



MEETING MINUTES

PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday September 14, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Via Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Beth Bodan, Mark Simon, John Jacobs, Suzi Reinhold
Stuart Cohen, Aleca Sullivan, Sarah M. Dreller, Jamie Morris

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: C. Sterling

Presiding Member: M. Simon, Chair

Notes Taken by: C. Sterling (Written notes as taken during the meeting. The meetings video recording has not been made available to staff pending review by the Broadcast Operations Coordinator).

AGENDA

1. SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

City staff recommends suspension of Article 2, Section 4 of the Commissions Rules and Procedures to permit remote participation.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Ridge Avenue Signal Project – Recommendation

The City's Public Works Department seeks review and comment from the Commission on intersection operation improvements planned along Ridge Avenue between Oakton Street to the south and Church Street to the north (Code Section 2-8-3 (G) #24).

- Chair Simon asked for clarification on whether any formal recommendation or motion needed to be made following discussion. Mr. Sterling stated that the Commission is only asked to provide comment on proposed City projects, so no formal motion or vote needs to be taken.
- Sat Nager, of the City's Public Works Department presented the proposed signal and intersection improvements within the Ridge Historic District.
- Commissioners stated that the Ridge Historic District contained significant landscape features including the dry laid stone walls within the public right-of-way. Commissioners asked if these walls would be altered during construction.
 - Sat Nager explained that the walls would not need to be touched as part of the project and that the scope of the improvements was within the existing intersection and portions of right-of-way without the significant stone walls.

- Commissioners stated that the project should move forward and that there were no concerns in regards to any adverse impact to the Districts integrity of setting within the scope presented.
- The commission had no additional comments on the project.

B. 1232 Ridge Avenue - Ridge Historic District - Landmark - 21PRES-0100

Philip Kupritz, architect, applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the existing north elevation of the subject property by removing two windows and constructing a two-story elevator addition to provide accessible access from exterior grade to the homes first and second floors.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]; Construction [1-4; 7-8; and 10-15]

- Philip Kupritz provided a detailed overview of the properties historical significance with an emphasis on a lacking singular design vocabulary, describing the home as eclectic and playful in its architectural expression.
- Mr. Kupritz described the intent of the new intervention was to be discrete and unobtrusive in its location noting it was not visible from Ridge Avenue and hardly visible from the rear alley due to the size of the rear coach house. The aesthetic and materiality of the intervention are simple and utilitarian in expression.
- Mr. Kupritz described the ability for the structure to be easily removed in the future noting it was independently anchored, that existing windows would be used and slightly modified for egress, the windows, sills, and lintels would be salvaged and stored in the garage for re-use and the area thoroughly documented for future restoration.
- Commissioners debated whether it was realistic or even advantageous for the structure to be removed in the future. Commissioners debated the value in an accessible historic home for future buyers and wondered how they might even ensure it was removed in the future if that was critical to it being approved.
- Mr. Sterling stated that the only option he saw available was recording something on the properties title making sure removal occurred at sale.
- Commissioners did not agree that this was valuable nor that such a heavy handed approach would be necessary.
- Commissioners stated a frustration with the owners architects presentation being pinned around the idea of removability but now it is being discussed as if it will never realistically be removed.
- The property owner addressed the Commission stating the reasons for the lift, the owners health concerns, and the significant investment in the project and desire for it to be sympathetic to the existing homes integrity. An exterior lift was preferred to an internal lift which would have a greater impact on the homes interior architecture.
- Commissioners stated concern with the drawings provided by the architect and their inability to communicate effectively. Specifically, there are inconsistencies between the sections and renderings. The renderings showing the lifts flat roof stopping before the frieze and soffit but the sections showing otherwise.
 - Mr. Kupritz stated that the sections are incorrect and there is adequate room available to ensure that the top of the lift does not intersect the soffit band/frieze.
- Commissioners asked if there was a mechanism available to not hinder the owners desire to move back into the home as soon as possible but also make the proposal more sympathetic to the existing architecture
 - Mr. Sterling stated that they could theoretically approve a COA for the structural aspects of the work with the condition that the materiality and detailing be modified and either reviewed as a separate COA or reviewed during permitting administratively.
 - Commissioners agreed this approach was messy

- Commissioners stated that the location of the proposed lift is critical, it is located in the most sensitive location possible. This and the two structures being minimally connected, the potential for reversal, and the desire not just for this homeowner, but future owners to have an accessible historic home was reason to support the project.
- The homeowner stated they were willing to work with the Commission and/or preservation planning staff to find more suitable materiality for the structure. The homeowner expressed a desire for the addition to respect the existing home which they have cared for as stewards for decades.
- **Action:** The project was approved 8-0 with the condition that the location of the proposed lift be documented for future restoration.

