

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
October 20, 2022 – Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm**

Roll Call

Present: Acting Chair Daniel Roush and Commissioners Asha Andriana, Monique Chase, Sarah Doherty, Andrew Elders, Lou Garapolo, and Scot Mazur
Absent: Commissioner Nicole Napper and Chair Noel Weidner
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

Agenda Approval

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

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to approve the minutes for September 8, 2022. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 7-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2022-48: 424 Pleasant St (Nick Schmuck & Cora Bruemmer):** Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition and expansion of a side porch, building addition to the rear, demolition of a garage and construction of a new garage. (Ridgeland–Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Architects Joe Juhl and Tom Bassett-Dilley, and homeowner Cora Bruemmer, were present on behalf of the project. Mr. Bassett-Dilley described the project. He said they are looking at not just preservation but sustainability. This would be a certified passive house. He said they heard from the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) that the garage is not the shape of the existing garage, but their goal is to get enough solar panels on the garage to offset the energy of the house. The existing house is not well-suited to solar. They are proposing translucent panels to break up the massing of the garage.

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

Commissioner Elders said he doesn't think the garage is appropriate and he said so at the ARC. He said he thinks the same about the side addition. They are a bit too much for the historic district. Commissioner Garapolo said he said something similar about the garage at the ARC. They had a lot of discussion about solar panels facing the street and he is not in favor. He said the existing garage looks like it's in good shape, but he trusts the professional who looked at it.

Mr. Bassett-Dilley asked if the garage review is a COA or Advisory. Commissioner Garapolo and Planner Trexler confirmed that it is a COA.

Commissioner Garapolo said the shutters should be maintained. He asked why the windows are not wood. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said they are seeking triple-glazed, insulated frames and there is no wood option for this. The profile will be similar to Marvin windows. Commissioner Chase asked about the changing light pattern and Mr. Bassett-Dilley said the current windows are from the 1980s. They based the proposed windows on a historic photo. Commissioner Garapolo asked about the diamond pane windows and Mr. Juhl said these will be retained and the storm panes will be replaced with fixed windows.

Acting Chair Roush said he is amenable to this project. They need to find ways to straddle sustainability challenges. He said the integrity of the house is maintained and there is a clear distinction between the old and the new. He said he supports the project.

Commissioner Chase asked if anything will disguise the side lot. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said fences and landscaping. Cora Bruemmer, the homeowner, said they want a taller privacy fence as this is their backyard.

Commissioner Elders said this is not historic district material. Commissioner Garapolo agreed. Commissioner Chase said she is willing to approve the addition but not the garage.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that the garage demolition and new construction is not included. Second by Commissioner Doherty. Motion approved 6-1.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: Commissioner Elders

- B. HPC2022-47: 224 N. Elmwood Ave (Donald & Kimberly Vander Griend):** Certificate of Appropriateness to move an art-glass window higher on the same wall which includes demolition and infill of a portion of the wall visible from the street. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Don and Kim Vander Griend, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Vander Griend explained that the window would be blocked by the new landing so they've moved it up to the first floor to be visible.

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

Commissioner Elders said the project looks great. He asked if there is any indication that the window is historic. Mr. Vander Griend said their builder believes it is historic and was relocated here. Commissioner Elders said it would be more historically appropriate to have it higher. Commissioner Doherty agreed and said she really likes this project. Commissioner Garapolo said he applauds the homeowners and doesn't have a problem. He asked about the trim line. Acting Chair Roush clarified that they're seeing the crown line that was under the roof before but will move up.

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

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

- C. HPC2022-49: 711 Woodbine Ave (Jason Wright)** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a garage and construction of a new garage. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Brian Crothers, the contractor, and Jason Wright, the homeowner, were present.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Commissioner Garapolo said he does not support vinyl. The Commission typically recommends wood or a wood-like product. Overall the garage shape and design are not a problem.

Mr. Crothers said they will use a 3-inch profile siding to match the house. The cost of the LP is a big added expense. The neighboring garages have 4-inch vinyl siding. They will use 12" eaves to mimic the old garage.

Acting Chair Roush said he concurs with the dislike of vinyl. Commissioner Chase said she is not against vinyl on something so minimally visible. It's facing the back of the house and is contained. Mr. Wright pointed out photos of the neighboring garages with 4" vinyl siding and said the garage is located at the back of the lot. The cost difference may be minimal to some but not to others.

