

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
February 9, 2023 – Meeting Minutes
Remote Participation Meeting, 7:30 pm**

Roll Call

Present: Acting Chair Lou Garapolo and Commissioners Asha Andriana, Monique Chase, Sarah Doherty, Andrew Elders, and Scot Mazur
Absent: Commissioners David Bates and Nicole Napper
Staff: Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner

Agenda Approval

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

Non-Agenda Public Comment

None

Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to approve the minutes for January 25, 2023. Second by Commissioner Elders. Motion approved 6-0.

Regular Agenda

- A. HPC2023-06: 178 N Taylor Ave (Ellen Parker):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear, mudroom addition and altered windows on existing rear addition (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler gave an overview.

Dan Roush, the architect, was present. He said the homeowner wants a better mudroom without stairs and with more space, including a better connection to the outdoors. There is currently a not-so-great addition and this will clean up the back of the house. The exterior materials will all be matching; the new windows will be composite. The windows are currently all vinyl. He said they tried to stay away from the distinctive gable form and fit the roof of the new addition neatly under.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Commissioner Elders said this is a good solution. He asked if the eaves are deeper on the addition and Mr. Roush said the eave depth is the same as on the gambrel, about 22". Commissioner Elders said the addition is unobtrusive with the exception of the return on the north elevation. Removing the deck and patio door is great.

Commissioner Doherty said she likes the project, it is really sensitive, and removing the door and adding the window will bring a lot of character back. Commissioner Chase said she doesn't like the

windows but understands the desire to get more outside in, so she can get past it. Commissioner Elders agreed.

Acting Chair Garapolo said he agrees with the solution to the roof but has concerns about the windows as they currently are 3-over-1. Mr. Roush said the current 3-over-1 windows are vinyl with snap-in muntins. He said he didn't see this window pattern in historic photos. The kitchen window will remain 3-over-1. Acting Chair Garapolo said a solution might be using a 3-over-1 window on the street-elevation window. Mr. Roush said they have the flexibility to move the sill down on that window so would be open to that. Commissioner Elders said he does not see divided lights in the historic photos. Mr. Roush said there is no indication that the original windows were anything other than 1-over-1. Acting Chair Garapolo said they're there now so it will be a mish-mash. Commissioner Chase asked if they can remove the snap-ins and Mr. Roush said they would prefer not to. The Commission agreed using a 3-over-1 on the north elevation window would be appropriate.

Commissioner Elders made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed with the condition that should the north window be enlarged, it be a 3-over-1 to match existing fenestration, with final approval by staff. Second by Commissioner Doherty. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

- B. HPC2023-07: 320 N Harvey Ave (John Blasi & Kathy Stohr):** Certificate of Appropriateness for a second-story addition on top of an existing, non-historic, one-story rear addition and additional windows on the north and south elevations (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Drew Nelson, the architect, explained that there is an existing one-story addition from 2005, which was designed for possible future expansion. He said they want to expand the primary suite and redo the windows on the rear and north elevations. Existing windows are not historic in this location. All materials will match existing.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Commissioner Elders asked about the north elevation and Mr. Nelson said it wasn't provided. Commissioner Elders said it's hard to make a decision without seeing that. Mr. Nelson said they're replacing two existing windows with three and they will be the same height. Commissioner Elders asked if it will look like what's on the rear elevation. Mr. Nelson confirmed and said it will look like the set of three proposed windows on the second floor of the rear elevation. Commissioner Chase said it's close enough to the neighboring house that she's fine voting on it. Commissioner Doherty agreed.

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

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

Commissioner Elders asked that this not set a precedent going forward and Commissioner Garapolo asked that an updated drawing be provided to staff. Planner Trexler confirmed.

- C. **HPC2023-08: 645 N Grove Ave (Matthew Soukup & Anna Lovis):** Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition including a porch on the side/rear of a house on a corner lot (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Drew Nelson, the architect, explained that the desire is more connection with Grove Ave. The front door is on Augusta but the homeowners want to sit outside and watch their kids. The project also includes a kitchen expansion. He said you can see there has been a two-story addition at some point; this proposal helps soften that. They'll match the existing materials. If the client in the future decides to remove the vinyl siding, they can update the one-story addition at that time.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Chase.

Commissioner Elders said it comes down to windows. The new south elevation has 1-over-1 windows. Mr. Nelson said the windows on the second floor are existing. The new kitchen windows will be casements. Commissioner Elders said this will create three different window types. Mr. Nelson said the second-floor actually has 2-over-2 windows and the rendering is incorrect. He said they can do 2-over-2 if the client agrees. Commissioner Elders said it will distinguish the new work more. Acting Chair Garapolo agreed. Mr. Nelson asked if they can keep the kitchen windows as proposed and the Commission agreed this would just apply to the non-kitchen windows.

Acting Chair Garapolo said creating a porch on Grove Ave is a good idea. He said there are a number of side entrances on Grove and this improves the look of the house. He said he's in favor with the caveat of the windows as discussed.

Commissioner Doherty made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness for the project as proposed with the condition that new 1st-floor, non-kitchen windows be 2-over-2. Second by Commissioner Mazur. Motion approved 6-0.

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

- D. **HPC2023-09: 204 S Scoville Ave (Iv & Mary Ashton):** Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing garage; Certificate of Appropriateness previously approved 2017 and expired (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler provided an overview. She said this project was previously approved by the HPC in 2017; however, as COAs are only valid for one year, the applicant has returned to get a new COA.

Denny Burke, the architect, was present. He said the house is E.E. Roberts design and was built about 10 years before the garage. The garage is in the same vein as the house; stucco on frame, slab on grade construction. He said this is very similar to the recent project on Pleasant St. Cost

estimates for this type of repair have been 30-50% more than replacement. He said they're looking to demolish the garage and replace with a couch house.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty to open for discussion. Second by Commissioner Andriana.

Commissioner Chase said it looks like the garage is in rough shape and needs to come down. She said she doesn't have any concerns. Acting Chair Garapolo said he knows the HPC approved this project in 2017. However, the HPC has since raised other concerns regarding information needed. One was having a third-party review, which is not presented. He said they've referenced costs from another project, which is concerning. He said as a precedent going forward, each project needs to stand on its own. Five years down the line, the situation might be worse than it was before, but he would like to see numbers. Acting Chair Garapolo said he's not arguing it shouldn't been demolished, but nothing's been presented.

Commissioner Doherty said since this has been approved before, she is okay with a decision, but she agrees for future projects. Commissioner Elders said the photo evidence is more compelling than Pleasant St. The slab looks pretty bad. He said he agrees with Acting Chair Garapolo's concerns about the process going forward.

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

AYE: Commissioner Andriana, Commissioner Chase, Commissioner Doherty, Commissioner Elders, Commissioner Mazur, and Acting Chair Garapolo

NAY: None

- E. Advisory Review: 141 S Scoville Ave (Michael & Kimberley Lenz):** Advisory Review for construction of a new garage for a house on a corner lot (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler provided an overview.

Tracey Brewer, on behalf of architect Chris Bremer, was in attendance. She said the rear addition was built in 2017 and got a COA. They are matching the garage to this addition. She said there are cedar shakes above the belt course and the windows are aluminum-clad.

Commissioner Elders asked if this is an entirely new construction or a second-floor addition to the existing garage and Ms. Brewer said it is new construction. Commissioner Chase asked if the footprint is the same. Ms. Brewer said it is slightly larger because they are adding a stair up to the attic.

Acting Chair Garapolo asked how the windows will relate to the house and Ms. Brewer said they will match the casement windows on the addition; they are trying to contrast the historical part of the house. Commissioner Doherty said it looks like it will blend well with the addition. Commissioner Chase asked if materials will match and Ms. Brewer confirmed. The Commission had no additional questions or recommendations.

