



**MEETING MINUTES**

**PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday, November 12, 2024  
7:00 P.M. Council Chambers Room 2800

Members Present: Carl Klein, Thomas Ahleman, Amanda Ziehm, Matthew Johnson, Stuart Cohen, Lesa Rizzolo, Joshua Bowes-Carlson, John Jacobs

Members Absent: Beth Bodan, Sarah M. Dreller, Charles Smith

Staff Present: Cade W. Sterling

Presiding Member: Carl Klein, Secretary

Minutes Taken by: Cade W. Sterling

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**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, 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 during those agenda items in a manner and under time limits determined by the Chair.

**REVIEW AND COMMENT**

**Church Street Bike and Pedestrian Improvements**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in conjunction with the City of Evanston, propose a shared-use path construction project involving Church St., McDaniel St. and Dempster St. in Evanston. The project involves the construction of two-way bicycle lane with a barrier median and pedestrian bump-outs on Church St. between North Shore Channel and Dodge Ave. as well as a shared-use path along the east side of the North Shore Channel between Dempster St. and Church St. This project will fill a

gap in an existing bike trail network between Beck Park and Harbert Park in Evanston.

IDOT has identified two resources within the area of potential effect as being eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places including the landmark designated Evanston Township High School, and the North Shore Channel and its associated landscape. As a consulting party to the Section 106 process, the Preservation Commission shall review and provide comments to IDOT on potential adverse impacts, if any, to the identified resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as well as provide, as applicable, recommendations for their avoidance, minimization, or mitigation.

- The consultant and members of the City's Public Works Agency presented the scope of work and identified the two resources, Evanston Township High School and the North Shore Channel, as being potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
- Following questions and discussion, there was majority consensus amongst the members present that the proposal would not result in adverse impacts to these resources and their ability to communicate their past and historic significance effectively.
  - Commissioner Ziehm and Commissioner Klein expressed concern about the projects impact to the Channels associated landscape and mature trees.
  - Commissioner Ziehm, exploring the potential to avoid the adverse impacts to those resource, asked for further clarification on the need and supporting data related to the portion of bike infrastructure running through the park and under Dempster Street.
  - Public Works representatives and the consultant noted the use of a third party biking app which shows the area as a current gap in service. And noted use of on-street infrastructure on Dempster which could connect to the east side of the Channel was not possible due to high traffic volumes.
  - Commissioner Ziehm agreed the portion of infrastructure adjacent to Church Street was important, but felt the investment being made for the channel portion could be better suited elsewhere such as portions of Dodge Avenue which would allow avoidance of any potential adverse impacts to the significant landscape.
- Commissioners further agreed with IDOTs findings in regards to the significance and eligibility of the North Shore Channel, as well as the Evanston Township High School, an Evanston Landmark.
- In regards to the North Shore Channel, Commissioners felt the project as presented had minimal impact to integrity and positively increased potential to access and visualize the North Shore Channel.
- It was further noted that the project could be made better through interpretive signage or other installations that communicate the significance of the Channel to not only Evanston, but Chicago and the Chicago Region broadly.

- If adverse impacts are identified, the Commission recommends this as a form of potential value added mitigation.

## OLD BUSINESS

### **24PRES-0137 - 318 Greenleaf Street - Lakeshore Historic District**

John Gonzalez, architect and applicant on behalf of the property owner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter the structures existing pattern of fenestration, construct an overhead entry portico at the homes street facing primary elevation and construct a gable dormer above the full second-story at the homes west volume. **Continued from October 8.**

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [1-8 and 10-14].

- Mr. Gonzalez presented the revisions prepared following the October meeting including changes in the proportion and lite pattern of fenestration to be more uniform, removal of the majority of glass block, and better depictions of the proposed overhead and side entry doors.
- Commissioners agreed the changes to fenestration were more sympathetic and the revisions addressed those concerns.
- Commissioner Jacobs, not present at the October meeting, asked about stylistic influence for the proposed entry portico, noting that the change to center the entryway rather than leave it offset, as well as the use of classical columns to support it, were more in keeping with a colonial revival style rather than the spare Prairie style the structure currently represents.
- The applicant noted that there was not specific stylistic precedent. The entryway being centered was critical for efficiency in the interior program of the structure, and the idea behind the visual change was to help the structure evolve and stand apart as a home rather than a coach house.
- Commissioner Cohen asked if the concern was related to the portico in general, or just the vocabulary of the columns suggesting that simple brick piers may be more sympathetic while also allowing the interior function to improve.
- The applicant agreed this may be a better solution.
- Commissioner Jacobs agreed this would resolve his concern.
- A motion to approve with the condition that the applicant work with staff to proposed a more compatible column, such as a simple brick pier, was seconded and carried on a vote of 8-0.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **24PRES-0159 - 2945-2949 Central Street - Landmark**

Ken Hazlett, architect and applicant on behalf of the contract purchaser, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a wood pergola/arbor and

outdoor seating area in the property's south and west yards. Additionally, the applicant requests a modification to a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness 24PRES-0138 (approved on October 8), altering the pattern of fenestration at the structures east volume to include a window and two overhead doors in new openings.

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [1, 3-8, 10, 12-14, and 16].

- Mr. Hazlett presented the proposal, including the revisions made since the previous October meeting. In addition to moving the pergolas structure further from the sidewalk, the fence was removed, planters included around the perimeter, and also moveable planters with trees incorporated into the main volume of the outdoor seating area.
- The opening for the pergola was centered on the structures primary gable, and widened to allow for more transparency into the space. The path leading to the entry was also straightened and widened.
- Additional changes were made to the east elevation including two new overhead doors matching the front overhead doors, and a new window flanking the side entry door. This was done to allow both additional light into the rear volume of the structure, but also add more permeability and access so patrons would not have to travel around the structure to get food or use the bathroom.
- Commissioners expressed appreciation for the changes and agreed they satisfied their concerns at the October 8 meeting. Especially the additional landscape elements, which the applicant did not have to propose, will help soften the transition between the street and the seating area and allow for more privacy and sense of enclosure in the fall and winter months.
- A motion to approve was seconded and carried on a vote of 7-0-1 with Commissioner Bowes-Carlson stepping down from the dais and recusing himself due to a conflict of interest with the applicant.

### **24PRES-0158 - 614 Judson Avenue - Lakeshore Historic District**

Studio Talo Architects, applicant on behalf of the property owner, submits for a Certificate of Appropriateness to 1; alter the exterior of the homes south volume three season room for use as habitable space by replacing screen panels with sliding doors in existing openings, replacing a single skylight with two smaller skylights on either side of the additions ridge, and removing and infilling an existing south elevation window, 2; alter the pattern of fenestration and proportion of openings at the homes rear volume single-story addition by replacing existing windows, and 3; reconstructing the rear volume shed roof and new shed roof dormer above the full first story.

**Applicable Standards:** Alteration [1-10]; and Construction [1-4; and 7-15].

- Natalya Silyarska, presented the application identifying the bulk of the change being limited to the rear elevation, raising the roof of the existing

single-story addition to accommodate a new shed roof. Additional changes included replacing screen panels in the screen porch with sliding glass doors, and removing a single window opening at the structures side elevation as well as modest window replacement and sill height changes at the rear volume. The only change to the front elevation is an addition of a single skylight at the screen porch roof replacing an existing skylight at the roofs ridge.

- Commissioners asked for clarification on the existing openings in the screen porch, specifically if the side opening was a window or a screen.
- The applicant noted it was a screen.
- Commissioners agreed it would be a nice composition to retain that opening, but the reasoning for its removal was logical and it didn't result in a significant impact to the homes integrity being on an addition.
- Commissioners questioned the use of sliding glass doors for a home of this vintage, noting that a series of french doors may be more compatible. However, it was noted that the proposed screen panels and general pattern of openings were very similar to what was proposed. Commissioners noted this change was more impactful at the front elevation, but also noted that the addition was set back from the front façade and street significantly.
- Commissioners applauded the sensitive and skillful nature of the shed dormer addition to the rear elevation, and agreed the pattern of fenestration at the rear volume was compatible.
- Commissioners questioned the use of a skylight at the front roof plane of the addition noting its visibility from the street. Alteration #1 was referenced, noting there was not a good reason for the skylight and it constituted more than the minimal change necessary to accommodate the interior function of the space.
- A motion to approve with the condition that the applicant remove the front facing skylight, was seconded and carried on a vote of 7-0-1 with Commissioner Ahleman stepping down from the dais and recusing himself due to a conflict of interest.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

### **Minutes of October 8, 2024**

- The minutes were approved without amendment.

