



MEETING MINUTES

PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday November 09, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Via Virtual Meeting

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

Members Absent: Jamie Morris

Staff Present: C. Sterling; C. Ruiz

Presiding Member: M. Simon, Chair

Notes Taken by: C. Sterling

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.

- A motion to suspend the rules to permit remote participation passed unanimously.

• OLD BUSINESS

A. 1233 Judson Avenue – Lakeshore Historic District – 21PRES-0135

Nathan Kipnis, architect, applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace existing windows, add a 40 panel solar array to the south roof face, and construct a rooftop deck over the southeast flat roof with new stair access at the south roof face rear volume.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]; Construction [1-8; and, 10-14]

- Nate Kipnis, applicant, provided a brief presentation on embodied and operational carbon costs of replacement windows vs restored windows, specifically restored double-hungs vs new casement windows.
- Commissioners commented on the presentation, noting its value as well as conflicting interests between preservation and energy efficiency initiatives. Commissioners agreed that strictly looking at energy efficiency, replacement casements have net positive long-term outcomes but do not always honor a structures history or detailing.
- It was noted that even though there are notable efficiency gains, it is noteworthy that energy loss through fenestration only accounts for ~10% of a structures total.
- It was noted that even casement windows with a faux meeting rail to simulate a double hung, operates in a single plane and cannot mimic a double hung well.

- Commissioners discussed solutions which find common ground and meet both energy efficiency and preservation goals, such as the proposal at hand to restore all windows on primary and secondary elevations, and replace on tertiary elevations. This may be appropriate for non Landmark designated properties or properties that are contributing but not of high architectural significance.
- Commissioners and Mr. Kipnis discussed how most homeowners and contractors replace entire window units after 20-30 years when in reality it is just the glazing that needs to be replaced as it isn't the window itself which fails, but the thermopane seals.
- Nate Kipnis noted that the future of energy efficiency will likely be triple glazing and saw the proposal here as a good case study to see how the structure performs with some replacements and some restored windows.
- Nate Kipnis quickly reviewed the changes made since the previous case was continued including the intent to restore the primary and secondary elevation windows and the changes made to the railing system on the roof deck.
- Commissioners applauded the changes to the railing system and noted it was a big improvement from the previous version.
- A motion to approve passed on a roll call vote of 6-1.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

- **A. 1414 Church Street – Ridge Historic District – 21PRES-0153**

- Daniel Tornheim, architect of record, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing detached single-car garage and construct an attached two-car garage addition with alley access at the rear volume the residence. Additionally, the applicant submits for Major Zoning Relief to permit a rear-yard setback of 3' where 30' is required (Zoning Code Section 6-8-2-8 (A) 4.) The Historic Preservation Commission will provide a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals, the determining body for this case.

- Applicable Standards:** Demolition [1-5]; Construction [1-4; 7-8, and; 10-15]

- Dan Tornheim, applicant, provided background on the proposed project including a desire to match the existing homes materiality and detailing while providing for two off-street parking spaces as part of a larger interior remodel. Creating efficient utilization of space on a very small non-conforming lot.
 - The applicant described alternatives which were considered including a detached garage at the properties southeast corner, but these would have increased the lots impervious surface ratio with a long driveway and was seen as inefficient and an intervention which would have a negative impact on the neighboring property.
 - The applicant discussed the adjacent coach house to the south which has a legal non-conforming setback, located on the lot line. The existing garage is ~6" from the structure while the proposed structure will be 3', and the overall impervious surface ratio of the lot will decrease.
 - Commissioners asked for the depth of the proposed eaves and the distance from the eaves to the adjacent structure.
 - The eaves are ~2' in depth, so the distance from eave depth to structure would be ~1'
 - Commissioners noted that the idea of matching the homes eave was the right decision generally, but in this specific instance, they would encourage the applicant to reduce the depth to provide for more separation between structures.
 - Mr. Sterling asked the applicant to explain his intention for fire-rating the structure.
 - The applicant stated the intent to fire-rate the structure with masonry exterior walls clad in fiber cement. The condition would be much safer than the existing wood frame detached garage which is also non-conforming in terms of separation between it and the principle structure.

- The property owners to the east provided comment against the proposal, with primary concerns related to risk of fire, loss of light and air into the ADU, obstructed views due to increased height of the roof, and an inability to rent the structure for the same structure currently needed to recoup their investment which enabled a rentable ADU.
- The Commission discussed the ridge height, as well as how water and snow would be managed from the roof pitch, noting it would be a good idea to find solutions which do not shed snow onto the neighboring property.
- The Commission found that the height of the proposed addition, including the roof pitch and ridge heights, were compatible with the structures to which it is related and encouraged the applicant not to reduce the height of the structure, or alter the roof form.
- The applicant was applauded for the overall design, which was very sympathetic to the principle structures architectural integrity.
- The Commission discussed that although the above-mentioned findings related to the preservation standards for construction speak to the preservation-based appropriateness of the proposed improvement requiring the identified zoning variations, the Commission determined that significant questions related specifically to zoning and not to preservation remained but were outside the bodies purview.
- These concerns included but were not limited to the alleged hardship as well as lacking testimony in regards to the need for a two-car garage rather than a one or one-and-one-half car garage which would create more separation between structures and reduce the degree of the request.
- The Commission resolved to not provide a recommendation in favor of nor against the requested zoning relief, deferring these questions exclusively to the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- A motion to approve the proposal with the condition that the eave depth be reduced passed 7-0.

B. 2121 Sheridan Road – Landmark – 21PRES-0156

R.E.M. Architecture, applicant, applies for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct an accessible ramp at the front entrance of the Garrett Evangelical Theological Institute adjacent to the south volumes north elevation.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [6-7; and 10-14]

- The contractor provided a presentation on the proposed accessible improvements including the materiality of the ramp which will be concrete with an iron railing system matching the existing railing on the front entryway.
- Mr. Sterling asked for clarification on the material of the existing stairs and landings at the front entryway.
 - Contractor states they are part concrete and part limestone. Ideally the entire project would be limestone, but the budget does not allow for that, and the existing front steps and landings were modified at some time, being replaces partially in concrete already.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the position of the accessible ramp and whether it impacts any of the structures south wing north elevation
 - Contractor states that the ramp is north of the north elevation with space between to accommodate proper drainage of water and melting snow and ice through a subgrade drainage system
 - Commissioner stated this was important – to keep water from becoming trapped on the existing foundation
 - Contractor agreed
- Commissioners discussed alternatives to the proposed work and precedents set by Northwestern University, such as the high-quality work at the Deering Library.

- Commissioners agree that although there is likely a more sensitive solution, it would require complete reorientation and re-design of the front entryway. The proposed work is minimally invasive, does not physically impact the Landmark Structure, and it a more dignified accessible entrance than a ramp or lift hidden at the rear of the building.
- A motion to approve the project as presented passed 7-0

- **MEETING MINUTES**

- A. Approval of meeting minutes of September 14, 2021

- Mr. Sterling stated the video was still unavailable from this meeting but that he added some of Commissioner Cohens concerns into the minutes. Suggested a vote be taken on them rather than wait for video review which may never be possible.
 - The meeting minutes were approved as presented.

- B. Approval of meeting minutes of October 12, 2021

- The meeting minutes were approved as presented.

- **DISCUSSION**

- a. None

- **STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Design Guidelines Update

- Mr. Sterling provided an update on the proposed design guidelines.
 - Commissioner Cohen expressed concern with the process repeating what was done in 2017 and asked for an explanation on why that work wasn't being used.
 - Mr. Sterling stated the work done in 2017 was important and a worthwhile undertaking by former Commissioners, but that there was no repetition or duplication of efforts, explain that what was done previously dealt with process while the new guidelines are intended to provide visual examples of preferred treatment types. This was not done previously.
 - Mr. Sterling stated that much of the work in 2017 will be wrapped into the first section of the new guidelines, noting its applicability and quality.
 - Mr. Sterling stated that the 2017 guidelines are still available online but that the individual links were removed from it and included separately on the website so they were more accessible. These included the standards for review, matrix of minor vs major work, applications for COA and window replacement, other resources such as NPS Preservation Briefs, Frequently Asked Questions, and borrowed text from the Ordinance.
 - Mr. Sterling stated the way it existed previously was not user friendly and although the new approach may not be the best solution either, it is certainly better. Mr. Sterling suggested uploading the former document as a new link on the website.
 - Commissioners expressed concern with creation of a programmatic and prescriptive document.
 - Mr. Sterling stated that it is not prescriptive and although the outline seems daunting, each bullet point really only receives a few sentences on the preferred treatment type and is accompanied by example photos to create a visual aid showing there are a multitude of ways to approach each project in a sensitive and appropriate way.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting of the Preservation Commission is scheduled for **December 7, 2021**.