



MEETING MINUTES

PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 30, 2024
7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Carl Klein, Sarah M. Dreller, Beth Bodan John Jacobs, Charles Smith, Thomas Ahleman,

Members Absent: Stuart Cohen, Amanda Ziehm, Joshua Bowes-Carlson

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling

Presiding Member: Sarah M. Dreller, Chair

Minutes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

Public Comment

- The Commission received one letter of support regarding amendment of the Harley Clarke property's statement of significance, and one letter in regard to designating Ryan Field as an Evanston Landmark.
- Mr. Sterling noted that due to the late submission of the Ryan Field comment, he would circulate it to Commissioners after the meeting and retroactively post it on the Commission's website.

NEW BUSINESS

A. **24PRES-0001 - 1117 Sheridan Road - Landmark - Lakeshore Historic District**

Jeanie Petrick, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a wooden deck at the homes rear volume and alter the homes north and east elevations fenestration -- removing non-original windows and installing new windows and doors in new openings.

- The applicant provided an overview of the proposed window and door alterations as well as a new wooden deck. The proposed modification are part of an interior remodel, and improving circulation throughout and in and out of the kitchen.
- The applicant provided original drawings of the home showing the original fenestration and that it had been altered on the side elevation. The intent was to enlarge those openings to better mimic the original conditions and increase

the amount of natural light into the kitchen.

- The applicant showed existing conditions, especially of the rear elevation which was highly altered in the 1980s from its original condition.
- Commissioners asked the applicant about the proposed use of a casement window when the original drawings showed a six over one double hung window.
- The applicant stated that the decision for a casement was to mimic some other newer windows on the homes primary elevation and elsewhere, as well as eliminate a meeting rail at eye level for the windows at the kitchen sink and stove. Although not divided lites in the casement, the above transom profile and proportions match the lite pattern of the original windows, creating a 3/1 effect rather than a 6/1. This also created continuity within the entire room, rather than propose this at the sink and stove and then divided lites at the rear elevation.
- Commissioners applauded the sensitivity in design, and noted that the use of a casement has the effect of subtly identifying old vs new in the home, an evolution of its built character. The proportions of the windows and doors, as well as the deck are an improvement on the rear elevation.
- Commissioners asked the applicant to state for the record what type of window and what material was being used.
- The applicant stated they were Marvin Ultimate wood units.
- The Commission asked the applicant if the trim and mouldings would match existing profiles, as well as the proposed sill, would it be limestone.
- The applicant stated yes to both.
- A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Jacobs, Seconded by Commissioner Bodam, and carried unanimously.

B. Election of 2024 Officers

The Commission shall vote on the slate of electors for 2024 officer positions.

- A motion to adopt the full slate of electors for 2024 officer positions, with Commissioner Dreller as Chair, Commissioner Bodan as Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Klein as Secretary was made by Chair Dreller, Seconded by Commissioner Smith, and adopted unanimously.

C. 2024 Annual Work Plan

Staff recommends review and adoption of the proposed 2024 annual work plan with the following priority initiatives within Preserve 2040 identified for implementation: Initiative 2.10; Initiative 3.6; Initiative 4.4; and, Initiative 4.12.

- Commissioners and City Staff discussed the proposed work plan, meant to advance annual initiatives identified in the City's Preserve 2040 Plan. In the second year of the plans inception, the Commission is looking to advance high priority initiatives with an implementation timeline identified as year 1-3.
- Initiatives identified for consideration included:
 - Advocating for adoption of a citywide deconstruction ordinance
 - Facilitating 1:1 trainings with elected officials and department heads

- Advancing a realtor certification program, and;
 - Creating a consortium or advisory subcommittee.
- Commissioners discussed the initiative around deconstruction, noting it is a significant source of material waste and is a climate action issue. They asked how the Commission would be involved and where this idea was conceived.
- Mr. Sterling noted that the Commission was correct, this is a significant tool many municipalities have adopted across the Country to eliminate construction waste, noise, and air pollution associated with traditional demolition.
- Mr. Sterling noted the initiative had grown out of conversations with the Environment Board and the City's Sustainability Division during creation of the Preserve 2040 Plan. The key word is advocate for, this initiative doesn't anticipate the Commission as the responsible party for moving this forward, but it does have significant overlap with the Commissions work and is often tied in an ordinance to buildings older than a certain construction date due to their inherent quality of building materials that can be salvaged, repurposed, resold at affordable rates, etc...
- The Commission expressed some discomfort with the initiatives exact language, and would rather simply explore the feasibility of deconstruction in Evanston, the cost, capacity to conduct the work, how other municipalities have structured this, and create a report of those findings.
- Mr. Sterling said that was reasonable.
- Commissioners asked about the preservation consortium and if it could include associate membership.
- Mr. Sterling noted that the primary goal of that initiative is to build local capacity in order to effectively advance the Preserve 2040 Plan. The Commission has limited volunteer capital and this group would help advance our goals and also share what goals they may have that the Commission could assist with. This cross pollination of ideas and energy is a very positive thing.
- Chair Dreller noted that something like this had been done in the past.
- Mr. Sterling noted that in 2020 and 2021, Carlos Ruiz had engaged in monthly calls with a consortium of partner organizations including Shorefont, the Mitchell Museum, Frances Willard House and Museum, History Center, and Preservation League of Evanston. This core group was instrumental in reviewing and helping write portions of the Preserve 2040 Plan, but due to leadership changes recently had absolved.
- The consortium could just include this group, or it could be expanded to include associate members, a program very successful in the Commissions history during the 1970s and 1980s. Associate membership helps capture specific interests and experiences and expertise from individuals who may not want to commit to being a full Commissioner and instead of serving 6 years, could pop in and out to advance things meaningful to them.
- Commissioners noted the realtor certification program as not being a year 1-3 priority. Chair Dreller explained that it was tied to a specific interest from Commissioner Bowes-Carlson who was absent. His experience and expertise as a realtor, and his enthusiasim to advance this initiative, makes it logical to

advance now. Realtors are the front line of the work we do and are valuable allies, confronting common misconceptions, and explaining correct processes that alleviate confusion and frustration later.

- Mr. Sterling noted the last initiative, training for elected officials, was really valuable, and during creation of the plan was one of the most pressing initiatives identified. The Council and department heads play a significant role in the preservation programs administration, and in some cases are the determining body for types of proposals. Preservation is multi-faceted and nuanced, and unless someone is taught about it, it is often misunderstood.
- Commissioners briefly asked about ongoing initiatives listed at the bottom of the annual work plan, specifically placing properties on the eligibility study list and conducting ongoing surveys.
- Mr. Sterling noted that ongoing initiatives are central to the work the Commission does, and should be advanced in some form each year. Specifically, survey and determining eligibility is essential to understand what significant resource exist and afford opportunities to review them during entitlement and non as-of-right development proposals. This is particularly important in areas of the City with “high development potential”.
- Commissioner Jacobs made a motion to adopt the annual work plan with an amendment to the language regarding the deconstruction initiative where it would instead read that the Commission explore the feasibility of a deconstruction ordinance rather than advocate for its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Klein and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. Minutes of December 12, 2023

- The minutes were adopted with amendments sent to City Staff by Commissioner Klein.

DISCUSSION (NO VOTE WILL BE TAKEN)

A. 1813-1815 Church Street - Mt. Pisgah Apartments - Review of Construction Management Plan

As part of the approved planned development, a condition was added to require the applicant, The Housing Opportunity Development Corporation, to work with the Preservation Commission before demolition to review the construction management plan, photo documentation of existing conditions, and a report issued by a certified structural engineer that documents measures taken to ensure the demolition and proposed construction of a multi-story affordable housing development, will not have an adverse structural impact on the adjacent Landmark property located at 1817 Church Street.

The Commission shall review and offer input to the applicant on further measures that could be considered for incorporation to ensure demolition and subsequent

construction does not adversely impact the structural integrity of 1817 Church Street.

- Richard Koenig provided the Commission with an overview of the proposed construction management plan with the following key points.
 - The buildings do not share a party wall
 - The proposed footing method and engineering does not require deep excavation
 - The wall adjoining the Landmark property will be deconstructed by hand
 - Vibration monitors will be installed
 - Constant photo documentation will occur to ensure no adverse impact to the structures integrity
- Commissioners asked who would be on site to answer any question should they arise during demolition and new construction.
- Mr. Koenig stated that the site superintendent would field all those types of inquiries and requests and he would be on site daily and contact information would be posted on site
- Commissioners asked about current water runoff conditions at the site.
- Mr. Koenig stated that the portions of the property to the rear by the alley is known to flood and water has been known to get into the Landmark building during heavy rain events. The new construction should alleviate runoff on the total site by managing it on their larger parcel, but that's all they could control
- Commissioners asked if moisture sensors could be installed to monitor potential flooding or water infiltration and asked if the Landmark building has a basement.
- Mr. Koenig replied that he would look into installation of moisture sensors and he wasn't certain if the Landmark property included a basement.
- Commissioners noted the Landmark buildings mansard roof form with a side face of the roof sloping toward the new proposed building. How would that be managed?
- Mr. Koenig stated that they had not identified that or come up with a solution but that is why he is here. It is an excellent observation and he will report back to the Commission with a solution to ensure water doesn't impact either structures integrity and is managed appropriately.
- Commissioners thanks Mr. Koenig for the opportunity and looked forward to hearing how demolition and construction progress.

B. **Amending the Statement of Significance for 2603 Sheridan Road commonly known as the Harley Clarke Mansion.**

Commissioner Smith will discuss amending the existing Statement of Significance or creating a separate Statement of Significances in order to adequately capture the property's varied character defining features which should be treated with sensitivity -- including the property's significant landscape composition and integrity of setting, and its cultural significance. Code Section 2-8-3 (G) 14.

- Mr. Sterling introduced the amendment, noting it had come from Commissioner Smith, who has an intimate understanding of the sites significance.

- Commissioner Smith noted that the existing statement does not capture the property's varied significance, including its deep historic, cultural, and social associations, nor mention in any meaningful way about its landscape composition, which was designed by an individual much more significant than the mansions architect. The statement further does not capture the coach house, nor the property's spatial relationships with its surrounds or evolutionary aspects such as the Werling Dune.
- Commissioner Smith noted that of course the many features designed by Jens Jensen and Alfred Caldwell need to be included in an amended statement, but he wanted to focus on an aspect of the property often ignored or not understood as significant.
- Commissioner Smith described the dune as a critical component in the award winning Johnson Johnson and Roy plan for the property, and one of the only aspects of that plan that was implemented.
- Commissioner Smith provided a history of the Werling Dune as a significant evolutionary aspect of the site with significance in its own right. The dune was designed as an homage to Jens Jensen by a notable landscape architect and Jens Jensen expert, Donald Werling, the City's naturalist in the 1970s and early 1980s. The dune arose from deep cultural and social unrest during the environmental movement of the 1970s, and was conceptualized as a respite from human interference, the City's first protected landscape as a sanctuary as habitat for a variety of species. In fact, the dune was once one of the most ecologically rich areas in the City but has since fallen into a sorry state due to overuse and lack of stewardship.
- Commissioner Smith was hopeful that elevating, identifying, and recording the significance of this feature would help with its future restoration and celebration.
- Commissioners debated whether the dune should be incorporated into the existing statement or whether it could be considered a standalone feature worthy of its own statement. Members came to some agreement that it was intimately tied to the property's overall composition, and was an evolutionary aspect of the site over 50 years old, but that it is also deserving of its own statement and could retain its significance without its associations with the remaining property.
- Mr. Sterling noted that the entire site, its entire 5 acres, even the beach was a designated Landmark, and that it was within the Commissions purview to create statements identifying critical character defining features of Landmark property's, as well as to amend them in order to capture their evolution.
- Commissioners wanted to highlight the period of history this feature was designed and constructed in. It is a uniquely modern landscape with deep social and cultural associations not only tied to Evanston but broader regional, national, and international movements.
- The Commission asked that a revised statement for the Harley Clarke mansion and Jens Jensen design features, as well as a new statement for the Werling Dune, be brought for adoption at the February 13 meeting.

C. **2024 Rules and Procedures**

The Commission shall review and discuss potential changes to the Rules and Procedures, including the Commissions Rules of Circumstance regarding review of Certificates of Appropriateness applications. Staff recommends forming a working group of 2-3 Commissioners to analyze the Rules and Procedures and bring recommendations back to the full Commission for further discussion and future action.

- Commissioners and City Staff discussed the process and procedure for amending the rules and procedures.
- Mr. Sterling noted that suggested rule changes had been provided in the attached memo, including review of the rules of circumstance, creating rules around associate membership, rules related to bestowing recognition on owners of property's and other preservation related activities as a way to identify and celebrate intangible cultural heritage, and to create a framework around placing properties on the eligibility study list.
- Commissioners asked that review of the existing COA applications also be considered.
- The Commission determined to form working groups to review and suggest changes to the rules and procedures and COA applications, as well as to review the list of eligible properties.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Order & Agenda Items are subject to change. Information about the Preservation Commission is available at: Preservation Commission Questions can be directed to Cade W. Sterling at 847-448-8231 or at csterling@cityofevanston.org The city is committed to ensuring accessibility for all citizens; if an accommodation is needed to participate in this meeting, please contact the Planning and Zoning Division at (847-448-8687) 48 hours in advance so that arrangements can be made for the accommodation if possible.

Español - La ciudad de Evanston tiene la obligación de hacer accesibles todas las reuniones públicas a las personas minusválidas o a quienes no hablan inglés. Si usted necesita ayuda, favor contacte a Carlos D. Ruiz de la Oficina de Planificación y Zonificación llamando al (847/448-8687) o cruiz@cityofevanston.org con 48 horas de anticipación para acomodar su pedido en lo posible