

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
109 James Street - Council Chambers
Geneva, Illinois 60134

July 16, 2013, 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Roy called the July 16, 2013 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. Roll call followed:

2. Roll Call

Present HPC: Chairman Roy, Commissioners Andersson, Ploppert, Schock-Soderberg, Wehrmeister

Absent: Commissioners Hiller, Zinke

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert; Community Development Dir. Dick Untch

Others Present: Deann Alleman, 11 Dorchester Ct., Sugar Grove, IL; Jim Jenkins, 228 Anderson Blvd.; Tad Hemming, 1224 Brigham; Rick Razum, Tim Nelson, and Donato Marrello with Geneva State Bank; Gerald Klemm, 217 Grant; Liz Safanda with Preservation Partners, 1013 Dunstan; Recording Secretary Celeste Weilandt

3. Approval of the June 18, 2013 Minutes

Minutes were approved on motion by Commissioner Wehrmeister, seconded by Commissioner Andersson. Motion carried. Vote: 3-0-2 (Ploppert and Schock-Soderberg abstain.)

New commissioners Zack Ploppert and Geri Schock-Soderberg were welcomed to the commission.

4. HPC Review of Building Permit Applications

A. 426 S. Third Street (Case No. 2013-032); Applicant: Kevin Haddle/Platinum Renovations; Application for Exterior Lighting - Preservation Planner Lambert explained that the petitioner was seeking porch lights on the north elevation (currently non-compliant), a request to add ground-mounted lighting, and to make the existing yard light operational. On behalf of the petitioner, Mr. Rutkowski with Ongo Industries, explained he was going to bring electric from the interior to the exterior by drilling an inch and one-quarter hole, surface-mount wider molding to the existing soffit, and secure it with proper fittings for the raceway, as well as provide two light boxes on each soffit and then reuse the existing fixtures. As to the ground lighting (facade lighting) he would try to match what existed there by adding two more fixtures. The pole light would remain but it would become functional again and he would restore the fixture. Regarding the actual post light, Mr. Rutkowski believed the fixture was a metal halide and the ballast would need to be replaced but he would have to confirm that. He surmised he would have to replace what was inside the fixture because he did not take it apart yet. Mr. Rutkowski proceeded to explain the electrical connection for the current porch lights, which the city and fire department found non-code compliant, and explained how the new lights would be installed.

Mr. Lambert clarified that two of the existing four porch lights on the north porch would be relocated to the south porch and be evenly distributed so that all doors would have lighting. Commissioner Andersson voiced concern about the location of the junction boxes and attaching the raceway (attached with screws to the porch ceiling) on a historic structure and seeing them from the street; however Mr. Rutkowski assured her the boxes would be white with the canopy of the fixture covering as much of the box as possible, which would be unseen by decorative lattice. Mr. Lambert shared that Mr. Rutkowski was with the owner. The location and fixtures for the ground lighting were referenced. Mr. Rutkowski confirmed that the ground fixtures worked except for one bad lamp in one of the fixtures. Commissioner Wehrmeister stated he would allow some latitude instead of installing canned lights.

Commissioner Ploppert moved to approve the request as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Wehrmeister. Roll call:

Aye: Andersson, Wehrmeister, Ploppert, Shock-Soderberg, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

B. 102 S. Second Street (Case No. 2013-056); Applicant: Unitarian Universalist Church/Deann Alleman; Application for Replacement of Entrance Door Leaves: -

Preservation Planner Lambert explained the church would like to replace its front entrance door due to outliving its use and due to the many patchings/repairs that have occurred over the years.

Mr. Jim Jenkins and Deann Alleman were present, representing the Facilities Committee for the church. Mr. Jenkins explained the deterioration that had occurred to the doors over the years and the fact that the locking feature needed to be corrected. The new doors would be Ash wood and replicate what currently existed, and the outdoor latch/handle would be reused. The hinges would probably be replaced with new hinges of a similar design. Per questions, Mr. Jenkins stated the latch on the outside would remain as is, but the inside latch he would construct himself, along with the hinges. Ms. Alleman said she hoped to use the outside handle and lock since she still had the original key but the lock had not been functional for years. Also, a more current locking system, with a dead-bolt, was needed. Per Commissioner Ploppert's question, Mr. Jenkins could not decide whether the doors would be naturally finished or painted, but he preferred the natural look with the original millwork. Commendations went to the church on the way they maintained their historic church. Ms. Alleman added that the original doors would be stored somewhere.

Commissioner Andersson moved to approve the request, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Ploppert. Roll call:

Aye: Andersson, Wehrmeister, Ploppert, Schock-Soderberg, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

C. 227 Third Street (Case No. 2013-057); Applicant: Tad Hemming/Hemming Construction; Berry House Shos-Trattoria Totuccio; Application for Door Replacement Leaves to Deck above Street Level - Mr. Lambert reviewed the history of the building noting a number of modifications had taken place on the building and the doors being replaced were located in the non-historic portion of the building. The subject doors were starting to rot and the petitioner wanted to replace them with clad doors.

Applicant, Mr. Tad Hemming, discussed that there were three (3) sets of wooden painted doors which were rotting and he wanted to replace them with smooth fiberglass doors with wood

frames/jams and wood exterior trim. The new doors (Seal Rite) would be painted and look the same, with the same proportions. Hardware would include code compliant lever handles.

Commissioner Wehrmeister moved to approve the request, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Schock-Soderberg. Roll call:

Aye: Andersson, Wehrmeister, Ploppert, Schock-Soderberg, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

D. 316 Hamilton Street (Case No. 2013-058); Applicant: Dr. David and Erin Bennett; Application for Replacement of Storm Door to Enclosed Porch - Preservation Planner Lambert reported that the petitioner for this request wanted to replace a storm door with a permanent door since the current storm door was installed with the hinges on the exterior. Because the petitioners could not be present at the meeting tonight, they wanted input from the commissioners. Currently the door led into a dental office and it was an egress door; however, it leaked and the petitioners wanted to like to replace it with a steel panel door with a three-fourths lead panel window. Per Mr. Lambert, the opening would not be modified. Since a modified version of the building permit came in, Mr. Lambert said it discussed the replacement of the "mantle," which he presumed was the top trim piece of the doorway, but he would have to confirm that with the petitioners.

Many commissioner comments followed that the style of the door was not appropriate for the type of building and there was probably a better choice in the market. The embossing of a steel door was another concern, with Commissioner Andersson preferring a wooden door or even a fiberglass door. Mr. Lambert mentioned he did look through a catalog. He presented three potential doors more fitting to the style of the home, but he could not get a hold of the petitioners to discuss them in more detail. Commissioners preferred a wooden or fiberglass door if there was not a large cost difference.

As to the style of the door, Commissioner Andersson suggested picking up some of the lines from the house, i.e., window sills or muntins in the upper sash. Of the three doors proposed, commissioners preferred Option B. Regarding the hardware, comments followed that the hinges should be mounted on the interior but open out, wherein Mr. Lambert stated he did not know if he had the review authority to require that but offered to check with the building commissioner.

Commissioner Andersson moved to approve the door replacement petition for 316 Hamilton Street with the following modifications: 1) that the material have a sharp profile, perhaps, fiberglass or wood; 2) that staff work with the petitioner to choose a more appropriate style of door, along the lines of the potential door options presented by staff; 3) of those door options, the preference was for Option "B"; however, with some latitude; 4) that the hinges for the door be located on the interior of the building; and 5) that cut-sheets be provided for staff to help petitioners. Seconded by Commissioner Wehrmeister. Roll call:

Aye: Andersson, Wehrmeister, Ploppert, Schock-Soderberg, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

Mr. Lambert confirmed he would speak to the building commissioner regarding the hinges and how the door should swing, i.e., inwards or outwards, for a commercial building.

E. 22 S. Fourth Street (Case No. 2013-059); Applicant: Rick Razum/The State Bank of Geneva; Application for Replacement of Non-Historic Windows, Spandrel Panels and Trim - Mr. Lambert reviewed photographs of the bank discussing that the bank would like to replace their windows with a similar type of window installed in 1980 but with muttons between the glass. They would like to replace the current wooden trim with a Hardi-brand cement fiber board.

Mr. Rick Razum with the State Bank of Geneva, discussed that due to a recent fire, the windows were broken by the fire department and they would like to replace all of the windows. Mr. Donato Marrello, also with the State Bank, described the interior trim detail/casing of the field, which he could not get in the Hardi board material, and, therefore, would have to use pine or popular wood primed/painted. The side moldings would be Hardi material. Mr. Lambert stated the bank could use a Phypon or Azek material, to which Mr. Marrello was open to. Window replacement was discussed by Mr. Marrello. He explained that the profile of the grills would be slightly different in that there would be more detail, whereas the existing was rounded. The grills would be located between the glass and the window frames would be painted white.

Commissioner Wehrmeister moved to approve the window replacement request, as presented, and that Azek and/or a cellular PVC material be utilized on the window trim and that the petitioner work with staff. Seconded by Commissioner Andersson. Roll call:

Aye: Andersson, Wehrmeister, Ploppert, Schock-Soderberg, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

5. Secretary's Report (Staff Update)

Annual Report Review - Mr. Lambert referenced the annual report and asked commissioners to review it. Comments included that the report was well written but it should clarify that the number of permits reviewed by the HPC were 15 and those reviewed by staff were 75.

Discussion of Administrative Review Procedure - Mr. Lambert mentioned that he and Dir. Untch did explain this process with the new commissioners prior to the meeting. However, the goal tonight was to 1) clarify the items that could be approved administratively; 2) utilize the resources of the commission and contact all of the commissioners in a timely manner yet being responsive to the public; and 3) understand staff's limited hours of work week. Mr. Lambert referenced a worksheet he would like to use for administrative reviews based off the Urbana Historic Preservation Commission, only modified for this commission. He asked commissioners for their input on what projects could be administratively approved or not. An explanation followed by Mr. Lambert of why this matter was returned to the commission for discussion, noting that a trial period would take place to fine tune anything in the next few months.

Commissioner Andersson summarized that she preferred staff to approve projects that were in-kind replacements with like materials, especially on the secondary and tertiary façades, and on buildings that were non-contributing or more modern. To that comment, Dir. Untch also added that in observing the commission over the years, the commission had basically "drawn the line" that staff provide administrative reviews on non-contributing projects, but then commission review for contributing, potentially-significant, and significant projects. Conversation continued with Dir. Untch responding to Commissioner Ploppert's question, that staff was looking for guidance on how to review those projects that were relatively simple and to communicate very directly and promptly, what needed administrative review and what did not, and to see some guidance for those projects considered in the "gray" areas, because, as he explained, the Building Division staff were having some intense conversations with applicants. This is where Planner Lambert asked to have some latitude with those gray area projects to make a judgment call if a project should come to the

commission or whether to informally receive comments from the commissioners to see if a project needed to come to the commission or not. Asked how the response rate was for previously sent emails regarding certain projects, Mr. Lambert stated it varied across the board and some commissioners responded; others did not.

Mr. Lambert stated he would revise the worksheet matrix based on the conversation tonight and then re-email it to the commissioners for comments. Further explanation followed on how to fill out the matrix. However, Andersson asked whether a committee of two could draft an easier document for staff to follow. Other commissioners favored the worksheet/matrix since it was straight forward. Dir. Untch also pointed out the worksheet did not necessarily have to be in the city's code but instead could be placed on the city's website as a user-friendly tool for applicants. Commissioner Wehrmeister, after hearing the conversations, asked if filling out the worksheet could be delayed, which was fine with Dir. Untch. Commissioners were directed to turn in the worksheets to Mr. Lambert as soon as possible. For the sake of time, the consensus of the commission was for staff to approve the roofing projects as long as they were replacements in-kind.

Other topics of conversation included Mr. Lambert stating he would like to update the survey due to certain buildings becoming of age; rewording the Certificate of Appropriateness letter, since the wording is confusing; and Commissioner Andersson recalling when the commission held less formal discussions in a less formal setting. However, Dir. Untch explained that the new commission setting was probably the most fair and the audience could hear the discussions taking place now. A brief dialog was raised regarding the re-establishment of the preservation planner's position as full-time, wherein Dir. Untch stated that monitoring of that was already taking place.

The last topic for staff administrative review was signage. Dir. Untch explained that most of the sign issues had to do with the placement of the sign on the building and the placement of the lighting in relation to the sign and the building. However, the easy reviews were mainly those signs located along private walkways or replacement of the surface with minor expansions. Andersson, again, favored replacing an existing sign with the same type of sign, same dimensions, same location (not changing lighting) which could be administratively approved. However, Chairman Roy suggested that the commissioners be notified first when a new sign was being installed. A suggestion was made to make a list of those sign projects that staff was seeing and include them in the HPC packet. As to replacing a patio or walkway with in-kind material (same size, location, etc.) there was no issue; however, Andersson said she would be concerned about changing the material or changing the dimensions from a square to a kidney-shape patio or being able to see it in a corner lot or another visible location. Mr. Lambert agreed, explaining that those projects which included a patio with a new wall, a pergola, or a retention wall, would come before the HPC.

6. New Business

A. From the Commission - Staff and Chairman Roy explained to the new commissioners what this agenda item was for. No questions followed. Mr. Lambert provided his new work hours for the commissioners: full days on Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Fridays.

B. From the Public: None.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Wehrmeister, seconded by Commissioner Ploppert. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote of 5-0.