

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
March 10, 2022 – Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm

Roll Call

Present: Chair Noel Weidner and Commissioners Asha Andriana, Andrew Elders, Lou Garapolo, Nicole Napper, and Daniel Roush
Absent: Commissioners Monique Chase, Sarah Doherty, Rebecca Houze, and Rachel Will
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

Agenda Approval

*Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the agenda. Second by Commissioner Elders.
Motion approved 6-0.*

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Elders to approve the minutes for February 10, 2022. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 6-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2022-11: 228 Forest Ave (Michael and Elizabeth Barrett):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a new coach house, none currently existing (Landmark; Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Chris Bremer and Tracey Brewer, the architects, were present. Mike and Liz Barrett, the homeowners, were also in attendance. Mr. Bremer said he is available for any questions.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Elders.

Commissioner Elders said the property was owned for some 50 years by Frank Sylvester and noted a personal connection. He said he understands the historic garage had a finished living space on the second floor. He said he may be able to find photos. Ms. Brewer said they would love to hear if anything is found.

Chair Weidner asked if the siding comes in a traditional tapered type. Ms. Brewer said the poly-ash material is milled to create beveled siding so they can replicate the dimension and shape of the cedar siding on the house. Commissioner Rousch said he has used this material a lot and is in favor.

Commissioner Elders asked if the rooflines and the pediments on the dormers match anything on the house. Ms. Brewer said they aren't exactly matching. They echo the Queen Anne style but are

not trying to say this is a piece of history. Commissioner Rousch said the house appears to have a 12/12 slope on the gable and the turret and asked if there is a reason the dormers are a lower slope. Ms. Brewer explained the height limits and the desire to put an ADU on the second floor. Commissioner Elders said it would read better if the peaks of the gables were a little higher.

Commissioner Garapolo agreed with the observations and said overall he doesn't have any issues. He said the material is a good selection and he hopes the homeowner will consider the dormer recommendation. Commissioner Andriana agreed. Mr. Barrett said they don't have a problem with making the dormers steeper, but the architects would need to speak to the main roof. Mr. Bremer said altering the main roof would impact the usable square-footage of the second floor.

Chair Weidner addressed the options moving forward. Planner Trexler said they may approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with conditions, if they want. Commissioner Garapolo recommended the project return to the ARC. Mr. Bremer said the dormers are street-facing and easy to adjust. The pitch of the main roof is less visible. He said they can commit right now to having the steeper roof on the dormers. The client is looking to break ground as soon as possible. Commissioner Elders said raising the pitch on the dormer roofs would be an improvement and is an easy change. He recommended 12/12 as that is what is on the house.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that the dormer roofs be altered to a 12/12 slope. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- B. HPC2022-12: 846 N Elmwood Ave (Betsy and Patrick Cliff):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear, two-story addition (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Debra McQueen, the architect, was present. She said the front of the house has a gambrel roof but the back is a simple gable. They are matching the shape of the back. An 8" exposure LP Smartside will be used on the upper floor and stucco on the lower. The addition is entirely on the rear.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Garapolo said the addition meets the Guidelines and the materials are compatible. Commissioner Elders said he was struggling with the lack of a gambrel at the rear, but if that's existing, this is an elegant solution. Commissioner Andriana said this is a good project. Chair Weidner said the project meets the Guidelines.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Elders. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- C. HPC2022-13: 1113 Paulina St (Tiffany and Rey Nungaray):** Certificate of Appropriateness to add open front porch in front of previously enclosed porch (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview and said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on February 24, 2022.

Debra McQueen, the architect, was present. She said the proposed porch is the same depth as the original. They borrowed some details but kept the design simple. The skirting will match the balusters.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Garapolo said this was discussed and the ARC and thanked the architect for following through. He said he doesn't have a problem with the project. It is more of an intimate project than one might see on a larger street, so the concern for detail is appreciated.

Commissioner Elders agreed and said the detailing is nice. He expressed concern that the Trex isn't tongue-and-groove. Ms. McQueen said it will be concealed. She said when she has used Trex, they have mitered the corners to get that edge all the way around. It's subtle. The PVC is not aesthetically any nicer. Chair Weidner said the Commission has typically been more lenient with horizontal surfaces. The vertical elements like the balusters should be wood. Ms. McQueen said vertical elements will be cedar but the decking is heavily functional and not as visible. Commissioner Elders said wood risers was previously advised.

Commissioner Andriana said she likes the design and agreed with previous statements. Commissioner Roush said he is in favor. He said it is unusual, but there is a lot of variety on this block; this is an improvement from the enclosed porch. Commissioner Napper said she is in favor.

Chair Weidner said his only concern was setting a precedent for bumping the building line out further, but sheet 18 and the Sanborns demonstrate the variation on the block. Ms. McQueen said it also conforms with zoning and they try to address those things as well.

Motion by Commissioner Roush to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- D. HPC2022-14: 205 S Harvey Ave (Josh and Megan Abrego):** Certificate of Appropriateness for renovation project including a rear addition, raising the porch railing height, altering windows, and adding a chimney (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She said the applicant attended the Architectural Review Committee meeting on February 24, 2022. She said the project can be divided into four categories: the rear addition, the addition of a chimney, raising the porch railing height, and the window alterations.

Josh Abrego, the homeowner, was present. He said the house has been vacant for 30 years and wasn't approved for a mortgage, so they had to purchase it in cash. The house is in disrepair.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Elders.

Commissioner Garapolo said the rear addition is appropriate. Commissioner Elders said his only concern is that the siding goes all the way to the ground. Commissioner Garapolo said stone would be nice and Commissioner Elders said even brick would be preferable. Commissioners Roush and Andriana said the rear addition is appropriate.

The Commission discussed the proposed chimney. Commissioner Elders said it should be red pressed brick, not common brick, and historically the first-floor portion would have been wider. Commissioner Roush agreed and said a brick veneer with complete brick is preferable to thin brick. Mr. Abrego said he is open to redesigning the chimney width and using red brick but the material is cut, which reduces the cost and weight. Chair Weidner said he is opposed to thin brick and recommended a full brick veneer. Commissioner Garapolo agreed. Commissioner Elders recommended that the mortar joints be thinner. Mr. Abrego agreed to use full red brick and taper the chimney.

The Commission discussed the porch railing. Mr. Abrego confirmed the change is due to code. Commissioner Elders said he understands not doing the double railing and asked about the balusters. Mr. Abrego said they would be plain, like they are now. Commissioner Elders approved. Chair Weidner asked about the treatment below the porch and Mr. Abrego said it is currently a combination of plastic lattice and wood but they would like to replace with material to match the balusters. Commissioner Andriana said she approves.

Chair Weidner asked about the third-floor tower window. Mr. Abrego said it is hard to access and they are relocating the HVAC there. He said he is willing to keep it and put in a single pane with a muntin to mimic the design. Commissioner Elders said the window should stay as it benefits the exterior proportions of the house. He said it could be fixed and covered over on the interior. Commissioner Garapolo agreed. Mr. Abrego agreed to keep it but said the window, itself would need to be replaced. Planner Trexler said this would be a staff approval. Chair Weidner asked about the trim and Mr. Abrego said all siding and trim has been replaced and is not historic.

Mr. Abrego said the new window on the front is to provide egress and add airflow. Commissioner Elders said he sees the utility but understands if it's not historic, that's something the Commission draws a line on. Chair Weidner asked what was found on the interior and Mr. Abrego explained this portion of the wall is lighter and has different lumber. Commissioner Roush said the 1958 photo looks close to the original house and should be a guide. It is hard to get behind the front window because of this record.

Chair Weidner asked if the bedroom would meet code without the added window. Mr. Abrego said it is an egress window. Commissioner Napper said if it's a bedroom, she's ok with the window as it makes the room safer and lighter. Some confusion was expressed about whether the proposed plans show the correct window sizes and whether they will be narrower.

The Commission discussed the proposal to raise the sill heights. Commissioner Elders said with the windows there, it would look awkward. Commissioners Garapolo and Andriana agreed. Commissioner Roush asked about tempered glass. Commissioner Garapolo said tempered glass may be a solution on the front. Chair Weidner said strictly following the Guidelines, the front windows should not change. The question is do we allow the addition of a second window. Mr. Abrego said

his issue with tempered glass is when it's open in the summer and there is just a screen. Chair Weidner said due to the investment and the shape of the house, should they allow the homeowner to make this something more family-friendly and livable? That's the question, whether it's the sill height or adding a window.

Commissioner Elders said if the window size is reduced, he can see the utility of adding windows. Commissioner Andriana referenced the potential changes in width and said she's not comfortable with the changes because she's not sure what she's looking at. Mr. Abrego asked if this piece of the project can be tabled and he can come back with better measurements. Commissioner Elders said it would also be helpful to overlay proposed and existing windows so the Commission can see the changes more clearly. Mr. Garapolo agreed that front elevation changes should be tabled.

The Commission discussed the north elevation. Commissioner Elders recommended adding vertical emphasis at the stairs, possibly by using a half-round window at the top of the main landing window or decorative paneling between the windows. Mr. Abrego said he likes this idea. Commissioner Roush said he doesn't approve of the horizontal top window and asked the other Commissioners if removing the tall, historic windows is ok. Commissioner Elders said looking at the plans, it's clear they can't be retained due to the staircase. Chair Weidner agreed. Commissioner Roush asked if the sills on the middle set of windows can be lower and Mr. Abrego said there will be a bench but they may be able to pull them down some.

Chair Weidner noted Commission agreement regarding the front elevation—that these changes will be tabled. Mr. Abrego asked about using decorative windows on the second floor. The Commission reviewed historic photos and Commissioner Elders said attic windows might have been decorative but it's unlikely the other windows were. The Commission agreed there should be no decorative window pattern.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project with the following conditions: (1) that the chimney be tapered and use full, red brick; (2) that the window alterations on the front elevation are not included in this review; (3) and that the windows should be simple 1-over-1 and not decorative. Second by Commissioner Napper. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- E. HPC2022-15: 225 N Marion St (Tim and Laura Hunnewell):** Certificate of Appropriateness to remove 4 existing windows and add 6 new windows (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Megan Walsh, from the architecture firm Aria Group, was present.

Motion by Commissioner Garapolo to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Andriana.

Commissioner Garapolo said the changes are consistent with the Guidelines and minimally visible. Commissioners Napper and Roush agreed. Commissioner Elders said in the past, window voids were left to maintain the visual balance, but it may not be important here as it's near the back. Ms. Walsh

said they would prefer to remove the windows but she understands the comment. She said the side-yard is pretty minimal in terms of use.

Motion by Commissioner Napper to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed. Second by Commissioner Andriana. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

- F. HPC2022-16: 614 N East Ave (Kevin and Gerrienne Hartman):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear, two-story addition and altering a window on the existing side elevation (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the application. Planner Trexler gave an overview. She noted that a rear addition of similar scale and materials was approved by the Commission in May 2021.

Denny Burke, of Tom Bassett-Dilley Architects, was present. Kevin Hartman, the homeowner, was also in attendance.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to open for discussion; Second by Commissioner Garapolo.

Commissioner Elders asked about the previous project and Mr. Burke said a different design was previously approved. It has changed significantly enough, this is a new submittal. Commissioner Elders said the addition respects the house and asked if the vertical trim piece between the house and the addition was previously recommended. Mr. Burke said a stucco reveal was previously approved and they may want to do this instead. Commissioner Elders said Fiddelke has a precedent for long sides of houses. The reveal would probably be better than a trim board. Commissioner Garapolo agreed and said this project meets the Guidelines and is comparable with the previous proposal.

Mr. Burke asked if the Commission has a preference on the reveal width. The previous design was 8 or 9 inches. Commissioner Elders said narrower is better; when it gets wider, viewers will wonder what is missing or it seems intended for a mechanical reason. Three inches would be enough. Commissioner Garapolo recommended leaving the width up to the architect. Mr. Hartman asked what a reveal is and Mr. Burke explained. Mr. Hartman agreed the wall needs a break as it is very long.

Motion by Commissioner Elders to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that a vertical reveal be used rather than trim. Second by Commissioner Napper. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Cook County Land Bank Authority and Historic Preservation**

Chair Weidner said Landmarks Illinois has recognized the Executive Director of the Land Bank, Eleanor Esser Gorski, for her preservation efforts. He said the Land Bank is a planning tool meant to assist with sensitive infill and vacant properties. Commissioner Napper said she has renovated two Land Bank properties and it is great to see these properties used that have been dilapidated for decades. However, it is rare in dense suburbs like Oak Park.

- **Historic Preservation Awards 2021**

Planner Trexler said that the award winners for last year's Historic Preservation awards have been notified. Typically the Village hosts an awards ceremony in December; however, it was canceled due to the pandemic. She said the PowerPoint of award winners has been provided to the Commission and is available online for the public.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Elders to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Garapolo. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Garapolo, Commissioner Napper, Commissioner Roush, and Chair Weidner

NAY: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:35PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.