



## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Carl Klein, Sarah M. Dreller, Beth Bodan, Charles Smith, Stuart Cohen, Joshua Bowes-Carlson, Amanda Ziehm

Members Absent: Thomas Ahleman, John Jacobs

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling

Presiding Member: Sarah M. Dreller, Chair

Minutes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

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## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Members of the public are afforded three (3) minutes per person to provide testimony related to items listed under discussion, staff reports, presentations, or to otherwise address the Commission generally. Members of the public wishing to provide testimony on new or unfinished business shall be given the opportunity to do so following presentation by the applicant in a manner and under time limits determined by the Chair.

- The Commission did not receive any public comment in person. One written comment in support of a local policy and procedure for reinterment of ancestral remains in instances of inadvertent discovery was submitted by Raphael Wahwassuck, Tribal Council Member and Historic Preservation Officer for the Potawatomi Prairie Band Nation.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Envision Evanston 2045**

HDR, Inc. will provide a presentation regarding development of the City's new Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, followed by discussion with the Commission.

- Jon Brooke, consultant, and Liz Williams, Evanston

Planning Manager provided an overview of the planning process including opportunities to engage with the Commission. The Preservation Commission will be a recommending body to the plans adoption, and will act in an advisory capacity to assist in the development of the plans historic preservation component as required by code.

- Commissioners advocated for:
  - Incorporating and expanding upon the City's recently adopted preservation plan, Preserve 2040,
  - Including a robust arts and culture component,
  - Providing adequate checks, balances, and safeguards for historic resources within revised entitlement processes.
  - Consider the unintended impact on historic resources, particularly those not currently registered as landmarks or within historic districts, when changes to zoning and associated land values and development potential are proposed.
  - Using the City's historic districts and their diversity of land use patterns as examples for future zoning changes that allow more flexibility in density and use while remaining contextual, human-scaled, and visually appealing

B. **Inadvertent Discovery and Re-interment of Ancestral Remains**

Eli S. Suzukovich III, PhD, will describe how inadvertent discovery of ancestral remains can occur and how these discoveries can be mitigated. This presentation will include a definition of re-interment sites and a discussion of the various legal, ethical, and cultural factors to be considered when selecting and maintaining a re-interment site. Code Section 2-8-3 (G) (8).

- A video from the Associated Press outlined House Bill 3413, and the ability to reinter ancestral human remains on State land where prior practice had made discovery of ancestral human remains property of the Illinois State Museum.
- Mr. Suzukovich III provided an overview of the change in policy at the State level, describing it as a critical step towards allowing ancestral human remains to be reintered where they were discovered or close to where they were discovered.
- Native peoples believe that the remains of their ancestors were buried in a location for a purpose, and removing them damages their cultural integrity and deep connection to place.

- The Illinois law is a step forward, but it fails in one key area – locations without proximate State land where the likelihood of inadvertent discovery is also high. This defines Evanston, and much of the North Shore and Chicago.
- A possible solution is a local policy and procedure for not only reinterment but early consultation and on-site monitoring for certain types of projects.
- A dedicated local reinterment site would need to be secure to prevent looting, be protected from future development similar to a conservation easement or area, have its identity and location protected, and be free of utilities that prevent excavation.
- Commissioners asked what the likelihood of discovery might be in Evanston and if there were known settlement sites throughout the City.
- Mr. Suzukovich stated that there were several known settlement sites in Evanston, both large and small, and the potential for discovery was higher than in other locations.
- Commissioners asked what types of projects might require consultation and how this would impact an average homeowner.
- Mr. Suzukovich stated that the location of the cultural layer was deeper than average excavation say for a patio or pool, or foundation. The types of projects that are of concern are those with very deep excavation, such as the recent Evanston Labs project on Clark and Orrington. That project should have involved consultation with Tribes due to the depth of excavation and its location.
- Mr. Suzukovich III further impressed that a local policy and procedure for inadvertent discovery as well as a dedicated reinterment area not only benefits the Native peoples whose ancestral homeland included Evanston, but creates more efficiency and mitigates otherwise costly development delays.
- The Commission stated that it seemed like a good policy and that increased consultation and communication regarding larger projects is essential. It is incumbent upon local governing bodies to uphold the spirit of HB3413 where its implementation isn't practical otherwise.

## NEW BUSINESS

A. **24PRES-0013 - 1046 Michigan Avenue - Landmark - Lakeshore Historic District**

Studio Talo Architecture Inc., applicant on behalf of the

homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the existing homes non-original cladding atop original wood cladding with a 3" exposure, replacing it with fibercement lap siding and trim.

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [7].

