



MEETING MINUTES

PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

7:00 P.M. Council Chambers Room 2800

Members Present: Carl Klein, Beth Bodan, Thomas Ahleman,
Matthew Johnson, Stuart Cohen, Lesa Rizzolo

Members Absent: Charles Smith, Amanda Ziehm, Joshua Bowes-Carlson

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling

Presiding Member: Sarah Dreller, Chair

Minutes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public are afforded three 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 in a manner and under time limits determined by the Chair.

- Stephanie Salem addressed the Commission generally, providing comments on the Commissions history and process.
- Omar Salem addressed the Commission generally, providing clarification on remarks made at the previous meeting as well as clarifying his families intended use for the proposed structure at 1525 Judson.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. 24PRES-0046 - 1525 Judson Avenue - Lakeshore Historic District

Anthony Hurtig, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing detached two-car garage and construct a new detached two-story accessory dwelling unit with ground floor parking in the rear-yard.

Applicable Standards: Demolition [1-5] & Construction [1-14, & 16].
Continued from May 14.

- Anthony Hurtig, applicant, provided an overview of the proposed changes made after the previous meeting and attempts to address the Commission concerns with the scale of the proposed structure as well as the spacing between it and the adjoining structure to the south.
- Mr. Hurtig reviewed the proposed changes which included moving the structure an additional 2 feet to the north, and reducing its height by one foot. Mr. Hurtig further demonstrated the existing location of the structure to the south, which was identified through survey information as being 11'-6" from the south lot line of 1525 Judson, and placing the proposed structure 15'-9" from the structure to the south.
- Commissioners noted that the applicant had reduced the floor to ceiling height in the second story to 8' but asked what the floor to ceiling height was at the ground floor garage level. The applicant stated that it was 8'.
- Commissioners asked how the applicant determined the distance between structures and whether a plat of survey was located. The applicant stated they had conducted significant field measurements that were then confirmed with City staff based on an archived copy of 1519 Judson's plat of survey.
- Commissioners noted that the same issues as before remain, the scale and spacing of structures, and asked how it was determined to move the structure further north, but not as far north as the code allows (which is 10'). The applicant noted that this was based on conversations with the client and trying to balance the concerns of the neighbors while providing useable space between the clients home and the north wall of the proposed ADU. They tried to strike the right balance, and are also amenable to moving it more if necessary.
- Commissioners noted difficulties with the uniqueness of the site, its non-conforming nature, and conflicting

- requirements between zoning and preservation standards
- Commissioners asked about the zoning analysis and why the first floor bathroom was not included in the calculated gross floor area. The applicant noted they were compliant with all zoning requirements. Staff noted that the analysis language was likely a minor typo and that it should say the first floor bathroom was included. Adding up the square footage as indicated on the floor plans, the ADU is under 1000 square feet.

Public Comment

- Several members of the public who wish to speak in opposition with to do so following a prepared statement by their legal counsel, as a party in opposition to the proposal.
- The Chair indicated that she would permit ten minutes for prepared remarks.
- Jeff Smith, attorney for several neighboring property owners spoke against the proposal with the following objections.
 - The front yard of the home faces Judson Avenue and the yard where the ADU is proposed to be located is a side-yard, not the homes rear-yard.
 - The size and location of the structure is incongruent with the development pattern of the historic district
 - The size and location of the structure impedes the neighbors right to light and air and their quality of life will be diminished
 - The 1400, 1500, and 1600 blocks of Judson Avenue do not contain any similarly sized accessory structures
 - The proposed ADU does not respect the period of significance nor historic qualities of the district and its significant pattern of largely single-family dwellings
 - The proposed materiality is not compatible with surrounding design vocabularies
 - The scale of the structure is not compatible and crowds adjacent structures, diminishes open space, and adversely impacts proximate trees
 - Alternatives exist which could be more compatible such as an addition to the existing home and an interior ADU.
 - The ground floor bathroom is not necessary and could be eliminated to reduce the mass and bulk of the structure
- Donna Harrison, objected to the proposal due to its impact to quality of life, especially light and air and views from her home to what is currently open space as well as detrimental impact to mature trees.
- Mike Meyers, objected to the proposal noting the many

construction projects that the neighborhood has endured over the past two decades. Additional objections were made to the proximity of the proposed structure to the structure to its south, and that this proximity is perceived as being closer due to the height of the proposed structure. Mr. Meyers was also concerned for the existing mature trees and wondered if there was room to move the structure as far north as possible and create as much room between homes as possible.