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

### **1311 Judson Avenue - Request for Technical Assistance and Consultation**

Todd Jennings, contract purchaser, requests consultation with the Commission regarding the current condition and potential demolition of a contributing resource within the Lakeshore Historic District, as well as technical assistance

related to a future proposal for new construction.

- Todd Jennings, presented his proposal for the property, as well as the current condition of the property and its associated structural concerns. Mr. Jennings asked for advice on next steps, including potential documentation needed so the Commission could make an informed decision on a request to demolish the structure, what the general feelings were related to the significance or lack of significance of the property, and advice for proposing a compatible new structure on the lot if demolition were approved.
- Mr. Jennings noted his plan was to shore the property so it did not fail, but that he would first construct a modest two-story Coach House and ADU to live in while additional capital was made available to eventually demolish the home and build new.
- Commissioners acknowledged some of the property's deficiencies, but noted that the documentation provided did not seem to indicate that the property could not be rehabilitated.
- Commissioners noted it was a difficult judgement in terms of the significance of the property. It is not architecturally significant, but as a remnant of a more working class history of the neighborhood, it is a significant typology of home that makes it very interesting and potentially historically and culturally important to retain.
- Commissioners suggested the difficulty for the property rested in the purchase price, cost of rehabilitation and improvement, and whether someone could recoup that investment without undue burden.
- Commissioners advised the applicant to obtain additional documentation by a structural engineer on the condition of the property and how it might be rehabilitated and at what expense as well as statements from realtors as to whether that cost could be recouped for such a modest home.
- Commissioners advised the applicant to hire a good architect to study surrounding context and design vocabularies and propose a compatible structure that might replace the one in question. The cost of these services is worth the expertise and quality one would gain, especially if a local architect were hired who specializes in these types of proposals and constructing more traditional and sympathetic housing types.

## REPORTS AND UPDATES

### Deconstruction (10 Minutes)

Commissioner Ahleman will provide the Commission with an update on progress related to a deconstruction ordinance (Initiative 3.6 in Preserve 2040).

- Commissioner Ahleman provided an overview of stakeholder meetings he attended related to deconstruction and an associated ordinance being considered. This is in the early stages and he felt it was an opportunity to discuss with the Commission.
- Commissioners discussed the feasibility of a deconstruction ordinance,

specifically how it relates to historic buildings with more valuable materials capable of being reused. Historic districts may be a logical place to start. However, it was noted that demolitions are extremely rare other than accessory structures.

- Commissioners wondered if deconstruction could apply to interior work not currently under the Commissions purview.
- The most valuable materials capable of reuse are an older structures framing and old growth lumber.
- Commissioners questioned if there was sufficient capacity in the region to undertake deconstruction if it were mandated and wondered if there were incentives that could offset the additional cost such as permit waivers.
- Although the cost is more than demolition it has significant benefits for both the environment as well as job creation. Materials as well as appliances and other features can be donated and used as a one time tax incentive that helps offset additional cost.
- Commissioners discussed other City's that have approved something similar including Portland, Boulder, and San Antonio noting that the San Antonio program is run through their historic preservation office. In all instances, the program started small and was ramped up. Typically there are date of construction minimums that frame which properties apply. For example, deconstruction could only apply to structures built before 1930.
- Commissioners ultimately agreed the exploration was valuable and that starting small and with historic structures was logical but there was additional work to be done to understand how the cost would be offset and through which department the Ordinance would be enforced. The City needs to start somewhere and allow the program to evolve and grow, overcoming misunderstandings or unintended consequences or complexities as they arise.

### **Nomination procedures for 2025 Commission Officers (5 Minutes)**

Staff will provide an update on timing and procedures related to nomination and election of 2025 Officers.

- Mr. Sterling reminded the Commission to nominate Commissioners for the role of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, and that elections would be held in January.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm