

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE  
September 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes  
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm**

**A. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Andrew Elders, Lou Garapolo, and Noel Weidner  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Mike Bruce, Zoning Administrator

**B. AGENDA**

*Motion by Elders to approve the agenda. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 3-0.*

*AYE: Elders, Garapolo, and Weidner  
NAY: None*

**C. MINUTES**

*Motion by Elders to approve minutes of the August 25, 2022. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 3-0.*

*AYE: Elders, Garapolo, and Weidner  
NAY: None*

**D. Advisory Review: 1016 Erie Street (Brian and Tanya Taylor): Advisory Review for construction of new roof line. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).**

Chair Weidner introduced the project and Mr. Bruce gave an overview.

Brian Taylor, the architect and homeowner, was present. He explained that the porch and flat roof are done by them when they purchased the house. Now they was to make the roof more sloped on the porch and the single-story wing. He explained the issues with the flat roof.

Chair Weidner asked if it's just a straight ridge down to the corner and Mr. Taylor confirmed. Committee member Elders asked why they made it flat previously and Mr. Taylor said he was looking for a clean roofline. He said there is a parapet around the main

roof but not on the porch. Committee member Elders asked if they will remove the parapet and Mr. Taylor said they will built on top of the parapet. Committee member Elders asked why they wouldn't remove the parapet and Mr. Taylor said they can do that. Committee member Elders asked about extending the bay above the roofline and said this would be a more significant change.

The Committee discussed the siding. Mr. Taylor said the siding is historic wood cut to look like stone and he restored it. It was covered with aluminum. The quoins on the corner were not present but they could see the silhouette and recreated those. The dentil molding on the main portion of the house was all existing and was restored. The portion on the west was recreated.

Committee member Elders said the sloped roofs are appropriate. Committee member Garapolo agreed and asked about the roof design previously and Mr. Taylor said it was in poor shape and not well-defined. Committee member Garapolo asked if the wing is historic. Mr. Taylor said it did not have the historic siding but was there when they purchased the house.

Committee member Elders said the Commission may be concerned about raising the bay over the door. He recommended doing a hip on the side of the porch roof rather than a shed roof.

Committee member Elders said the house is in the Sanborn maps and the porch originally wrapped around the south front of the house but not on the west addition. That went as far back as 1895, including the west addition. He said it does not show the bump-out for the front door so that was added or it could be missing from the Sanborn. He said there was a studio in the back. Mr. Taylor said that was a painter's studio, where 1014 was built. Before they bought the house, the property it was 1014, 1016 and 1018. Now their property is 1016 and 1018. It's very tight on the east side of the house and jogs over.

The Committee asked for next steps. Mr. Bruce said it would be Advisory Review if Mr. Taylor eliminates the bay above the door. Otherwise the project will go to the Commission.

- E. **Advisory Review: 644 Woodbine Avenue (Barbara Gonzalez):** Advisory review for installation of solar panels by Kyle Benyamin, Sunrun. (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the project and Mr. Bruce gave an overview.

Kyle Benjamin, from Sunrun, was present. He explained the panel locations they selected. Chair Weidner asked if the offset would just not be as much. Mr. Benjamin said ComEd requires the panels to be where shown.

Chair Weidner asked if the panels on the north are not as efficient, e.g. four-to-one in comparison to solar on the south, and Mr. Benjamin confirmed. Committee member Elders asked about which is the front and the addition. Chair Weidner said there was an old pumping station there and they built an addition to connect the buildings. Tom Bassett-Dilley, architect attending on behalf of a later project, said that was their project and that it's a jumble of different buildings stuck together. Committee member Elders said if it's an addition, maybe it doesn't matter as much. Chair Weidner said he doesn't want to set a precedent for solar panels facing the street, particularly if they are on the north. Committee member Elders said it's 1960s with a 1980s addition and Tom Bassett-Dilley agreed.

Committee member Elders asked about the flat roof and Mr. Benjamin said they don't install on flat roofs due to snow.

Committee member Garapolo said solar panels facing the street does not meet the Guidelines and Augusta is a main street. Chair Weidner said they should do what they can on the south and the other section but he does not recommend solar on the street-facing side.

**F. Discussion: 424 Pleasant Street (Schmuck-Bruemmer):** Discuss new addition, new dormer and garage demolition. (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the project and Mr. Bruce gave an overview. He said they are doing an addition, a dormer, fixing windows, and the garage. He said the Committee should talk through all of the issues. Mr. Bruce said it was hard to see the garage due to vegetation.

Tom Bassett-Billey and Joe Juhl, the architects, and the homeowners were present. Mr. Bassett-Dilley explained the project. He said they are seeking to do a passive house retrofit and it would be the first of its kind in Oak Park. He said the garage is 1920s era, the slab is cracked. The proposal is to tear it down, shift it north, and shape it to maximize solar gain. He said the roof of the house doesn't lend itself to solar well. The garage can be the powerplant for the house. They recognize it's not a historic form, but they are tying it in through form and scale. The distinct form is what they need to achieve their energy goals. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said many of the windows have already been replaced. He said the house is brick on the bottom and stucco above. The stair bump-out is clad with faux brick siding. They will replace with LP panel, which is a modern analogue to stucco. Stucco is an additional expense.

Chair Weidner asked about the existing covered side entry and Mr. Bassett-Dilley said they will replace that and clean it up. Historically, the rear of the house was less architectural.

Mr. Bassett-Dilley asked if they will go to the Commission. Chair Weidner said they ARC is an initial step, but this will go to the Commission. Sometimes the Commission sends projects back to the ARC as well. Mr. Bassett-Dilley asked if they can start the permit review. Mr. Bruce said the permit can be reviewed at the same time. He said this project is on the next Commission agenda.

Committee member Garapolo said he has a number of concerns. The work on the main house he doesn't have a problem with. He approves of the LP siding. The garage is an unusual element. They just talked about solar panels facing the street. He asked if they have considered ground-mount panels. He said geothermal is fine. The garage does not blend with the house. Mr. Bruce said free-mounted solar systems are not allowed in the front or corner side yard, so they would have to go through the variance process. Mr. Garapolo said solar facing the street doesn't meet the Guidelines.

Mr. Bassett-Dilley asked about the garage review. Committee member Garapolo said the Commission would have to approve the garage. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said new construction is advisory. He said there is a real conflict between Historic and the climate goals of the Village. Committee member Elders said this is one of the most exposed properties in the historic district. The garage is on the street. The design is way outside the range of what is in the district. He said he admires what they're doing, but this is going against the Guidelines and is not compatible with the Historic District.

Chair Weidner said demolishing the garage is one thing and that's the Commission's purview. The design of the new garage is not as much the purview of the Commission. He said he is conflicted. He said he thinks the historic garages contribute to the property in most cases. A lot of time they have more character than what is being built. Chair Weidner said he is happy the solar is staying on the garage and not on the house. He said he doesn't have any problems with the addition. This is something the Commission needs to be conscious of as preservationists. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said they discussed solar when he was on the Commission and the idea of reversibility. Put them on the side of the back if you can. If you can't get it somewhere else and it has to be on a more visible area, that's where it has to go; keep it in the plane of the roof. He said this will be coming up a lot. Chair Weidner said your house has been cared for and preserved because of the way it looks. If you're adding solar, you have to consider how that disturbs the way it looks and the considerations of the next owner. In some cases, it can be too much and pulls away from the aesthetic of the house that has been appreciated for years. He said the Guidelines haven't changed much. If solar faces the street, they don't recommend it.

Chair Weidner said keeping the solar to the garage is a nice solution. Committee member Garapolo said they were much pickier about a previous garage design that was much closer to the historic garage design. Chair Weidner said they have to start by voting to approve the demolition and then the new garage is advisory. Committee member Garapolo said they need to include more information about the existing garage. Chair Weidner said they will need to demonstrate to the Commission that the garage must come down and can't be saved.

Committee member Elders said the garage is a pretty big departure from the Guidelines. Mr. Juhl said for a lot like this one, there's no way to have solar panels that are not somehow visible from the street. He asked if it would be preferable to push them as far back from the street as possible. Chair Weidner said he has been waiting for solar shingles. Committee member Garapolo asked if a sawtooth roof could be an option, that would not be directly visible. He said he is thinking out loud. They depend on the architects to have a creative solution to the problem.

Chair Weidner recommended solar shingles and considering the north hip of the roof. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said a sawtooth would be shading the panels. He said they looked into solar shingles. Part of the issue is you have to commit to the entire roof. It is expensive and the output per square foot is not as good. You're committing to a weather barrier and your technology. He said he thinks this is coming.

Committee member Elders asked about the window patterns. Mr. Bassett-Dilley said the current windows are cheap plastic grills. They have a 6-over-1 photo from 1981. Committee member Elders said they should include this.

**G. 128 N. Lombard Avenue (Lance Law):** Advisory Review for construction of new garage (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Chair Weidner introduced the project and Mr. Bruce gave an overview. He said there is no existing garage on the lot so the review is Advisory. This property was reviewed in 2020 for a coach house for a prior owner. Lance Law, the homeowner, was present.

Chair Weidner said they typically ask for the design of the new garage to pick up some elements from the existing house. Committee member Garapolo said he did not see anything about the design of the existing garage. Committee member Elders said it's in the link on the Commission website. Mr. Bruce shared the plans on his screen. Committee member Elders said the design looks fine. The proportions and door are nice. It could have two gable ends but that's not too important. This is the kind of garage that looks like would have been there. Committee member Garapolo said he wouldn't put the vent facing the alley. He asked about the siding.

Committee member Garapolo asked about the siding and Mr. Law said it will be a basic vinyl to match the color house. Committee member Garapolo said they don't recommend vinyl. He recommended LP Smartside siding. He said stucco would be ideal. Chair Weidner recommended adding some windows similar to those on the house, especially on the yard side. Committee member Elders said it wouldn't be visible unless you were in the alley and it could be a security concern. He recommended putting the vents on the east and west sides.

Committee member Garapolo agreed the proportions are fine. Committee member Elders agreed and said he likes the garage door. He said he doesn't have any concerns and this is a nice design.

**H. Other Business**

None

**I. Adjourn**

*Motion by Elders to adjourn. Second by Garapolo. Motion approved 3-0.*

*AYE: Elders, Garapolo, and Weidner*

*NAY: None*

Meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.