

**Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission**  
**May 9, 2013 Meeting Minutes**  
**Oak Park Village Hall, Council Chambers/Room 201, 7:30 pm**

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT:** Chair Christina Morris, Joerg Albrecht, Greg Battoglia, Garret Eakin, Regina Nally, Drew Niermann, Gary Palese, Tony Quinn, Tom Sundling  
**ABSENT:** Frank Heitzman, Rosanne McGrath  
**STAFF:** Douglas Kaarre, Urban Planner/Historic Preservation

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

*Motion by Eakin to approve the Agenda as submitted. Second by Quinn.*

*Motion approved 9-0.*

*AYE: Albrecht, Battoglia, Eakin, Nally, Niermann, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair Morris*

*NAY: None*

**NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT**

Anan Abu-Taleb, Village President, introduced himself to the commission and thanked them for their service. He added that he is always available should anyone wish to speak with him.

**MINUTES**

*Motion by Eakin to approve the April 11, 2013 meeting minutes as submitted. Second by Palese.*

*Motion approved 9-0.*

*AYE: Albrecht, Battoglia, Eakin, Nally, Niermann, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair Morris*

*NAY: None*

**REGULAR AGENDA**

A. **Historic Landmarks: Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for 745 S. East Avenue**

*Motion by Eakin to approve the Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for Historic Landmark designation for 745 S. East Avenue under criterion 5 as submitted. Second by Albrecht.*

Planner Kaarre noted that owner consent is on file. The property owner, L. J. Tan, is present. The Andreas Brisch House no. 1 was constructed in 1914 and designed as a Chicago Bungalow. The house was nominated under the following criteria for designation:

(5) Embodiment of those distinguishing characteristics of a significant architectural type, or style, or engineering specimen;

Chair Morris stated that the nomination report did an excellent job outlining its importance as an example of a Chicago Bungalow, and feels it would also meet Criterion (1): Significance as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic or social development or heritage of the Village of Oak Park.

L. J. Tan, property owner, stated that they have done a lot of restoration work and provided a lot of investment in the property. They plan on applying for the Property Tax Assessment Freeze program.

Chair Morris noted that the house has fabulous details for a bungalow.

Commissioner Albrecht agreed, stating that it stands out in terms of quality.

Commissioner Eakin stated that bungalows are an every-day, working class housing type, and this particular one includes beautiful architectural details and protrusions and graduated to the upper class.

Commissioner Nally noted that the builder often built on corner lots and it may have been his showcase home.

Chair Morris noted that the rear attached garage was constructed in 1954 and does not seem to be architecturally relevant to the house.

Commissioner Eakin agreed that the garage is not remarkable, and including it in the designation has no benefit to the property owner.

Commissioner Nally noted that if it is excluded from the designation it would provide more opportunities for the rear of the property.

*Motion by Eakin to amend the original motion to approve the Preliminary Determination of Eligibility for Historic Landmark designation for 745 S. East Avenue under criteria 1 and 5 as submitted, excluding the attached garage as a non-contributing feature. Second by Albrecht.*

*Motion approved 9-0.*

*AYE: Albrecht, Battoglia, Eakin, Nally, Niermann, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair Morris*

*NAY: None*

## **B. Smart City USA Project**

K. C. Poulos, the Village's Sustainability Manager, presented an overview of this proposed renewable energy project. Oak Park will be a model test community for smart distribution devices under a demonstration project funded by South Korea and the State of Illinois. The first phase will include 200 homes (half multi-family). The owners can apply and if chosen can document their energy use for three years. The first homes will be selected in August, and the project will last three years.

Commissioner Palese asked if multi-family buildings would be included.

K. C. Poulos stated that it is less likely that condos will be selected due to multiple ownership per building. Also, apartment buildings allow for more diverse economics.

Commissioner Nally asked about the kinds of external equipment which will be used. She asked if S. Korea have historic neighborhoods where they implemented the same program.

K. C. Poulos stated that the only external equipment would be solar panels. They expect them to be the standard flat size and shape. The project was implemented in S. Korea on an island that was a resort and farmland, without historic areas.

Commissioner Battoglia suggested the application encourage homes with west-facing back yards.

Commissioner Albrecht stated that solar power is used in Germany all the time on historic buildings – even clay tile roofs. The panels are removable/reversible.

Chair Morris suggested that they see specifications and installation process at some point. The Commission is supportive of this project and wants to see it happen.

K. C. Poulos stated that they want it to succeed while being respectful to historic buildings.

Commissioner Sundling stated that this is an opportunity for the Commission to embrace new technology. Maybe they can consider the 200 homes as special approvals.

K. C. Poulos stated that they hope this will be seen as an economic investment for local builders.

**C. 1001-13 South Boulevard (SoHo): Request for proposed revisions to the exterior design of Buildings 3 and 4.**

Planner Kaarre provided an overview of the project. The SoHo Planned Development includes five buildings: Buildings 1 & 2 are seven townhomes facing Home Avenue and are connected by a bridge; Buildings 3 & 4 are ten townhomes which face inward; and Building 5 is a condo/commercial building facing South Boulevard. Although the site is not in the adjacent *Ridgeland-Oak Park Historic District*, it is within 250 feet of two Oak Park Historic Landmarks (Pleasant Home: 217 Home, and the Boulevard Arcade Building: 1033 South), which requires Advisory review by the Commission. The HPC recommended approval of this Planned Development at its meeting on March 8, 2007, and the material specifications at its May 10, 2007 meeting. The Village Board approved the project in June 2007. In 2009-2010 the ARC reviewed changes in the design of Buildings 3 & 4, but those elevations were never submitted to the Board for approval. Building 5 was completed and construction of Buildings 3 & 4 were halted during the economic downturn. The project was recently purchased by a new developer, and will soon resume construction. The new owner, SoHo Development LLC, is proposing changes to the elevations of Buildings 3 and 4, both of which are on the interior of the lot and do not face the street. These changes are similar to the ones the ARC reviewed in 2009-2010. The original design for Buildings 1 & 2 will not change.

John Schiess, project architect, stated that they are removing the rear stair tower and proposing changes in siding materials and design for repositioning in the market.

Art Gurevich, property owner, stated that he is one of the principals of SoHo. They feel that masonry works better than siding and next to the masonry condo building. The proposal is a more modern design in the rear and more traditional on the street. They already have some condo and townhome interest. He asked they consider allowing vinyl siding and removal of the window openings on the west façade as it is only three feet from the adjacent building and not visible from the street. All the proposed changes are not about saving money, but about repositioning them in the market.

- The HPC noted that they are supportive of contemporary design, and understands that little of these two buildings will be visible from the street. However, they felt the proposed design changes for buildings 3 and 4 are plain and lacking in human scale.
- The HPC recommended investigating the creation of entry canopies on each of the units on buildings 3 and 4 to shelter the entrances.
- The HPC requested they be able to review a landscape plan, which could potentially soften the appearance of these buildings, and the presence of street trees would determine how much would be visible from the street.
- The HPC had no objections to the proposal to add vinyl siding and remove window openings on the west elevations of Buildings 3 and 4 to help control graffiti damage, as they will not be visible from the street.

Planner Kaarre noted that the comments will be forward to the Village Planner for consideration.

**D. Architectural Review Guidelines**

Chair Morris and Planner Kaarre provided an update on the Guidelines process. Kaarre will be reorganizing the remaining sections to forward to the consultant.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Staff Approvals: Planner Kaarre provided a report on the 172 Staff permit reviews for April 2013.

White Roofs Cool Roofs Brochure: The Environment & Energy Commission created this brochure and is seeking input from the HPC on any conflicts of interest. Kaarre will email the brochure to everyone.

Statewide Preservation Conference: Chair Morris noted that the conference will be in Evanston on June 28-29 and encourages everyone to attend. A CLG grant will fund cover the registration fees for three commissioners or staff.

Realtor Educational Seminar: Chair Morris noted that their educational seminar for realtors was held on April 5 and was a success. There were over 50 in attendance. Karen Doty did an excellent job organizing the event. She, Doug and Anthony Rubano from IHPA spoke. Landmarks Illinois is using the session as a model for other commissions and it will be a session at the statewide conference.

**ADJOURN**

*Motion by Albrecht to adjourn. Second by Quinn. Motion approved: 9-0.*

*AYE: Albrecht, Battaglia, Eakin, Nally, Niermann, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair Morris*

*NAY: None*

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. Minutes prepared by Douglas Kaarre.

U:\CPD\_Strategic\Community Planning\HISTORIC PRESERVATION\HPC Agendas and Minutes\2013\2013 Minutes\05-09-13 HPC Minutes.docx