- Mitchell Harrison objected to the proposal noting that what was proposed was essentially two homes on one property and did not fit into the context of the neighborhood which is characterized by larger single-family homes with ample open space and mature trees.
- Mr. Hurtig and his Client Mr. Salem responded two points made regarding the impact to proximate mature trees, particularly the majestic tree in the back yard of 324 Davis Street. They have spoken about strategies to protect the tree. These include placing the structure on piers at the corners and span with a grade beam to avoid disturbance to the soil and root system. They are also amenable to bringing in an arborist to advise on best approach.
- Mr. Salem noted that they hear the neighbors concerns and they're going to do the project with dignity and address as many as they can, but they feel like at this point they have addressed everything that was asked of them at the previous meeting.

Deliberation

- Commissioner Cohen stated that the project seemed to be within the letter of the law, but not perhaps within the spirit of the law which allows for accessory dwellings. Notably, the footprint of the ADU and the footprint of the main house are almost identical. The volumes are also approximately the same, and it seems that what is being proposed is not an auxiliary building due to its scale.
 - The spacing of the principle and primary structures is also not compatible by way of the zoning requirement for such a structure to be 10' from it. What this does is create a situation where the proposed ADU reads as an independent rather than an auxiliary structure.
 - Commissioner Cohen noted that what is being proposed is an interesting test case for how far the ADU Ordinance can go, and that situation is created due to the zoning requirements and the uniqueness of a corner lot.
- Commissioner Klein noted the significance of the District, and

how introducing a structure like this on a corner lot where it reads as an independent and out of scale dwelling unit might be contrary to the districts pattern of development. ADU's are common as are coach houses and larger auxiliary buildings, but they are nearly always at the rear of properties with significantly more distance between them and their principle structures and other structures to which they are visually related.

- Commissioner Ahleman noted that one of the primary concerns from the previous meeting was the relationship of the spacing of structures. Now that we understand that distance and its been visually represented, and they have made additional efforts to set it back further, the question still remains is that compatible or should it be set back even further.
- Chair Dreller noted that she was struck by how close the homes are to one another in the blocks proximate to the proposal and found what was proposed to be entirely reasonable. There is actually more space between the proposed ADU and the southern neighbor than there is between other houses on the same block. However, the scale of the structure, and its relationship between structures and ability to read as subordinate remains concerning.
- Commissioner Cohen stated that he tended to agree but it depends how one is looking at what is proposed. If its being reviewed almost as a new home introduced into the streetscape, and one asks about the scale of it, its absolutely in scale with surrounding structures. However, if one reviews it more as an auxiliary structure that should be subordinate to its principle structure, it is out of scale.
- Commissioner Cohen stated that it might help in terms of associating the two structures together and not as separate if it was pushed as close as possible to the principle structures south wall (10'). Mr. Cohen asked the applicant to strongly consider this.
- Commissioner Johnson concurred that this was a difficult proposal but he was largely in agreement with his fellow Commissioners. One has to weigh the needs of the property owner vs the needs of the neighbors, but they asked the applicant to come back with some changes and they've in at least some measure responded to that. It may be a situation where what is proposed is compatible but far from ideal.
- Chair Dreller asked to review the two standards one at a time and asked for further deliberation on each. The Chair also reminded Commissioners that the property as well as the majority of the properties to which it is immediately visually

related, are non-contributing, and there are degrees of expectation as it relates to meeting the standards or how the standards are interpreted for landmarks and contributing structures vs those that are non-contributing.

