



**MEETING MINUTES**

**PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday, September 12, 2023  
7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Aleca Sullivan, Carl Klein, Sarah M. Dreller, Jamie Morris, Stuart Cohen  
Amanda Ziehm, Susan Reinhold, Joshua Bowes-Carlson

Members Absent: John Jacobs, Beth Bodan

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling

Presiding Member: Sarah M. Dreller, Chair

Minutes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

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**CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

- The meeting was called to order with a quorum of eight members being present.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A. **1404 Judson Ave - Landmark - LHD - 23PRES-0098**

Errol Kirsch, applicant and architect, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the homes north elevation fenestration, construct a single-story addition and covered basement entryway at the rear volume of the homes north elevation. The applicant further requests the following Major Zoning Variations to expand a non-conforming structure as it relates to bulk (Code Section 6-6-5-2): a rear-yard setback of 3.75' where 30' is required and the existing legally non-conforming condition is 2.75' (Code Section 6-8-2-8 (A) 4); and building lot coverage of 33.25% where 30% is the maximum permitted and 31% is the existing legally non-conforming condition (Code Section 6-8-2-7). The Preservation Commission is the determining body for the Certificate of Appropriateness (Code Section 2-8-8). The Preservation Commission may, at its discretion, make a recommendation to the Land Use Commission, the determining body for the proposed zoning relief (Code Section 2-19-4 (E)).

- Mr. Kirsch presented revised plans that he believed addressed the Commissions concerns as presented at the June 13 meeting. The changes were endorsed by the State Historic Preservation Office, and reduced the impact to the north

elevation through a simplified composition and single volume rather than the previous three disparate masses. The proposed composition also allowed for an original window to be maintained.

- Mr. Kirsch further clarified additional changes to both the proposed egress window, as well as modification to the retaining wall necessary for the basement ADU access stair.
- Mr. Kirsch presented additional testimony in regards to the proposed zoning relief, noting his belief that the addition was positioned intentionally within the required rear-yard setback in order to meet the preservation standards and minimize the adverse impact to the structure. Additionally, the basement ADU can not be reduced in size, nor can the office addition be relocated elsewhere within the structure due to the need for a workshop space for woodworking in the basement, and an inability for rooms in the rest of the home to provide the privacy necessary for the applicants work as an attorney.
- Ms. Harper, property owner, presented additional information about her work as an attorney for the State of Illinois, the sensitive nature of her work and the cases she presides over, and the need for a separate and private space.
- Ms. Harper further explained the need for the variation and inability to locate the office elsewhere due to her ongoing work to restore aspects of the home on her own including windows in the basement, and the need for her to have roomers in order to supply the income necessary to afford the home as a single-income household.
- Mr. Kirsch asked the Commission to make a recommendation on the proposed variation, believing it was in the interest of historic conservation.
- Commissioners asked Mr. Kirsch if he had further considered relocating the basement access to the ADU at the rear of the home, eliminating the covered entry that was visible from the street.
- Mr. Kirsch responded that this was not possible, and presented the existing image from the street as well as the proposed renderings noting that the vegetation that exists blocks the addition from view for the majority of the rear and that it was already a half-story and at the rear volume of the north elevation, reducing its prominence. This was intentional.
- Neighboring property owners within the notification boundary provided public comment.
  - Ann Trompeter, 1422 Judson Avenue, provided testimony against the proposal. Ms. Trompeter noted incompatibility of the proposed volume attached to the side of the home, further noting that nothing like what is being proposed exists on other Myron Hunt designs throughout Evanston.
  - Dan Hartnett, 1412 Judson, provided testimony against the proposal. He noted the character defining nature of the homes horizontality, and its design approaching the Prairie Style in its vocabulary. The home is designed by a significant and underrated architect, and it has been minimally altered, or not altered at all since its design left Mr. Hunts drafting table. This should mean something. Mr. Hartnett noted that construction standard 12 was not met as the addition being proposed does not preserve the character of the north elevation. Mr. Hartnett acknowledged the difficulty in the idea that someone should not be able use and change their property as they see fit. However, the answer is simple, that when each owner took title of a property registered as a

- landmark, or within a historic district, they made a commitment to their neighbors, to the City, and to the residents of the City to be good stewards and protect these resources for the future to enjoy.
- Nancy Liskar, 1400 Judson Avenue, provided testimony against the proposal noting the proposed use and work was antithetical to their interests, and that they had significant concern with construction impacting the integrity of the double house as well as the proposed use for a woodworking and lead paint stripping operation in the basement. Finally, the proposed construction of the ADU, both precluded them from ever proposing something similar, and that it would devalue their home, and that the home was large and had 5 bedrooms that could be used and be made private for an office. None of the other 30+ Myron Hunt homes in Evanston have been depredated in the way that's proposed at 1404 Judson.
  - Bruce Styler, 1400 Judson, provided testimony against the proposal, worrying about the effects of the construction, as well as the value of his home. A potential solution to all of this is clear, an office could be rented elsewhere.
  - Amanda Hartnett, 1412 Judson, provided testimony against the proposal. The State does not require their employees to build additions to their homes to do their jobs. There are many alternatives, too many alternatives that would meet the owners needs while retaining the integrity of this significant structure.
- Mr. Kirsch addressed the concerns, noting the intention to position the addition in a way that created subordination to the original home, and that the property values would not be diminished, as is almost never the case, and that there are strict controls and procedures to be followed to ensure the construction does not negatively impact and of the proximate structures.
  - Commissioners deliberated and were split on whether the revised proposal addressed their previous concerns, with some noting it was an improvement and likely the minimum required to meet the standards, and others questioning its necessity, and ability to meet associated standards for height as a half-story which appears visually incompatible with the home and its surrounding design vocabularies.
  - Commissioner Morris noted that although the squat nature of the addition is uncomfortable, it is successful in extenuating additional horizontality, a noted character defining feature of the home. Believes it is the minimum necessary to meet the standards and is improved from its original composition.
  - Additional Commissioners noted that they believed the proposed use/needs and the associated physical composition to meet those needs was not done in a manner representing the minimal alteration necessary, and that the proposed mass depredated the north elevations integrity. (Alteration 1, as well as Construction 12).
  - Commissioners noted that the composition before the Commission today is exactly what they asked him to explore previously, and that created a difficult situation.
  - Mr. Sterling noted that providing technical assistance to applicants in an effort to meet standards of concern is done with the best intentions, but the Commission has to react to what is proposed, and may come to different conclusions after seeing those concepts physically represented.

- Commissioners asked staff if they were required to make a motion on the proposed zoning relief, and if they could make a negative recommendation.
- Mr. Sterling noted that they were not obligated to make a motion on the zoning relief that was proposed, and if desired, they could make a negative recommendation, but should specify why the proposal not only did not meet the associated standards for making recommendations but was directly contrary to them.
- Mr. Sterling recommended making separate motions on the COA and the zoning recommendation, and that further, they could take a separate vote on the rear-yard setback and the lot coverage variations if necessary. Mr. Sterling recommended a roll-call vote be taken due to the contention.
- The Commission deliberated the proposed zoning relief finding that the requested variations from the zoning ordinance were not materially related to, nor being sought in the interest of historic conservation or as to not adversely affect the integrity of the Landmark structure where otherwise zoning compliant alternatives either do not exist, or would otherwise be detrimental to the homes integrity.
- Alternative locations for the proposed use in existing interior spaces that would not necessitate variations were further deliberated, including additional bedrooms, the attic, in a space created if the ADU were reduced in size, and the proposed woodworking space.
- Seeing no further deliberation, Chair Dreler asked if there was a motion on the proposal. With no motion being made, Chair Dreler made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal. This was seconded by Commissioner Reinhold and was adopted 5-3 with Commissioners Ziehm, Klein, and Bowes-Carlson dissenting based on Standards for Alteration 1, and Construction 1, and 6.
- A subsequent motion to recommend denial of the proposed zoning relief was made by Commissioner Klein, seconded by Commissioner Cohen, and carried unanimously, 8-0.

## NEW BUSINESS

### A. 1041 Ridge Court - Ridge Historic District - 23PRES-0161

Mark Demsky, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the homes west elevation fenestration, replacing existing jalousie windows, construct a bracketed gable overhang at the homes west entryway, and construct single and two-story additions to the homes northeast volume. The applicant further requests the following Major Zoning Variations: a rear yard setback of 6' where 30' is required; and building lot coverage of 34.5% where 30% is the maximum permitted. The Preservation Commission is the determining body for the Certificate of Appropriateness (Code Section 2-8-8). The Preservation Commission may, at its discretion, make a recommendation to the Land Use Commission, the determining body for the proposed zoning relief (Code Section 2-19-4 (E)).

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [ 1-10]; Construction [1-8, and 10-15]; and Code Section 6-15-11-5 [A, B, and C]

- The applicant provided an overview of the proposal which focused on a

desire to expand the home to meet the needs of a growing family, as well as to respect the homes existing character. They believe the proposal is compatible with the homes existing design vocabulary, retains the homes character defining aspects, and creates interior functionality.

- In order to accomplish these goals, the homeowner wished to pursue major zoning variations that would enable to desired aesthetic outcomes, while also allowing them to meet many of the required preservation standards, many of which in this instance conflicted with the zoning requirements.
- The applicant further explained the material choices, continuation of the roof plane, extension of the chimney, and new portico as sympathetic elements that were done with intention to both respect the home, and the quality of neighboring homes.
- The applicant presented zoning compliant alternatives, or a variation that is incentivized by the zoning ordinance by building additions vertically atop existing ground floor footprints. They believe these alternatives would not only denigrate the home, but would denigrate the integrity of setting for the surrounding homes. If this were the only option made available by zoning, they would forego the project completely.
- The applicant requests that the Commission recommend their zoning relief be approved.
- Chair Dreler asked if the roof plane was extended in the same plane or if it were stepped back slightly. The applicant stated it would be in the same plane, and the horizontal line between the existing roof peak and the start of the new portion was just a rendering error.
- Commissioners deliberated and acknowledged the success of the proposal while further applauding the use of materials, and clear effort made to retain the homes horizontal quality and form, allowing it to continue to communicate as a ranch style, particularly from the Ridge Court frontage. The addition being proposed is sympathetic.
- Commissioners further acknowledged the difficulty the homeowner was placed in to meet both the preservation and zoning requirements, and believed that in this instance, the preservation standards should take precedence. The Commission was in favor of supporting the proposed zoning relief.
- A motion to issue the Certificate of Appropriateness as presented was made by Commissioner Bowes-Carlson and Seconded by Commissioner Cohen and carried 8-0.
- A separate motion to recommend approval of the proposed zoning relief was made by Commissioner Morris, seconded by Commissioner Cohen and carried 8-0.

The Commission sat in recess for 5 minutes.

B. **1231 Maple Avenue - Ridge Historic District - 23PRES-0159**

Jeanie Petrick, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the homes entry portico, and construct an open, roofed front porch at the homes primary street facing elevation. The Preservation Commission is the determining body for this case in accordance with Code Section 2-8-8.

**Applicable Standards:** Demolition [1-5]; Alteration [1-10]; and, Construction [1-8 and 10-14]

- The applicant, presented an overview of the proposal including the desire to replace the non-original portico with a full front-porch that existed on the home originally and was removed sometime in the 1940s.
- Commissioners asked the applicant if there were similar detailing on proximate homes in the neighborhood?
- The applicant indicated there were, and provided context photos of the neighborhood to show similar material and detailing on porches constructed at the turn of the century. These included the paneled detail in the small gable above the stairs. The gable was introduced to eliminate the need for gutters, and to shed water away from the walkway and stairs.
- The applicant described the intent to replace the existing lap siding in the front gable with a shingle. This detail exists on the south elevation intersecting gable and they would like to return this to the west, primary elevation gable as well.
- Commissioners asked the applicant about the proposed ionic capitals in the drawings and if they were drawn as they would be constructed. As drawn, they are completely unique and not classically accurate.
- The applicant stated that it was just a drafting choice to reflect an idea, but the actual capitals would be pre-fabricated and classically correct.
- Commissioners asked the applicant if they had considered a fiberglass or composite column rather than a wood column. It looks exactly the same, but would last much longer. There was concern that the columns and capital as drawn, and without cap flashing, would be susceptible to rot.
- The homeowner indicated that use of wood was important to them.
- Commissioners asked about the proposed roofing material for the porch as it was not indicated on the drawings.
- The applicant stated they would be asphalt shingles to match the existing roof
- Jeff Hickey, owner of 1227 Maple, provided testimony in favor of the proposal, noting the importance of front porches to creation of a sense of community and providing opportunities for interaction between neighbors.
- Seeing no deliberation, Commissioner Ziehm made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal as presented. This was seconded by Commissioner Cohen, and carried 8-0.

C. **1734 Asbury Avenue - Landmark - RHD - 23PRES-0160**

Charles Neuhaus, Hanson Roofing, contractor and applicant on behalf of the

homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove the homes existing slate tile roof and install an asphalt shingle roof in its place. The Preservation Commission is the determining body for this case in accordance with Code Section 2-8-8.

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [1-10]

- The applicant provided a brief overview of the proposed scope of work, to remove the original, and heavily deteriorated slate tiles with an asphalt shingle. The homeowner has explored replacement in slate, as well as various composite materials that mimic the appearance of slate, but they are cost prohibitive. Approximately 80-100k more than replacement in slate.
- Commissioners asked the applicant to describe what portions of the roof scheduled for replacement were visible from the public way.
- The applicant described maybe 60% of the roof being visible, but also acknowledged that the roof was a low slope hipped form that was not as prominent as other slate roofs on landmark homes. Additionally, portions of the slate roof have been replaced previously (prior to binding review) with a grand manor asphalt shingle
- Commissioners asked the applicant to present the alternative asphalt shingles they had considered. The applicant presented both the grand manor shingle and the slate line shingle. The grand manor is a thicker shingle and mimics portions of the roof previously replaced.
- The applicant also provided a tile from the roof to compare dimension and edge thickness.
- Commissioners asked if the copper detailing, gutters, and valleys would be replaced in kind.
- The applicant stated they would be replaced in copper, and also stated that the asphalt shingles could be removed in the future and a slate roof re-installed. The alteration was technically and easily reversible.
- Commissioners asked about the exposure of the existing tile and whether it was graduated. The applicant stated it was.
- Commissioners deliberated about the difficulty of the proposal, noting the term replacement in kind, “when feasible”, and asking staff about how to understand this term.
- Mr. Sterling stated that the term was subjective and could be applied and understood differently by individual Commissioners. It could be construed to mean financial feasibility, or more of a binary, is it possible or not to replace the material in kind.
- Commissioners asked about choosing between the two asphalt shingle types, and if they agreed asphalt was appropriate, why would they choose one over the other when one was more expensive. Hard to agree to the change in appearance from slate to asphalt and then nitpick the exact appearance of the slate.
- Mr. Sterling stated that the Ordinance and standards for alteration require the Commission to find a material that is most compatible in design, and other visual qualities, and if one of the two shingles accomplished that to

a higher degree than the other, then that is what the standards would dictate as being more compatible.

- Commissioners agreed that due to the roof being less prominent than on other styles of homes, and the difficulty before the homeowner to finance replacement in-kind, it was not feasible, and selected the Grand Manor asphalt shingle as a compatible alternative that reduced the adverse impact to the homes integrity.
- Commissioner Cohen made a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposal with the use of the Grand Manor asphalt shingle. Second by Commissioner Sullivan and carried 8-0.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

### **A. Minutes of July 11, 2023**

- The minutes were approved as presented with no revisions.

## **DISCUSSION (NO VOTE WILL BE TAKEN)**

### **A. Disaster Recovery and Debris Management Plan**

General discussion on historic preservation considerations within the City's current disaster recovery and debris management plan.

- Mr. Sterling provided a brief overview of the City's draft plan to address primarily an EF-4 Tornado event. The plan includes a chapter on how to handle historic resources and areas more appropriately to enable their reconstruction through extensive documentation. This is an opportunity for 1-2 members of the Commission to read this section, provide comment, and supplement it so that it meets best practice standards.
- Commissioner Cohen volunteered.

### **B. Upcoming October Historic Preservation Newsletter**

General discussion on columns or topics for inclusion and solicitation of interest by Commissioners to write content.

- Mr. Sterling provided an update on the quarterly newsletter, shared potential ideas for regular columns, and reviewed the timeline for commissioners to submit draft narratives for inclusion in the next October newsletter.
- Commissioner Bowes-Carlson volunteered to write something for October in addition to what staff and the Chair were planning to prepare.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Preservation Commission will hold its next regularly scheduled meeting on October 10, 2023 at 2100 Ridge Avenue in Room 2800.