- Jen Parker Holtz and Nataliya Silyarska provided a detailed overview of the proposal which includes restoration of the existing original wood windows, replacement of aluminum siding atop original wood siding with fibercement lap siding, and replacement of the curved bay's lap siding with a smooth textured azek panel.
- Commissioners asked if the applicant has considered restoring the original wood siding.
- The applicant stated they did seriously consider it, but due to the original siding being missing in many locations altogether, and in others being in very poor condition, it made sense to propose replacement. The cost of replacement in wood was considered as well, but was more expensive and has additional maintenance. The savings for the siding is what made restoration of the windows important – a feature the owners felt was more character defining.
- Commissioner asked for clarification on the existing exposure of the siding.
- The applicant stated that the wood siding beneath the aluminum siding was between 2 and  $\frac{3}{4}$ " and 3" in width while the aluminum siding atop it is a 4" exposure.
- The Commission asked what the exposure of the fibercement would be.
- The applicant stated it would be 4" so there would not be a change in general appearance to what is currently existing.
- The Commission asked if it were possible to provide a 3" exposure for the fibercement noting that some applicants had accomplished this in the past.
- The applicant stated it was possible in theory and could be accomplished either by ripping the boards to size, but that voids the warranty and has a lot of added labor cost and material waste, or by having more of an overlap on the boards.
- They did discuss overlapping the boards more to achieve close to a 3" exposure, and the rep at hardie board said this was possible – however, their contractor did not feel comfortable with this approach.
- The Commission agreed that since the aluminum atop the original was 4", a 4" fibercement would not change the

appearance.

- The Commission asked for clarification on the trim and associated transition areas at windows, doors etc and how those would be handled.
- The applicant stated the home currently has corner boards, so that won't change. The transitions at windows and doors will have the fibercement butt directly against existing mouldings and trim.
- The only area where the fibercement is not possible is the curved bays. This is where they are proposing a trex panel. It won't look the same as lap siding, but since it is only on the bays, the change in general appearance will likely be negligible.
- Commissioner stated that this approach may be suitable and suggested that the applicant explore scoring the azek panel to mimic the exposure of a lap siding.
- The Commission applauded the applicant on the thoroughness of their presentation as well as the commitment by the new owners to restore many of the original windows and give the long vacant home new life.
- The Commission voted unanimously to approve the application with the following conditions:
- If alteration is necessary to the proposed scope of work presented for cladding the rounded bays, it may be approved administratively so long as the applicant proposes either a smooth azek panel, or a scored azek panel that mimics the exposure of the proposed cladding.
- Additionally, the following were added to the scope of work and approved by the Commission. Installation of two skylights minimally visible from the public way and replacement of two badly deteriorated windows identified during the presentation with custom wood windows to match existing substantially.

B. **Amending the Statement of Significance for 2603 Sheridan Road, The Harley Clarke Mansion and Grounds**

The Commission will consider language that amends the existing Statement of Significance and create a separate Statement of Significance for the property's dune landscape. The goal is to adequately capture the property's varied character-defining features which should be treated with sensitivity, including the property's significant landscape composition, integrity of setting, and cultural significance. This aligns with initiative 3.10 within the Preserve 2040 Plan. Code Section 2-8-3 (G) 14.

- Commissioner Smith provided an overview of the change

noting that the original statement was devoted almost entirely to the details of the mansion and included less than a sentence for the grounds.

- The new statement not only goes into more depth about the background of Jens Jensen and his work with Alfred Caldwell for the site, but provides additional detail about the modern human-made dune landscape to the east of the mansion designed by Donn Werling.
- Commissioner Smith noted that the dune is very vulnerable and fragile right now and is a significant feature with deep associations with the City and Nations environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The dune was the first area created in the City to be a protected habitat. It was intended as a respite from human interference.
- Commissioners applauded the new statement noting it was an important step in acknowledging the City's cultural landscapes – an action that should likely be replicated for many other sites and properties.
- Chair Dreller stated that the Commission should expect to amend the statement further once a contribution from local tribal leaders about the Native American history of the site could be incorporated.
- Mr. Sterling stated that the statement could be adopted with an understanding that the additional contribution would be added afterward.
- The Commission voted unanimously to adopt the amended Statement.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

### **Minutes of January 30, 2024**

- The minutes were adopted as presented.

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

### **A. Realtor Certification Program**

Commissioner Bowes-Carlson will summarize a National Alliance of Preservation Commissions webinar about historic preservation certification and training programs for local realtors. This item aligns with initiative 4.12 within the Preserve 2040 Plan. Code Section 2-8-3 (G) (8).

- Commissioner Bowes-Carlson summarized points from a recent webinar he attended by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions about historic preservation and training programs.
- There are many misconceptions among real estate agents

about what it means and what it doesn't mean to be a historic property.

- Rather than start with a full certification program, which may be difficult to implement, Commissioner Bowes-Carlson suggested starting by building a stronger connection between preservation and local realtors. This could be done through a walking tour of historic districts, and more informal training opportunities.
- There may be future opportunities as interest takes off to partner with regional governing entities to provide a certification that could be a point of pride for realtors and could be included in their credentials.
- Fellow Commissioners were enthusiastic by this opportunity, noting that realtors are really at the front lines for preservation and can cause a lot of misunderstanding and fear, or help break down these barriers and misconceptions.
- If done properly, this program could help correct processes that alleviate confusion and frustration later – even if its knowing who to contact as questions come up, and understanding that the City has resources available including staff.
- Commissioner Bowes-Carlson stated he has been in conversations with the History Center and local realtors with an initial schedule to launch something in the Fall when the housing market slows down.
- Commissioners asked if another update could be provided in April.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:47pm.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:cruiz@cityofevanston.org) con 48 horas de anticipación para acomodar su pedido en lo posible