Commissioner Chase asked the applicant to confirm that they will use a 3" profile. Mr. Crothers confirmed.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Chase. Motion approved 4-2.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, and Commissioner Mazur

NAY: Commissioner Garapolo and Acting Chair Roush

- D. HPC2022-51: 1016 Erie St (Brian Taylor)** Certificate of Appropriateness to modify an existing roof style from flat to sloping. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Bryan Taylor, the architect and homeowner, was present. He said they made some revisions based on comments from the Architectural Review Committee.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Acting Chair Roush asked about the existing siding. Mr. Taylor said it is wood siding made to look like stone. They found it when they removed the aluminum siding. They recreated the quoins. They could see the shadow of them but they were removed when the aluminum was added. Mr. Taylor said the flat roofs have become maintenance nightmares. The snowdrifts have been getting worse and going over the parapet on the west side of the house. He said the small addition will add a closet to the master bedroom. The Commission clarified that this was originally proposed as a higher ceiling in the vestibule but will now be used as a closet.

Commissioner Elders said he's concerned about adding the extra volume, but it's not a major concern. Commissioner Garapolo said the applicant took the comments of the ARC into consideration and he doesn't have a problem with the project. Commissioner Elders agreed. Commissioner Chase asked if the new siding will match. Mr. Taylor said it will. He said after they found the original siding, he manufactured about half the siding for the house and he's ready to do it again for this small addition.

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

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

- E. HPC2022-52: 604 Woodbine Ave (Robert Picchiotti)** Certificate of Appropriateness to add a dormer and skylights. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Bob Picchiotti, the homeowner, was present. He said they originally proposed a larger dormer but scaled back the project. They just need headroom for a stairway as they want to use the attic as storage space. This is the most economical way to do it.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Andriana.

Commissioner Elders asked about the siding and Mr. Picchiotti confirmed it will be stucco. He said the originally considered clapboard. Commissioner Garapolo said this is a revision from the first proposal and he thinks it is much improved. He said he likes that it is stucco and doesn't have a problem with the roof shape because it is so small. Acting Chair Roush said typically the Commission would expect it to be a gable but he agrees with Commissioner Garapolo.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo 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 Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

- F. HPC2022-53: 742 N Marion St (Todd & Anastasia Valentine)** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish residence. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the Guidelines state that contributing resources shall be retained and repaired. In cases of demonstrated economic infeasibility, demolition can be considered at the discretion of the Commission through the Certificate of Economic Hardship Process. She said that as this is a contributing building, it is recommended that the Commission take on action. She recommended that the Commission discuss the building's contributing status. If the Commission feels the building is listed incorrectly, the homeowner may pursue changing its status.

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

Glenn Smutney, the architect, and Anastasia, the homeowner, were present. Mr. Smutney said the family is in a significant amount of duress and has been out of their home for over 15 months. He said this is not led by profit and the homeowner has lived in Oak Park her whole life and this house for 25 years. He noted that this building was at the very end of the period of significance. The permit was received on June 23, 1941. They have not been able to establish if the home was built immediately or in the next building season. The homeowner has documents from the original purchase that state the home was constructed in 1942, in which case it would not be within the period of significance.

Mr. Smutney discussed the attributes of the house. He said it was a minimalist, war-era home and the builder built more in Westchester. He said it does not follow the Foursquare designs of the rest of the block and there is no unique craftsmanship. Mr. Smutney said the structure has been modified and what little detail does exist was added by the Valentines prior to its incorporation into the historic district.

Mr. Smutney explained the issues with the house and potential renovation. He detailed the interior changes that would be required in order to meet current building standards and said this would result in a loss of space and would detract from the historic character. A number of masonry bearing walls would have to be moved. This would be extremely expensive. An addition would be necessary and they will not be able to match the historic brick. He said putting good money after bad money doesn't make sense.

Anastasia Valentine, the homeowner, explained her predicament and asked the Commission to help her find a way forward. She said this was a horrible insurance accident and they have lost everything. Acting Chair Roush said they are here to help discuss and asked the Commissioners to comment on the building's contributing status.

Commissioner Elders said based on the 1941 building permit, it is contributing, and the Commission cannot debate this. Commissioner Garapolo said he is sorry to hear the homeowners' story and the direction is difficult. He said he understands an addition was approved last year and that would be a way forward. They can remodel the existing house, maybe move around the rooms. He said there would be nothing you can build in four months. In his opinion, the contributing decision was made before his time but it certainly fits into the neighborhood.

Commissioner Andriana agreed with the previous Commissioners. She said it's in the historical time period and is a contributing structure. She agreed that nothing could be built in four months. Ms. Valentine said it's not about the four-month timeline, they just need a path forward. She said the addition drawings were an almost \$900K rebuild. If you were to walk into the house, there's nothing there. She said she's not sure how anyone can rebuild it, it is complete devastation.

Acting Chair Roush said what would be preserved is the unique character of Marion St and the unique identity of this structure, which he finds absolutely contributing. Commissioner Chase said we know it's contributing and she's more worried about the fastest way forward. Commissioner Doherty said she wants to understand the Commission's role. Planner Trexler explained the options: the Commission can take no action, after which the homeowner will be able to withdraw, alter the project, or request a public hearing. Following denial at a public hearing, the homeowner may appeal to the Village Board or request a Certificate of Economic Hardship. Mr. Smutney asked if they can preserve the front elevation only. Acting Chair Roush said that would be a conversation for an Architectural Review Committee meeting.

The Commission took no action.

- G. HPC2022-54: 547 Linden Ave (Angie West)** Certificate of Appropriateness for multiple modifications to existing residence.

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Duane Kleczewski, the architect, was present. He said he thought the garage doors were original but now doesn't believe they are. The top portion is fixed glass panels that were painted at some point. The goal would be to bring them back to the carriage-style doors that would have been there originally.

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

Commissioner Garapolo asked about the garage doors and their material. Mr. Kleczewski said they are shown in the drawings. They would be wood or painted metal to look like wood. Commissioner Garapolo said what's proposed is in keeping with the scale of the house and he doesn't see any problems.

Commissioner Elders asked about new brick and Mr. Kleczewski said they won't be adding brick, just losing brick. Commissioner Elders said this is off-topic, but painting brick is a problem. Mr. Kleczewski said paint has come a long way. He said the painting occurred before he joined the project and painting brick does present some issues.

Acting Chair Roush said projects in Chicago consider curb cuts. I said he is uncomfortable talking about this project without knowing if the curb cut will be approved. Everything else is appropriate. Commissioner Garapolo said the curb cut is going to have a major impact on a beautiful tree and he is concerned. Acting Chair Roush asked if they can use the alley and Mr. Kleczewski said there is no alley, it's the neighbor's driveway. He said they were hoping for approval from the Village Engineer and Arborist at this point. He suggested they consider the project without the curb cut and gate. Acting Chair Roush said this seems like a good way forward. Commissioners Garapolo and Doherty agreed.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed with the exception of the portion of work associated with the curb cut. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

H. Advisory Review: 901 South Boulevard (John Schiess, Arch.) Advisory Review for new construction of a two-family dwelling. (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Roush introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

John Schiess, the architect, was present. He said the drawings speak for themselves and he'd like to focus on his client's intent. He said this is a by-right development and all zoning requirements will be followed. This drove the design to build two attached homes. The home on the north looks like a traditional townhome; the home on the south is lower-scaled. Neither is above the height limit. The lower scale to the south is starting to address the scale of the neighborhood to the south. Other than that, it is non-referential and non-contextual. He said the townhomes to the west set the stage for that.

Commissioner Chase said it is too close to the lot lines and we're missing out on a lot of greenspace with a lot of the new builds in the Village. Commissioner Garapolo asked about the siding. Mr. Schiess said they are looking at using a cement composite. Commissioner Garapolo said it seems close to the building to the west and blocks their views. Commissioner Andriana agreed with Commissioners Chase and Garapolo. She said we are losing a lot of greenspace and it is very close to the other building.

Commissioner Elders said his concern is the design. It's not a bad design but it in no way tries to reference or be compatible with the historic district. Mr. Schiess said he understands. He said they acknowledge they weren't even approaching that and he hopes that doesn't sound disrespectful.

Acting Chair Roush asked how they landed on the bulk and the units. Mr. Schiess said these are market driven. The client has a marketing and sales team which gave guidance. Commissioner Elders referenced the Guidelines and said this is jarring in the streetscape. He said he thinks they could get two luxury flats in a more historically-informed form that fits better with the neighborhood.

Commissioner Chase said she is concerned that it worked from needs of the developer, not the needs of the community. Acting Chair Roush said he was amenable to the design on [424] Pleasant but in this case agrees with Commissioner Elders. He said they can create a crisp contemporary design with references to historic form. There are versions of contemporary architecture that feel like better neighbors than this and he thinks it's possible to get there. Commissioner Elders said the colors would be better if they were natural brick or stone colors, too. This would work well in a contemporary or Art Deco district, but not in this area. Commissioner Chase said the earlier homeowner was replacing flat roofs due to snow issues. Commissioner Andriana said she agrees with everything and is more passionate because this is her neighborhood. She said this will be very jarring for this location.

Mr. Schiess thanked the Commission for their comments. He provided some history of the project and said they looked at selling it to the adjacent townhomes and creating a pocket park, but neither was successful. They found a local developer who agreed to build two units by right.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 2023 Work Plan

Acting Chair Roush introduced the item and Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the 2023 Work Plan. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

- Historic Preservation Awards

Planner Trexler asked Commissioners to submit any nominations they have by October 24.

- New Commissioner

Acting Chair Roush introduced the new Commissioner, Scot Mazur.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Elders. Motion approved 7-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Roush

NAY: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:45PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.