

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE
October 23, 2019 Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Room 215 – 7:30 pm

A. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Committee Members Sandra Carr, Lou Garapolo, Aleksandra Tadic, and Noel Weidner
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

Acting Chair Rebecca Houze attended to observe.

B. MINUTES

Motion by Tadic to approve minutes of the September 25, 2019. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 4-0.

AYE: Carr, Garapolo, Tadic, and Weidner

NAY: None

C. 401 S Maple Ave (Michael A. Vielehr): Advisory Review for new garage, no garage currently existing (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Michael Vielehr, the homeowner, was present. Mr. Vielehr said they plan to build a garage and there is no garage currently. They will have a gable roof and use a pewter color to be similar to the house. Mr. Vielehr said they intend to use cedar shake or fish scale shingles on the gable end to be in keeping with the style of the house. They plan to use a carriage style garage door.

Committee member Garapolo said he approves of the carriage style door and use of fish scale shingles. He recommended that they mimic the roof overhangs on the house on the garage. The homeowner clarified with Committee member Garapolo that this would necessitate removing the fascia and soffit.

The Committee discussed windows and doors. Mr. Vielehr said they will not be adding windows, due to security, but they will have a French door with light fixtures on either side. Committee member Carr said she approves. Committee member Garapolo said trim on any windows or doors should match trim on the house. Committee member Weidner recommended that siding be as close in profile to the house siding as possible.

D. 401 N Harvey Ave (Abby Imrem): Discuss renovation project including the addition of a side porch and roof over rear door, repair to the front steps, and replacing the front door (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Kindon Mills, the architect, was present. She explained the project to the Committee. She noted that the existing door does not appear to be historic and the decorative glass is actually a sticker. They plan to restore the pilaster, entablature, and crown. They intend to replace the stoop in kind but may not do it as part of this project due to budget. The owner wants to add French doors and a covered wood deck on the side elevation to access the yard and garage. The deck will be painted. Lastly, the second-floor door will be removed and replaced with a window for safety purposes.

Following a question from Committee member Garapolo, Ms. Mills confirmed that the new window will match in appearance but will be a casement in operation.

Committee member Carr said this house used to have shutters and asked if they will be putting the shutters back. Ms. Mills said not at this point; they were removed prior to the current owner. Committee member Weider asked about the brick infill and Ms. Mills confirmed that they will use the brick that is removed to create the French door at the kitchen.

Committee member Tadic agreed the door is damaged and said it should be replicated as close as possible. The Committee agreed that the scale of the existing stoop is appropriate and discussed handrails, noting that the stoop is likely low enough that a railing is not required. Committee member Garapolo said the application to the Historic Preservation Commission should be clear about any stoop plans.

E. 515 Fair Oaks Ave (Tom Abrahamson): Discuss replacement of wood shingle roof (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Tom Abrahamson, the homeowner, was present. Mr. Abrahamson said the current cedar shingle roof is 20 years old, covered in moss, and leaking. He said he will probably replace the cedar shingle to match but asked what the material might originally have been like. He looked at alternative materials but didn't like the appearance and found them to be more expensive. He requested recommendations.

Committee members Weidner and Garapolo agreed the cedar shake is appropriate. Mr. Abrahamson said he found some historic photos but it is hard to tell. Committee member Weidner referenced another homeowner who had an issue with the longevity of cedar shakes and the Committee discussed the different installation methods which can provide more coverage and last longer.

F. 1023 Chicago Ave (David Lewis): Certificate of Appropriateness for replacement of decorative wood window on the front of the house (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

There was no one present on behalf of the applicant. The Committee agreed to discuss the project and have Planner Trexler provide their comments to the homeowner.

Committee member Carr said the window is a main feature on the house. Committee member Weidner said it would be easy to add an interior storm window and recommended repairing the existing window. Committee member Garapolo said the applicant should provide cost estimates.

G. 710 S Elmwood Ave (Stephen Casper and Karen Casper-Strauss): Discuss project to rebuild and remodel rear addition, including adding a corner tower and side deck (Gunderson Historic District).

Steve Casper and Karen Casper-Strauss, the homeowners, were present. Mr. Casper said they had a fire in April and the house was extensively damaged. The fire destroyed the rear of the house and the garage. All the floors were gutted and the rear third of the house has to be rebuilt. Mr. Casper said they will replace the garage and will leave the front of the house as existing. The house currently has all vinyl siding. They will add a deck around the rear, a corner turret, and a rear dormer.

Committee member Garapolo said the side stairway and deck are visible so need to match the house. He said the house has squared-off articulations and asked why a round turret was added. Mr. Casper said the turret was encouraged by the architect to create more living space and light but they do not need to have the turret as designed. Committee member Garapolo said they can achieve the light and space by creating something more like a bay window. Committee members Garapolo and Weidner agreed that matching the tower to the existing bay would be appropriate. Committee member Weidner said rounded turrets are more characteristic of Queen Anne style houses. Committee member Carr said she is okay with a bay. Committee members Garapolo and Tadic encouraged rounded paving and landscaping as an option to soften the Foursquare house type.

Committee member Garapolo recommended that the drawings and perspective views be updated for the Historic Preservation Commission. He said that a full set of plans is not required but the drawings are helpful. Committee member Weidner asked that they remove the fence just from the renderings to improve visibility.

H. Other Business

The Committee discussed the transfer of information from the Architectural Review Committee to the Historic Preservation Commission and how it might be improved.

I. Adjourn

Motion by Committee member Garapolo to adjourn. Second by Committee member Tadic.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.