



## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday June 14, 2022

7:00 P.M.

Via Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Mark Simon, John Jacobs, Aleca Sullivan, Jamie Morris  
Suzi Reinhold, Carl Klein, Beth Bodan, Stuart Cohen

Members Absent: Sarah M. Dreller

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling; Carlos D. Ruiz

Presiding Member: Suzi Reinhold, Chair

Notes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

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## **Agenda**

### **New Business**

#### **A. 713/715 Sheridan Road - Lakeshore Historic District - 22PRES-0084**

Catherine Flanagan, owner, submits for advisory review of a proposed subdivision/land swap between the properties at 713 Sheridan Road and 715 Sheridan Road (Landmark). The Commission provides a recommendation to City Council, the determining body for this case.

- The applicant provided a brief overview of the proposal noting that the re-subdivision formalizes an agreement made several years ago with the primary intent of simplifying the lot line to be more easily legible.
- The proposal is an equal land-swap between properties in a location not visible from the public way.
- The applicant indicated that no construction is planned as a result of the re-subdivision although the property to the south had preliminary but unrelated plans for a small non-visible addition.
- A motion to provide a positive recommendation to City Council was approved unanimously without discussion.

#### **B. 1214 Maple Avenue - Ridge Historic District - 22PRES-0085**

Devon Herrick, owner, submits for advisory review for a proposed subdivision of 1214 Maple Avenue. The Commission provides a recommendation to City Council, the determining body for this case.

- Scott Collier, agent for the applicant, provided a detailed summary of the proposed subdivision.
- Mr. Collier addressed the predominant lot size on the block, indicating that the proposed lot was similar to all but one additional double lot located to the north. The lot width was also similar to proximate lots.
- Mr. Collier addressed the standards for review nothing the comparable lot size, claiming a new home in this location would strengthen the block in whole, and noting that the sellers were not proposing construction although the contract purchaser would present plans concurrently for review. The proposed setbacks as well as the location of new construction being proposed by the contract purchaser would not block any elevations of the home at 1214 Maple.
- Mr. Collier explained that the home at 1214 Maple was also under contract contingent on approval of the subdivision. The heirs of the home would have liked to stay, but the cost of maintaining the home and double lot, as well as requirements to live in the City of Chicago for employment purposes, led to this decision.
- Mr. Collier claimed the lot met all City requirements after some back and forth with the Zoning Office.
- Commissioners asked Mr. Collier about these requirements and the decision to divide the lot as proposed.
  - Mr. Collier explained that the home and surrounding improvements at 1214 Maple create a high percentage of impervious surfaces. Rather than removing some of this, the lot was divided in its proposed location to be compliant with the impervious surface and setback requirements.
- A motion to provide a positive recommendation to City Council was approved unanimously without further discussion.

**C. 1210 Maple Avenue - Ridge Historic District - 22PRES-0081**

Nathan Kipnis, architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a new two-story single-family residence and detached single-story two-car garage on a proposed subdivision of the parcel commonly known as 1214 Maple Avenue.

- Nate Kipnis, applicant, introduced the contract purchaser, his client, Margaret Stender, who provided a statement about her background, previous ownership of Landmark Properties in Chicago, desire to live in a historic neighborhood, and her reasons for hiring Mr. Kipnis, as a leader in low carbon, sustainable construction as well as a proven record of preservation-based design and design which compliments a historic context – including designing the first and still only LEED Platinum home in Evanston.
- Nate Kipnis, provided an introductory statement about the project as well as his background and credentials in addition to successful projects he's brought before the Commission in the past.
- Mr. Kipnis addressed the proposed design of the home as well as some of the letters of opposition that he reviewed. Mr. Kipnis stated that the home is certainly different than its neighbors, but argued that it should be divergent as it represents a new intervention. Directly mimicking the neighboring homes, or attempting to design a 1890s Queen Anne, would be inappropriate, akin to Disneyland.

