

Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission
December 12, 2013 Meeting Minutes
Oak Park Village Hall, Council Chambers, 7:30 pm

ROLL CALL

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

AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion by Albrecht to approve the meeting agenda and consent agenda as submitted. Consent agenda includes HPC 07-52: 644 Madison Street (Hill Motor Sales Company). Second by Brandstrader. Motion approved 8-0.

*AYE: Albrecht, Battoglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Palese, Sundling, Chair McGrath
NAY: None*

Commissioner Quinn arrived at 7:35.

NON-AGENDA PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MINUTES

Motion by Eakin to approve the November 14, 2013 meeting minutes as submitted. Second by Palese. Motion approved 9-0.

*AYE: Albrecht, Battoglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Palese, Sundling, Quinn, Chair McGrath
NAY: None*

Commissioner Nally arrived at 7:45.

REGULAR AGENDA

A. HPC 13-39: 220 N. Euclid Avenue (Park District of Oak Park) – Certificate of Appropriateness for rehabilitation of the Cheney Mansion Greenhouse (Historic Landmark)

Jan Arnold, Executive Director of the Park District, and Don McKay, Nagle Hartray Architecture, were present regarding the application.

Planner Kaarre presented the Staff Report. The block-long Cheney Mansion estate is owned by the Park District of Oak Park and was designated a Historic Landmark in 2004. It is also a Contributing Resource within the *Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District*. The designation includes the brick Tudor Revival style Cheney Mansion (*C. A. Sharpe House*) and wrought-iron fence with brick posts (1913, Charles E. White, Jr.), the brick coach house (1914) and greenhouse (1924, Lord and Burnham). The proposal is to reuse the building as a reception space. The proposal will significantly improve the life of the structure through repair of the glass roof structure, wood siding, brick and wood entry canopies, and the sympathetic replacement of the west door and new widened opening on the south façade. The proposal meets the Architectural Review Guidelines, and Staff recommended approval of the COA application as submitted based on the plans by Nagle Hartray dated December 12, 2013.

Don McKay, Nagle Hartray Architecture, stated that the Park District is proposing a substantial investment in the greenhouse. The double door on the south is important for the new function of the building. He outlined the proposed alterations in relation to recommendations from the Architectural

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Review Committee. He noted that the Park District's goal is to replace the glass roof with new tempered glass. They would like approval to seek an alternative bid for Lexan, in case glass is too expensive. Although Lexan is inferior to glass, it is also less expensive.

Motion by Heitzman to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for 220 N. Euclid Avenue as submitted based on the plans by Nagle Hartray dated December 12, 2013. Second by Palese.

The Commission encouraged the Park District to investigate reusing those pieces of glass which are not damaged, thereby cutting the costs for new glass and retaining the historic appearance of the building.

Mr. McKay indicated they would be happy to investigate the reuse of non-damaged glass.

Jan Arnold, Park District, stated that reusing the glass and installing new glass is their priority. However, they are required to get an alternative bid. They want to remove the blue tarp and reuse the building. The Park District Board has allocated \$480,000 for the project.

Motion approved 9-1.

AYE: Albrecht, Battaglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Nally, Palese, Quinn, Chair McGrath

NAY: Sundling

B. HPC 13-38: 1111-13 South Boulevard (Oak Park Brewing Company/Hamburger Mary's) - Cook County Class L application for commercial rehabilitation (Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District)

Property owners Ashley Wright and James Cozzens were present.

Planner Kaarre presented the Staff Report. The building at 1111-13 South Boulevard is a Contributing Resource within the *Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District*. The two-story brick *Playhouse Theater* was constructed in 1913 by Harper & Butendorff for Frederick A. Hill, Jr. and was designed by architect E. E. Roberts. It was converted into a film studio and laboratory in 1920 by the Atlas Educational Film Company (later the Atlas Film Corporation), and remained so until the 1960s. It was converted to office space in 1968, and underwent further interior remodeling between 1983-1989. The current applicants have recently purchased the property.

The proposal is to remove the interior non-historic offices and convert the building into a restaurant and brewpub housing the Oak Park Brewing Company and Hamburger Mary's. The interior renovation will include kitchen space, seating, brewery equipment, bathrooms, cabaret-style bar with stage, and upgraded utilities. The exterior renovation will include the cleaning of the existing masonry, removal of paint, tuckpointing and closing of the central door, and the reopening of the west door. The result will be two entrances on the east and west ends of the building in existing openings. All historic doors have been previously removed and several of the original doorways converted to windows. The applicants plan to maintain any historic features which may be uncovered during the work. They also plan to explore the restoration of the original retractable skylight, a unique historic feature.

The applicants are proposing to apply for the Cook County Class L real estate tax incentive. The incentive requires that the owner's investment in a substantial rehabilitation must equal at least 50% of the building's full market value for the year prior to commencing the work, which is 2013. The building's assessed market value for 2013 is \$165,719, with 50% of that value at \$82,860. The proposed investment in the rehabilitation of the building is valued at \$1,200,000. The building must

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either be an individual Historic Landmark or a Contributing Resource within a locally designated historic district. Upon approval of the Class L incentive, the property will be assessed at 16% of the fair market value for the first 10 years, 23% in the 11th year, and 30% in the 12th year.

The following is required from the Village for the application:

- A formal recommendation of approval from the HPC to the Village Board specifying that the project budget exceeds the minimum investment required and the proposed scope of work meets or exceeds the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Certified copy of an ordinance or resolution from the Village Board of Trustees which supports and consents to the granting of the incentive, finds that the Class L incentive is necessary for the rehabilitation of the property, and approves the HPC's recommendations.

The proposed rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the historic *Playhouse Theater* building into a restaurant and brewpub will revitalize the building and block through the elimination of inappropriate interior renovations, the reopening of interior spaces, retention of any remaining interior historic features, and the cleaning of the exterior masonry. The proposed scope of work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Village of Oak Park's Architectural Review Guidelines. The proposed investment in the building far exceeds the minimum requirement for the Class L incentive. Therefore, staff recommended the following: A Resolution recommending approval of the Class L application for 1111-13 South Boulevard to the Village Board which specifies that the project budget exceeds the minimum investment required and the proposed scope of work meets or exceeds the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Motion by Heitzman to forward a Resolution to the Village Board recommending approval of the Class L application for 1111-13 South Boulevard, stating that the project budget exceeds the minimum investment required and the scope of work meets or exceeds the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Second by Palese.

Ashley Wright, property owner, stated that they are only cleaning the exterior masonry. The interior balcony will not look down into storage areas. He outlined the proposed interior layout and budget.

Jim Cozzens, property owner, stated that there is a lack of historic documentation of the building. They have one historic photo of the exterior.

The Commission recommended using windows and doors of a design similar to those in the historic photograph if possible. They commended the applicants on the proposed use and significant investment.

Mr. Wright stated that they are excited about coming to Oak Park. They have not closed their due diligence process yet, and have not yet hired an architect.

The Commission encouraged their using an architect with some preservation experience.

Motion approved 10-0.

*AYE: Albrecht, Battaglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Nally, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair McGrath
NAY: None*

C. HPC 13-37: 403 N. Elmwood Avenue (Kaegi) – Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear one-story addition (Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District)

Property owner Rebecca Kaegi and architect Tom Bassett-Dilley were present.

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Planner Kaarre presented the Staff Report. The house is a Contributing Resource in the *Frank Lloyd Wright-Prairie School of Architecture Historic District*. The 2-1/2 story stucco house was constructed c. 1910 in the Prairie style. The proposal is to remove the small rear entry porch and construct a full-width, one-story rear stucco addition while incorporating the existing rear two-story bay. The addition will expand the kitchen and add a mudroom. A new rear deck/patio and stairs will also be constructed on the rear of the addition. Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application as submitted as the project meets the Architectural Review Guidelines based on plans by Tom Bassett-Dilley Architect dated December 5, 2013..

Motion by Brandstrader to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for 403 N. Elmwood Avenue as submitted based on plans by Tom Bassett-Dilley Architect dated December 5, 2013. Second by Albrecht.

Tom Bassett-Dilley, architect, provided an overview of the project. The rear of the house is visible from Superior Street. The rear addition roof and eaves references the front porch and provided a horizontal continuity. They are matching details and materials. New windows will be Marvin aluminum-clad wood windows. The proposed contractor is Von Dreele-Freerksen Construction Company.

The Commission noted that the proposal was an compatible design that meets the Architectural Review Guidelines.

Motion approved 10-0.

*AYE: Albrecht, Battaglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Nally, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair McGrath
NAY: None*

D. HPC 13-40: 134 S. Taylor Avenue (Byer/Gupta) – Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear second floor addition, enlarged side entry porch, and removal of the clay tile roof (Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District)

Property owner Deepa Gupta and architect Christopher Goode, Architecture and Conservation, P.C., were present.

Planner Kaarre presented the Staff Report. The one and one-half story stucco Bungalow was constructed in 1921 by Benson and Peterson for owner Robert Houston, and designed by architect Ernest N. Braucher. The house is a Contributing Resource within the *Ridgeland/Oak Park Historic District*. The proposal involves removing the green Spanish clay tile roof from the house, enlarging the side entry porch to the south and constructing a new roof system with front-facing gable, constructing a second floor addition with front-facing gable on the rear half of the house, and installing an asphalt shingle roof over the entire house and addition.

The proposed rear second floor addition to the house will alter the overall appearance of the house, but will not detrimentally affect the historic character, as the original front 20 feet of the house will remain intact. Although the rear second floor addition is taller than the existing ridge-line, it is set well back from the front. Due to the significant setback from the front of the house (approximately 20 feet), it will not alter the character of the streetscape. The adjacent houses to the north and south are large 2-1/2 story stucco American Foursquare houses, and will remain slightly taller as the proposed addition. The enlargement of the side entry porch widens it by 2 feet, and incorporates a similar side wall, wood post, and roof overhang to the existing. The proposed replacement of the clay tile roof with asphalt shingles meets the definition of technically infeasible if it can be shown that the proposed replacement material (asphalt shingles) can match the clay tile as closely as possible in size, profile and texture. Until a sample of the proposed roofing material can be viewed, this cannot

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be determined. Staff has also recommended that the property owner investigate an artificial or synthetic tile, which may match the appearance more closely at a lower cost. Although the proposed addition and porch alterations appear to meet the Architectural Review Guidelines, Staff cannot recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness application until more information on the roofing materials and contractor has been submitted and reviewed.

Christopher Goode, architect, provided an overview of the project. They do not yet have contractors, waiting on bids and HPC approval. They received roofing bids for repair and replacement. Full replacement is needed due to the condition of the underlayment. Reusing the clay tiles or replacing with new clay tiles is prohibitively expensive. He provided his thoughts on the porch and addition roof designs.

Motion by Sundling to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness application for 134 S. Taylor Avenue as submitted based on plans submitted by Architecture and Conservation, P.C. date stamped as Received December 4, 2013. Second by Albrecht.

Mr. Goode presented a preliminary roofing sample. He noted that cost is the main reason for replacing the roof with asphalt shingles. They would match the color and work with the HPC on the final selection.

The Commission discussed three issues with the application: 1) the side porch roof and rear second floor additions; 2) the replacement of the clay tile roof with asphalt shingles; and 3) the expansion of the primary side entry porch.

Chair McGrath noted that the existing rear roof is a hip, and the porch and second floor additions are front facing gables, which provide a cascading effect as they recede from the front. However, they make the house appear larger. Did they examine using a hip roof and a lower eave line?

Mr. Goode stated that they looked at a hip with jerkinhead, which did not look as good. The repetition of form looked better to him. Using the gable roof did not gain them much interior height.

Commissioner Eakin felt there were too many gables. The height is okay due to taller neighbors. The adjacent homes are simple, but this design is complex and making something big out of something small.

Mr. Goode noted that the existing porch is a lean-to with limited expansion abilities. The expansion of the roof may be overdoing it, but it is the same height as the existing hip. It is a Japanese effect of cascading gables. The use of a gable gives a reasonable ceiling height at 8 feet. All the gabled roofs are the same pitch. Reusing a hip did not aid the design much.

Commissioner Albrecht stated that it is an attractive bungalow from the front, but awkward from the side due to the strange roofs. The proposed roofs are higher. It is hard to expand the existing awkward geometric shapes.

Commissioner Nally noted that the clay tile roof is a character-defining feature of the house and it would be unfortunate to lose – especially the front two gables. It completely changes its appearance. She inquired if they had considering only replacing the rear where the addition will go and retaining the tile in front.

Commissioner Eakin noted it is all about cost, and it loses its cohesiveness.

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Commissioner Heitzman expressed regret at the prospect of losing another bungalow and another clay tile roof. He suggested they do a survey of remaining tile roofs.

Mr. Goode stated that they are willing to look at alternative solutions.

Planner Kaarre reviewed the relevant Architectural Review Guidelines for roofing, porches and additions.

Chair McGrath suggested they look at alternative solutions for roof forms and colors and meet with the Architectural Review Committee.

Deepa Gupta, property owner, stated that she bought the house last year and love the roof. They were shocked when they discovered it was leaking and had it thoroughly inspected. Replacement of the entire underlayment is the issue. Estimates for repair and reuse of the tile roof range from \$45,000-\$60,000. They also thought they would add on the rear rather than up, but the roof issue moved it to the forefront. The main reasons for going up are steep interior stairs and the requirement of a rear foundation. They want to preserve the beauty of their house and don't want the addition to be too big.

Mr. Goode stated that the underlying felt is 93 years old and seriously deteriorated. They have to remove all of the tiles to replace it.

Commissioner Sundling stated that tile roof repair is labor intensive. He suggested getting other bids looking at using recycled green tiles vs. new tiles.

Planner Kaarre provided information on the Property Tax Assessment Freeze program, which may assist in offsetting the cost of repair. He noted that the tile roof on the garage is also proposed for replacement.

The Commission referred the application to the Architectural Review Committee for further discussion and took no action on the application.

OTHER BUSINESS

National Register Public Outreach: Planner Kaarre

Liaison with the Plan Commission: Commissioner Nally provided an update on her meeting with the Plan Commission and proposed future coordination on projects.

Village Hall National Register Nomination: Commissioner Heitzman provided an update on the current nomination process.

Education Committee: Planner Kaarre provided an update on the November 25, 2013 meeting.

Staff Approvals: Planner Kaarre provided a report on the 113 Staff permit approvals for November 2013.

ADJOURN

Motion by Battaglia to adjourn. Second by Sundling. Motion approved: 10-0.

AYE: Albrecht, Battaglia, Brandstrader, Eakin, Heitzman, Nally, Palese, Quinn, Sundling, Chair McGrath

NAY: None

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m. Minutes prepared by Douglas Kaarre.