- Standard for Construction 5, spacing of structures on the street, was debated. The Chair stated that she felt this standard was met and there was a reasonable and compatible amount of space between the new building and those to which it is visually related.
 - Commissioner Ahleman stated that it is certainly similarly spaced to other buildings within that block and that is the minimum criteria.
- Standard for Construction 10, scale of structure, was debated. The Chair stated that this one seemed more problematic to her, since the two structures are similar in size although they have made a change to reduce the scale modestly.
 - The scale as it relates to surrounding structures off the same property seems compatible but the scale as it related to its principle structure seems incompatible.
 - Commissioner Klein stated that this was the principle concern and question. What should the structure be compatible in scale to, its primary structure, or surrounding structures. Currently it seems out of scale with both, its too large to be compatible to its primary structure and too small to be compatible with the neighboring houses if its reading visually as a new home.
 - Commissioner Cohen stated that it isn't just the overall mass and bulk that Standard 10 intends to control, there are also other elements that provide scale, such as wall planes, windows, etc. The eave lines align with the home to the south, the windows are adequately scaled, but one thing that hasn't been discussed is the two large garage bays and how those voids are out of scale with their surroundings, especially as seen along a street.
- Commissioner Bodan, who had refrained from engaging in questioning or deliberation, stated for the record that she was recusing herself from the conversation and would abstain from any vote due to some professional conflicts that arose between the previous meeting in May and this meeting.
- Commissioner Ahleman stated that the scale of the features in the building seemed compatible and were adequately arranged and proportionate to surrounding vocabularies. In many ways, the proposed structure reads similarly to many historic coach houses throughout the District. It reads as if it

could have been built in the 1890s. The odd thing then becomes the house itself, but in terms of Standard 10, what is proposed seems compatible.

- Commissioner Klein stated that to him the scale was concerning in that its fitting two homes onto an already small lot that had previously been subdivided and that the relationship and maintaining of open space within the district was being degraded.
- Commissioner Cohen moved approval of the project with the condition that they move the structure further north to meet the minimum 10' separation between structures. Commissioner Klein seconded the motion to allow debate.
- Commissioners Cohen and Ahleman stated that they had brought this up a few times previously and when it comes to taking a vote, in order to be comfortable and make the project as compatible as possible, there should be both deference to the neighbors concerns who know the relationship better than the Commission, as well as effort to connect the ADU visually to the principle structure and read less as an independent structure.
- Commissioner Cohen agreed and stated that he had been conflicted all evening.
- Commissioner Rizzolo stated that earlier concerns from the neighbors had been that commonly and visually, this reads as a side-yard. If they moved it to be 9" further north it would meet the 5' setback requirement that would be applied if this were a side-yard. If zoning on two vacant lots would allow two primary structures to be 10' apart from one another, and that condition and much tighter exists throughout the District, than the ~15' that would be proposed here would be compatible.
- Commissioner Cohen stated that it was difficult to judge if what was proposed was compatible, and they are asking for more to make that decision easier and to get approval.
- Chair Dreller suggested that instead of apply a condition, they could approve with a recommendation that the applicant move the ADU further north and expressed concern that there seemed to be consensus that the project met the standards without the condition.
- Commissioner Ahleman expressed that the condition seemed necessary, at least for him, to be confident the standards were met.
- The motion to approve with the condition that the ADU be moved to be the minimum of 10' from the south wall of the principle structure carried on a vote of 4-2-1 with Commissioner Klein dissenting under Standard 5 and 10, Chair Dreller dissenting under standard 5 due to the added

condition, and Commission Bodan abstaining.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. 24PRES-0067 - 2300 Lincolnwood Drive - Landmark

Omar Gutierrez, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the homes west elevation roof plane by introducing four skylights and constructing three gable dormers above the homes full second-story.

Applicable Standards: Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [1-4, 6-8, and 10-14].

- Bob and Cathy Benson, homeowners presented the application with their architect participating remotely.
- The homeowners described the project, which was initiated by a desire for increased use of the attic level of the home and corresponding changes to the exterior to increase the interior floor area and increase natural light and air.
- The homeowners described that the original intent had been a single large gabled volume at the rear roof line, but through conversations with City staff, they had modified the proposal an minimized impact by introducing three much smaller gabled dormers.
- Two alternatives to the form of the dormers were explored, and the shed dormer roof form was rejected due to an increase in perceived bulk and what the homeowners described as a bigger impact to the visual qualities of the home.
- To respect the long multi-story sloping roof, and to respect the pattern of fenestration at the second and first floors, skylights were introduced at the north end rather than another dormer.
- Commissioners asked about the plans and elevations and wanted clarification on whether there was a larger impact to the exterior at the front elevation of the home to accommodate the stair. The homeowner and architect explained that there was no impact to the front elevation of the home and that the existing stairway to the attic would not be altered.
- Commissioners discussed the roof form of the two alternates presented and agreed that the gabled dormer was more appropriate for the style of home (Tudor Revival) and also that the introduction of the dormers, their size, proportions, ratio of wall to fenestration, was all very well done.
- Commissioners discussed whether a dormer would be more appropriate than the proposed skylights, as well as whether what was proposed were skylights or roof windows and asked

for clarification on how far they project above the roof line.

- The homeowner and architect described skylights rather than flush roof windows, and that they would extend ~2” above the roof line.
- The Commission determined that this was preferable to a fourth dormer as it minimally interrupted the catslide roof which was a character defining feature of the home.
- Commissioner Klein made a motion to approve the application as presented. Second by Commissioner Cohen. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

B. 24PRES-0068 - 724 Colfax Street - Northeast Historic District

Todd Israel, architect and applicant on behalf of the homeowner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a wood deck and stair and construct a single-story addition and new deck at the homes rear volume.

Applicable Standards: Demolition [1-5]; Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [1-8, and 10-15].

- Todd Israel presented the proposal which was driven largely by a want for kitchen and dining room expansion. The home is modest in its detailing and form, and the rear of the home even more so. Additionally, the new addition would not be visible from the front of the home as seen from the street or sidewalk.
- Commissioners discussed the proposed roof form and uncomfortable relationship with the expanded bay to the east elevation. It was suggested that a hipped roof on both ends be explored.
- The applicant stated they had explored a simple hipped roof form but it was not possible to integrate without additional alteration to the east elevation bay.
- The Commission recommended that they continue to explore how those roof forms integrate into a more cohesive composition.
- The Commission discussed the proposed fenestration and relationship of solids to voids in the proposed southern addition to the east volume bay as well as the east elevation of the single-story addition, noting that there was very little wall space compared to fenestration, a condition not compatible with the rest of the home.
- The applicant stated that the fenestration in the expanded bay was driven by a desire to frame a view of a nearby tree, and the rhythm of windows at the addition to the south was attempting to mimic the triple windows at the existing side volume bays.

- The Commission asked about the rear elevations fenestration and whether the scale of the proposed openings should be broken down more in order to be more compatible with the existing design vocabulary. Commissioners noted that what was being proposed was in some ways an extrusion of the existing fenestration at the rear onto the plane created by the new addition, but it was less effective in terms of the relationship of solids to voids and overall proportion of openings. The two additions were so tight and so close to one another.
- Commissioners asked about the proposed deck railing system. The applicant stated it was intended to be as simple as possible and would likely be metal.
- Commissioners discussed the proposal and its divergence from the the existing design vocabulary of the home which albeit simple, was a good representation of an American Foursquare. It was further discussed that it was difficult to offer individual advice or guidance on approach when the entire proposal might need further study as a composition and not sum of individual parts.
- Commissioners further discussed the difficulty of appreciating the pattern of fenestration and solids to voids that were proposed without understanding the reasoning for those decisions. It is understood that an interior floor plan is not required, but in this case it would have been very helpful.
- A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Bodan and seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The motion failed on a vote of 3-4 with Commissioners Rizzolo, Cohen, Klein, and Ahleman dissenting under Standards for Construction 3, 4, and 8.
- A subsequent motion to reconsider was made by Commissioner Rizzolo. Motions to reconsider do not require a second. The motion was debated, suggesting it was appropriate to reconsider and instead continue to case to the subsequent meeting so that the applicant could attempt to resolve the standards of concern and gain approval with a revised proposal without having to re notice the case or re apply. The motion to reconsider carried unanimously 7-0.
- The Commission further discussed the proposal, noting the three standards of concern as being construction 3, 4, and 8. It was suggested that the applicant meet with a subset of the Commission who could provide additional technical assistance in an effort to find a mutually agreeable solution that met the standards.
- A motion to continue to the July 16 meeting was made by Commissioner Klein in order to address specific standards

Construction 4 and 8. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Bodan and carried unanimously.

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A. **Minutes of May 14, 2024**

- The minutes were approved as presented without revision.

6. DISCUSSION (NO VOTE WILL BE TAKEN)

A. **Cultural Heritage Awards**

The Commission shall discuss ideas for promoting the new Cultural Heritage Awards with a deadline for submissions in August. Chair Dreler will also provide a summary of her recent discussion with the Arts Council regarding the Cultural Heritage Awards.

- Commissioners and staff discussed the upcoming deadline for the Cultural Heritage Awards and ways to promote the new program.
- Commissioners discussed paper flyers and digital flyers that could be easily shared on social media and other platforms.
- Staff stated he would reach out to the City's Communications team and prepare such a flier.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 pm.

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