrego detailed issues with the house, concerns of the neighborhood, and requirements of building code. He said they love the home and the character but the code requirements are very costly. Committee member Garapolo said that is a struggle. He said they're suggesting some of the items that may come up for discussion so Mr. Abrego can be prepared to say why it has to be done a certain way. Mr. Abrego said there are a lot of changes being made and he needs to clarify what will need review. Committee member Garapolo said Planner Trexler will help with that.

Committee member Will said the fire is also an important piece of the house's history and not knowing what was renovated. Provide as much background as possible. There is some precedent for change. The Commission wants to make sure everyone is doing their due-diligence. This establishes a precedent for the Commission when there are a lot of changes. Different homes have different back-stories.

Mr. Abrego asked for feedback about the rear addition. Committee member Garapolo said the Commission doesn't get involved with the rear because it's not too visible. He said he doesn't have any issues except it would be nice to carry around the stone foundation. Mr. Abrego agreed and said it was cost-prohibitive. The Committee discussed visibility.

Committee member Will thanked Mr. Abrego for being a good steward of the building. Based on previous reviews, there may have to be a phased approval. Mr. Abrego said he will focus on the windows and can keep the tower windows.

Mr. Abrego asked for recommendations about the window designs on page 50. He said in the historic photos, it is hard to tell what the glass may have looked like. Committee member Will asked about similar style houses nearby and Mr. Abrego said there are similar windows to the top left window on two neighboring houses. Committee member Garapolo said chances are the windows would be more like the top windows and asked if they are Marvin. Mr. Abrego said they are and asked if he should separate this part of the project. The Committee recommended making all project requests at once.

#### **H. Other Business**

Historic Preservation Commissioner Andrew Elders said hello to the Committee and that he listened to the last item. He said he will be joining the Architectural Review Committee. The Committee discussed the review process, building code requirements, and when things like windows are grandfathered in.

I. **Adjourn**

*Motion by Will to adjourn. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 2-0.*

*AYE: Garapolo and Will*

*NAY: None*

Meeting adjourned at 9:00PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.