- Mr. Kipnis compared the homes front elevation to the homes located across the street by way of a proportion study. He further explained the attempts to make the home look taller than it would feel internally, also noting that the majority of the homes on the block exceed the current zoning requirements for bulk and height.
- Mr. Kipnis addressed the lack of grade change between the sidewalk and front-door, noting the home has no basement due in-part to the reduce the amount of concrete used which has adverse environmental impacts, as well as create a home which can transition easily and allow its occupants to age in-place.
- Mr. Kipnis addressed the homes materiality, being predominately real stucco, a standing seam metal roof, and metal entrance canopy. Fenestration was also addressed, noting casement windows for their energy efficiency. The home will be a certified passive home. The highest certification of its kind and a first in Evanston. The home is believed to complement its surroundings, be authentic in its contemporary architectural expression, and meet the demands for new construction which aligns and contributes positively with climate resilience goals.
- Mr. Kipnis showed the Commission a 3D model of the proposal, addressing each elevation as well as relating the design decisions to its context.
- Commissioners addressed the idea of innovative design with some members agreeing that this kind of proposal was what the Commission had in mind when the standard regarding innovative design was written. Other members acknowledged the importance of this type of construction, and although it is not commonly implemented, aspects of it were not necessarily novel or innovative. Commissioners ultimately agreed that whatever was proposed, innovative or not, still had to be complimentary to its surroundings and meet the standards for review of construction.
- As such, Commissioners asked Mr. Kipnis to address each of the standards for construction, something they would have liked to see included in the packet.
  - Mr. Kipnis addressed each of the standards and how the home, in his opinion, independently met these. The standards were considered throughout the design process.
- Commissioners stated that the standards, in instances of new construction relate not only to the individual structure, but more predominately how it relates to the properties to which it is visually related. Commissioners did not see documentation provided which enables them to make this determination, and asked Mr. Kipnis to provide additional documentation and testimony which relates his design decisions to the homes is visually related to, more predominately to the homes it is adjacent to, but also the block in whole, not just the building across the street.
  - There are many aspects of the proposal which are admirable and make sense independently, and what is proposed is a fine home in its own right, but it's not clear with the information given, how the home relates to its surroundings. Commissioners acknowledged that it was a difficult challenge and balance.

**Public Comment:**

- John Tuzson (1220 Maple), Peter Siegal and L.J. Ellul (1217 Maple), and Ginny Holbert (1800 Ridge), provided public comment. The majority of residents was opposed to the new construction as proposed, and did not understand how it related to its surroundings and homes on the block. Residents stated the prominence and integrity of the block as a whole. Residents did not object to new construction on the lot, and welcomed a new neighbor, but asked that the architect take more time balancing his client's desire for a passive home, with the requirements of the preservation ordinance. Considerable comment focused on the homes front elevation, the two-story metal canopy, and lack of a covered front-porch.
- Ginny Holbert, the agent for Ms. Stender, spoke in favor of the proposal and her belief that it would be a beautiful home that would blend with the neighborhood.
- Mr. Kipnis was asked if he wanted to rebut any of the public comment that was made. Mr. Kipnis declined to do so, but stated that he and his client were committed to and believed in this process. His goal is to create something that he, his client, the neighborhood, and the Commission are proud of and he is confident he can accomplish that.

**Deliberation:**

- Commissioners deliberated and discussed the merits of the proposal in relation to the standards. Commissioners agreed that the secondary and rear elevations of the home met the standards for review and suggested that revisions focus on only the front-facing elevation.
- Commissioners stated the following standards as those of concern.
  - Standard #6 – Rhythm of entrance porches and other projections
  - Standard #9 – Walls of continuity
  - Standard \$4 – Rhythm of solids to voids in a façade
- Commissioners reiterated that compatibility and being able to understand how it is compatible, are essential. This is referenced in Standard 14, specifically as size, scale, color, material, and character.
- Commissioners stated that Standard #2 – Proportion of facades, was not necessarily not met, but they lacked information to make this determination and would like to see the revised design in context with its surroundings.
- Commissioners stated a preference for continuing the case, noting that the process, for this type of proposal, nearly always takes two meetings. No one, including the neighbors, has objected to a new home in this location, and there are many aspects of the design which meet the standards and are admirable.
- Commissioners asked the applicant to provide testimony and further documentation for the next meeting which relates the proposal to the standards as well as its context, providing more analytical data on how the aspects of the new construction relate to and are compatible with the structures to which it is visually related.
- A motion to continue the case to the July 12 meeting was carried unanimously.

**D. 650 Forest Avenue - Lakeshore Historic District - 22PRES-0080**

Garry Shumaker, architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing two-story rear addition; construct a new two-story addition and open wood deck at the residences rear volume; and, replace the existing front porch windows.

- Mr. Shumaker provided a detailed overview of the proposed addition at the rear of the home as well as the window replacement at the enclosed front-porch.
- Mr. Shumaker showed additional documentation of the front-porch windows, the windows are non-original, simple fixed glass inserts, which make the room non-habitable for much of the year for lack of airflow and intense heat during the summer months.
- Mr. Shumaker described the partial demolition of the rear existing, non-original addition, and construction of a new two-story and single-story addition that incorporates aspects of the homes Craftsman detailing while remaining subordinate and visually separate from the original structure. These include primarily differentiation in cladding material and the second-story bring below the rear gable.
- Commissioners asked the applicant about the decision to incorporate wood clapboard siding rather than continue the stucco present on the original home.
  - The applicant explained the principle reason was to provide visual differentiation between the addition and the original structure.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the proposed cladding which appears as stucco in the rendering.
  - Applicant explained it is a drafting error in the rendering.
- A motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal as presented was carried unanimously.