C. 707 Sheridan Road – Lakeshore Historic District – 21PRES-0101

Michael Hauser, architect, applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the existing north and east elevations of the subject property by enclosing parts of two existing second-floor decks for use as habitable space.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]; Construction [1-4; 7-8; and 10-15]

- Michael Hauser presented the proposed alterations to the existing structure including two existing open-porches to be enclosed with the intent of more year-long usability. Mr. Hauser explained that the home underwent some recent restoration efforts including replacement windows, replacement siding, and restoration of the front-porch. The new enclosures would match the existing materiality. The east bay would be enclosed partially in glass as a conservatory with lake views.
- Commissioners asked if the north and east open second story porches were original to the home.
 - Mr. Hauser stated that the east bay and much of the rear of the home was added or altered recently. In the last 20-30 years. As far as we can tell the north bay was original to the home.
 - Mr. Sterling confirmed that this matched his research on the home.
- Commissioners applauded the treatment to the east bay but expressed concern with the roof form of the north bay enclosure stating it was overly complicated.
 - Mr. Hauser stated that many renditions of the roof were looked at and this was the most sympathetic approach while also accommodating storage and HVAC needs in the attic roof.
- Commissioners stated that the roof form was problematic, particularly in regards to Standard for Construction #8 and that the proposal should relate to the existing roof form rather than create something new that is not reflected elsewhere on the home.
- **Action:** The proposed project was approved 8-0 with the condition that the applicant revise the north bay roof form to better mimic existing conditions. The revised plans will be reviewed by a subset of the Commission and approved administratively.

D. 1106 Judson Avenue – Lakeshore Historic District – 21PRES-0122

Amy DeMarte, owner, applies for a certificate of appropriateness to replace existing windows of various materiality and vintages on all elevations with fiberglass windows.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]

- Mr. and Mrs. DeMarte, owners, presented the proposal noting that the existing windows are an amalgam of styles, vintages, and materials. The intent is to create uniformity for the structure and to incorporate a good quality, long-lasting window.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on if the product being specified was a fiberglass clad wood window.

- The owners confirmed it is a fiberglass clad wood window. The interior is wood. The product was selected due to its durability, ability to be painted on the exterior, and the ability for custom sizing.
- The new windows match the existing windows in dimension, and percentage of glass area. These are full replacements.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the proposed windows at the rear porch which are currently multi-lite wood windows. Will this be mimicked?
 - The owners confirmed that the fiberglass clad wood windows at the rear porch with match existing in dimension, lite division, and overall glass area. A simulated divided lite will be used rather than a true divided lite.
- Commissioners stated that fiberglass clad wood windows have come a long way in the past 15-20 years and the ability to paint them and provide custom dimensions, as well as their cost (roughly half of aluminum clad wood windows) and durability make them an increasingly attractive solution, particularly for non-landmark properties.
- **Action:** The proposed project was approved as presented 8-0.

E. 1217 Michigan Avenue – Lakeshore Historic District – Landmark – 21PRES-0121

Garry Shumaker, applicant, applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness to: demolish the existing detached two-car framed garage; construct a new attached garage at the subject properties southeast rear volume; replace three non-original vinyl windows on the north and south elevations attic and basement levels; replace existing vinyl siding on the north and south elevations with wood clap-board siding; replace the existing window trim to match original conditions; and construct a new permeable concrete driveway.

Applicable Standards: Demolition [1-5]; Alteration [1-10]; Construction [1-8; and 10-15]

- Mr. Shumaker presented the proposal as well as clarification on the evolution of the home including the Talmadge and Watson two-story addition which was subsequently altered (enclosing the open ground-floor porch) where the proposed garage addition would occur.
- Mr. Shumaker addressed the projects additional alterations outside of the proposed attached-garage which would either match existing materiality, or replace improper alterations to the home with new sympathetic materials and finishes. These included some siding replacement, alterations to the front-porch, replacement of vinyl windows, as well as replacement basement aluminum clad wood windows which failed due to improper installation.
- Mr. Shumaker addressed the need to cut down a group of three large trees as well as a note from an arborist which stated the trees were in poor health and a recommendation for removal as to not be a danger to life and property.
 - Chair Simon asked if this letter was available.
 - Mr. Sterling stated it was sent shortly before the meeting and he could confirm its contents as well as circulate it amongst Commissioners.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the green roof and whether this was part of a request for zoning relief.
 - Mr. Shumaker stated the green roof was a unique feature which was designed to offer the residents of the adjacent multi-family building a more pleasing view.
 - Mr. Sterling stated that the green roof does not impact the lots impervious surface ratio since the garage is counted toward building lot coverage and inherently thus counted as 100% impervious.
 - Mr. Shumaker stated the intent of the large open eyebrow dormer to bring light into the otherwise darkened internal space due to its depth.
 - Commissioner Cohen stated that these ideas were very clever in service of the client.

- Mr. Shumaker described the open roofed porte cochere mimicking the existing open front-porch and there being a visual continuance of this element as seen from the street.
- Commissioner Cohen expressed concern with the roof form of the structure, the depth of the “porte cochere”, and the proportion of the proposed eyebrow dormer. It was suggested that the proportions of the dormer better mimic the existing homes window proportions and that the roofed porte cochere be reduced in depth as to be ore sympathetic to adjoining structures and mimic the depth of the existing front-porch.
- Commissioner Dreller stated concern with attaching the garage to the existing home, not making a clear case for why this was being done, and the ability it had to extend the homes horizontality where it otherwise has more verticality.
 - Mr. Shumaker disagreed with this assessment stating that the proposed garage was setback far enough from the front-facing façade to address these concerns.
- **Public Comment:** Members of the public provided testimony in opposition of the proposed project. Members who attended also submitted written comments.
- The publics principle concern was the relationship between the proposed attached garage and the neighboring apartment building which is on the north lot line.
- It was stated that the two structures were originally designed with one another in mind. The existing detached garage being placed in a location where there is no ground-floor fenestration for the apartment building. Shifting the garage closer to the street will block sunlight and air into the basement dwelling unit of the adjoining structure and create a condition that has no precedent on the block.
- The resident of the ground-floor unit spoke against the project noting the impact to the light and air in her unit and the ability to completely change the feel of her home.
- It was stated that the green roof was a nice feature for the units above the first two stories, but those units would only see a blank façade.
- Members of the public stated a detached garage was more appropriate and preferential.
- After public comment and input from Commissioners, the applicant implied that the client would not pursue some of the aforementioned changes, particularly the idea of a detached garage, and rather than have the case be continued, a vote should be taken.
- **Action:** A motion to approve the proposed project as presented failed on a vote of 3-5
 - Following action, Mr. Shumaker requested a reading of the standards, noting that several Commissioners who voted no hadn’t provided comment previously.
 - Commissioners Dreller and Reinhold offered standards that the proposal failed to meet.
 - Mr. Shumaker stated that the point of the meeting was to fully develop the Commissions findings and expressed frustration with the proceedings.
 - Chair Simon stated that Commissioners had provided direction on which standards they felt were not met. Suggestions had been made by Commissioners during the meeting that could be used to revise the proposal. Both comments and suggestions were given which were grounded in the standards for review.
 - Chair Simon recalled that In instances of denial, findings of fact are given to the applicant, but they don’t have to be fully developed during the meeting. Chair Simon asked staff for input and clarification.

- Mr. Sterling stated that the ordinance allows the Commission up to five business days following final action to deliver their findings of fact to the applicant.
- Chair Simon stated this allows the Commission time to deliver clear findings and identify all the standards which were directly or indirectly discussed during the meeting which framed the outcome. The written findings provide more clear direction for applicants and will identify a recommendation for resubmission.
 - The findings of fact as a summary of the Commissions findings will be provided to the owner within the timeline outlined in the Ordinance.

3. MEETING MINUTES

A. Approval of meeting minutes of July 13, 2021

- The meeting minutes were approved as presented 7-0 with one abstention.

4. DISCUSSION

A. Creation of a 2022 Work Plan Sub-Committee to explore potential initiatives for consideration

- Chair Simon asked applicants and members of the public who did not intend to participate in the Commissions discussion to sign off the meeting.
- Mr. Sterling described the intent of the work plan including the ability to create a long-range plan which can be implemented across 5-10 years rather than the typical annual work plan. This is a planning effort to create a road map for not only this commission, but future commissions to follow and implement preservation program priorities and initiatives.
- Mr. Sterling asked for three members to volunteer to make up the subcommittee. Members would be asked to endure planning exercises and help craft a vision statement, value statements, goals, policies, and initiatives as well as review drafts of each prepared by staff.
 - Commissioners Dreller, Cohen, and Bodan volunteered.
- The sub-committees first assignment will be sent out the third week of September.

B. Other Discussion:

- Commissioners discussed applying the standards to accessibility cases.
 - It was suggested that design guidelines be developed for preferred treatment types for accessibility related projects as they become more common.
- Commissioners discussed ways to facilitate more robust deliberation within the context of the standards for review. Something made more difficult in a virtual format.
 - It was suggested that a virtual version of the standards worksheets be sent to Commissioners prior to the next meeting to more easily reference the standards, their applicability, and add notes/identify standards of concern.
- Commissioners discussed motions to continue vs motions for approval or denial and the appropriateness of each.
- Procedure for resubmission was discussed, specifically the challenges for cases that are denied to make changes and meet submission and noticing requirements for the next available meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Commission adjourned at 9:45pm. The next meeting of the Preservation Commission is scheduled for **October 12, 2021**.