- F. Advisory Review: 204 S Scoville Ave (Iv & Mary Ashton):** Advisory Review for construction of a new coach house (Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District).

Acting Chair Garapolo introduced the item and Planner Trexler provided an overview. She said the project was previously reviewed and approved by the HPC in 2017. However, as COAs only last for one year, the homeowner has returned for a second review.

Denny Burke, the architect, was present. He said this will be a coach house but the second floor will be used as a home office. It will have stucco, clad-wood windows, and a large sliding door. Brackets and window details match the house. The coach house was shaped to receive solar on the south elevation, which is facing away from the street. The street-façade reflects the house, including cedar siding similar to the rear addition. Acting Chair Garapolo asked if this is what was approved previously and said he doesn't have any concerns. Commissioner Chase said the shutter shape is not her favorite but she understands it's what's needed for the solar.

Acting Chair Garapolo said the roof slope is dramatic and asked if there's a way to break it up. Commissioner Elders suggested making the gable symmetrical and dropping down the rest of the slope, maybe just a foot.

Commissioner Doherty said at first glance she thought the massing was aggressive, but there are a lot of coach houses in this area and this is a double lot. Commissioner Elders said this does raise the question throughout town, we're kind of building two residence-sized buildings on one lot. He said he can tell a lot of thought went into the design and he likes the Wright-ian balcony facing the house. He said it would be preferable to break up the slope of the roof.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Garage Review Process:

Commissioner Elders said he agrees they need a third-party review of the structural integrity of a garage. He said he is concerned about things that seem to be entire second residences and thinks they should be subordinate.

Acting Chair Garapolo said the comments in the garage memo should relate to any demolition. He said he also feels strongly about the bigger picture. The HPC's only control is through the demolition process. They've seen a number of projects where they approve the demolition and the next step is purely advisory. It doesn't seem to be helpful. He said he's seen a few of these projects and they look pretty bad. The owner/architect/developer has no requirement to follow what the HPC is saying.

Commissioner Chase said her concern is this applying to structures and not just garages. Commissioner Doherty asked if there's a Village employee that inspects. Commissioner Chase brought up the Packer Dealership and that it looked good from the outside, but they argued that water got into the basement and froze. This is a demolition by neglect discussion. Commissioner Elders said all it takes is backing up a garbage truck into it; the HPC doesn't have any teeth enforcing the quality of what happens behind the house. Commissioner Chase said they need to define economic hardship. Planner Trexler explained the 2022 changes to the Guidelines in relation to garages and roof replacements. She said there is a Certificate of Economic Hardship process following the COA process and that is defined in the Ordinance. She said the Commission should consider what they want to see at the COA review and explained what they have previously requested and what the Guidelines required. She said it may be more of a technical infeasibility question.

Commissioner Elders said the relative weakness of the HPC's ability to guide how garages are built will greatly compromise the historic districts. Acting Chair Garapolo said they need to discuss this with the HPC's attorney. Planner Trexler explained the process should the HPC wish to request a change to the Historic Preservation Ordinance or Architectural Review Guidelines. She said they would need to draft text, vote on the revision, and then forward it to the Village Board for approval. She said the attorney will be attending the next meeting as it is a public hearing for the Landmark nomination. Acting Chair Garapolo asked that this item be continued and Planner Trexler said it will be added to the next agenda.

- **HPC Chair:** Planner Trexler said the HPC is in need of a new Chair. If any Commissioners are interested, or would like to nominate someone, they should notify the Village Clerk.
- **Potential collaboration with the EEC:** Planner Trexler said the HPC has two opportunities to collaborate with the Environment and Energy Commission. The first is by having a speaker in advance of the April HPC meeting as part of Earth Month. The second is creating a collaborative sustainability and historic preservation award. She asked Commissioners to reach out to her if they have ideas or wish to assist.

ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Mazur to adjourn; Second by Commissioner Doherty.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.

Minutes prepared by Susie Trexler, Historic Preservation Urban Planner.