**E. 701 Forest Avenue - LHD - Landmark - 22PRES-0066**

Garry Shumaker, architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a second-story addition, and rear two-story addition, to an existing detached garage.

- Mr. Shumaker provided a presentation on the proposal noting the significant work already done on the principle structure, as well as the uniqueness of the principle structure as one of the finest examples of Italianate Architecture with significant in-tact detailing.
- Mr. Shumaker described the partial demolition of the accessory structure, retention of the first-floor brick, construction of a small horizontal addition to accommodate an internal stair, and a large two-story addition atop the existing. The proposed second-story addition takes many queues from the principle structure including bracketing and fenestration detailing such as detailed window hoods, and oriel window. These more elaborate features face the principle structure, while the secondary elevations fronting the alley are more spare.
- Commissioners debated the appropriateness of aspects of the proposal which had the potential to create a false history for the structure. Debate centered around guidance given from the Secretary of the Interior Standards which dictate a more spare and authentic expression for new construction vs the appropriateness of taking visual and design queues from the existing vocabulary of the principle structure and applying those to create visual compatibility.

- A motion to approve the project as presented was carried unanimously.

**F. 1223 Oak Avenue - Ridge Historic District - 22PRES-0082**

Diane Zabich, architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a single-story entry addition at the north elevation of the residence; demolish the existing detached circa 1980s two-car frame garage; and, construct a new two-car frame garage with ground-floor workshop and storage area.

- The homeowner provided a detailed overview of the proposed project.
- First, the homeowner described the intent for the small side addition to primarily accommodate a mudroom and act as the homes principle entry for the family. This addition mimics previous not historic additions on the homes alternate secondary elevation.
  - Commissioners asked the applicant to consider a window in the proposed entry addition. The applicant explained it was considered but left little room for desired storage.
- The applicant provided information on the proposed new detached garage, which mimics not the homes materiality, but proximate accessory structures in the block which are highly vernacular and utilitarian. The block contains some historic barn structures with board and batten construction. The size of the garage was largely dictated by storage needs for the family and limited storage in the principle structure for bikes, outdoor furniture, etc.
- Commissioners debated the materiality of the proposed accessory structure and asked for additional photos from proximate structures. The applicant provided this information.
- Commissioners asked for clarification on the proposed ground floor window material.
  - The applicant explained it was a light filtering (not opaque nor transparent), hard plastic material which was more resistant to damage or break ins than a typical glass window. The homeowner acknowledged that burglary was a concern and this allowed for light to enter the structure while maintaining security.
  - The applicant provided a sample for review by the Commission.
- A motion to approve the proposal as presented was carried unanimously.

**G. 2241 Sherman Avenue - Northeast Historic District - 22PRES-0079**

Jennifer Parker Holtz, architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing rear sunroom and wood deck; and construct a new two-story frame addition with screen porch and wood deck.

- Thomas Ahleman provided an overview of the proposal which incorporates a large two-story addition as well as a small single-story sunroom and open deck at the rear of the property.
- Mr. Ahleman explained the desire for additional living space as well as a need to maintain already improved habitable space at the half-story above the full second story. The proposed roof form was largely determined by the existing form, with limited compatible alternatives.

- Mr. Ahleman reviewed the proposed fenestration which in-part mimics the amalgam of window sizes and locations which existing on the homes secondary elevations.
- Mr. Ruiz asked the applicant about the scale of the proposed addition as well as the decision not to increase the setback slightly to incorporate delineation between existing and proposed structures.
  - The applicant explained that these decisions were guided by the homeowner's direction and internal floor areas but he believed the result was compatible.
- Mr. Sterling asked about the south elevations fenestration, particularly the small awning windows proposed which seemed out of character.
  - Commissioners agreed this elevations fenestration was uncomfortable and asked for clarification on the internal space.
- Mr. Ahleman explained this space was the kitchen, and the awning windows were located above the cabinets to top light the room while providing for the most storage and counter space.
- Commissioners agreed the alternatives were limited due to the internal function of the space. Alternatives were suggested but not required. Commissioners believed this secondary elevation to be minimally visible as seen from the street.
- Commissioners applauded the project and noted the design decisions were sound based on the homes existing vocabulary and form.
- A motion to approve was carried unanimously.

## **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

### **A. Minutes of May 10, 2022**

A motion to approve the May 10 minutes with revisions sent to Mr. Sterling via email was carried unanimously with two abstentions (Morris and Sullivan).

## **Discussion**

### **A. Downtown Heritage Resource Survey**

Mr. Sterling provided an update on the proposed downtown survey and the desire by the City to have the Commission phase the report starting with documentation of the additional structures identified on the potential downtown resources list (2019) as well as a focus on the three Traditional Zones identified in the 2008 plan.

## **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm