

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

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

1. Call to Order

Chairman Roy called the April 16, 2013 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call followed:

2. Roll Call

Present HPC: Chairman Roy, Commissioners Adams, Andersson, Bruno, Hiller, Wehrmeister

Absent: Commissioner Zinke

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

Others Present: Mr. Mike Simon, 614, Aston Ave., Geneva; Bob Rasmussen, 409 Illinois Ave., St. Charles; Mike and Tiffany Douglass, 29W577 Newton Square, Geneva; Tom and Alison Wetmore, 418 Ford St., Geneva; Sean Gallagher, 427 Anderson Blvd., Geneva; Dan Marshall, 812 E. Main St., St. Charles; Recording Secretary, Celeste Weilandt

3. Approval of the January 15, 2013 Minutes

Changes included: Page 2, sixth paragraph, delete "Collin Campbell" and insert "Colin Campbell"; Page 3, third line, delete the word "boarders" and insert the word "borders." **Commissioner Wehrmeister moved to approve the minutes, as revised, seconded by Commissioner Andersson. Motion carried by voice vote of 6-0-1. (Hiller abstains.)**

4. HPC Review of Building Permit Applications

A. 418 W. Ford Street - Preservation Planner, Mr. Michael Lambert, briefly reviewed the history of the home, explaining that it was a Wilson Brothers home constructed sometime after 1897 but before 1905, as detailed by the Sandborn insurance maps. The transitional architecture of the style reflected elements between the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. A review of the home's additions and changes over the years followed. The home was rated "contributing" per the 1999 Survey. Turning to today's request, the Applicants are proposing the following changes: reopening the historic porch, reorientating the entry stairs to the front of the home, installing period porch details, installing new windows, and removing the through-wall air conditioner units. The synthetic siding will not be removed at this time due to economic constraints. While the historic Sanborn map showed the home with a one-story front porch. Mr. Lambert stated no historical photographs could be found by staff or the Applicants regarding the porch at this time. Details of the porch rehabilitation followed.

Per Mr. Lambert, because the air conditioner units were being replaced, the replacement of the synthetic siding would have to be addressed. The Applicants also wanted to rearrange a few windows on the west elevation due to the rearrangement of interior space. Regarding the bay window on the second floor (east elevation), the owners will either have to install a new egress with

double-hung window on the central wall of the bay or make flanking windows to meet egress. Inside the porch, the Applicants will retain the fixed window with a leaded glass transom. Mr. Lambert confirmed that 7 of the 10 Standards of Finding of Fact were applicable in this petition.

Up for commission discussion were the following: details of the porch rehabilitation; possibly salvaging the entry door; should the synthetic siding be salvaged due to the minor changes; how to patch in the siding; and the details of the windows (following the city's window policy.) Per Mr. Lambert, the Applicant was proposing casement windows in some locations; however, prior to the meeting, Mr. Lambert stated he just learned that on the west façade the owner will have to install double-hung windows. The Applicant has yet to determine the bay window design and will have to return to the commission with a proposal for those windows.

Mr. Tom and Mrs. Alison Wetmore stated this was their first home and explained that the stair railing would be a standard cedar 4" X 4" post, with rounded top, running up to the columns or 6" x 6" with a code-compliant handrail running up to the column above. Commissioner Andersson preferred to see more detail than just stock railings, since so much investment was being done to return the porch to its original state. Regarding the casement windows being proposed, Mr. Wetmore stated the windows would be Pella standard double-hung windows. However, he offered to provide the details. The side stairs would be removed entirely. For the second floor, west elevation, Commissioner Adams preferred to see double-hung windows installed, similar to the windows below it and suggested if egress was needed, that the casement windows that look like double-hung windows be used as an option. As to the rear elevation, he suggested the Applicants install casements that look like double-hung windows there to keep the look of the house.

Regarding the tapered front columns, Commissioner Wehrmeister asked if they were appropriate on a Queen Anne, wherein it was mentioned that the columns were original. Mr. Wetmore then proceeded to recall that he did have the original railing in his garage and offered to take a picture of it and forward it to Mr. Lambert for review. Commissioner Hiller was pleased to see the Applicants restoring the porch and discussed how to get some ideas by walking the neighborhood. He then presented a photo of the type of railing he used on his own home as an example. Commissioner Bruno, too, preferred more detail in the rail and believed the simple square balusters were appropriate but he cautioned the Applicants about recreating the wing railing inside the two right columns, since it was probably not original.

The dialog moved to the topic of siding, with the commissioners agreeing that the Applicants should save the siding after removing the air conditioner units and replacing/feathering it in so it matches. Commissioner Bruno also reminded the Applicants to keep in mind that there were potential financing incentives for restoring a home.

Overall, the commissioners were in support of the proposal and wished the Applicants well with their project. No comments were received from the public.

Planner Lambert reported that staff recommended approval with the conditions: that the applicant work with staff on the details as work progresses; limited tooting-in/repairing of the synthetic siding take place; all windows on north, east and west facades to be double-hung windows to match original windows, with the exception of any investigative work that may prove what the historic windows looked like on the second floor bay. Additional suggestions included that a review of the east and west windows and railing detail return to the HPC next month. **Commissioner Andersson made a motion to approve the proposal, as presented, with the condition that the owners return before the HPC with more details on the front porch railings and newel post; provide cut sheets for the east and west windows, and provide the**

type of windows and window configuration for the east elevation. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Roll call:

Aye: Adams, Andersson, Bruno, Hiller, Wehrmeister, Roy
Nay: None **MOTION CARRIED. VOTE: 6-0**

B. 11-21 S. Third Street, Applicant - Mike Simon - Planner Lambert reviewed the history of the Tri-City Garage building and additions located on South Third Street, noting the buildings were built by the Wilson Brothers. Architectural details of the buildings followed. Per Mr. Lambert, the building is significant to Geneva because it was considered one of the first large scale buildings built for the auto industry and because of its repetitive one-story scale. Initially the building was rated “non-contributing” in the 1999 Survey due to multiple storefronts; however, in its 1979 nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, it was listed as a “site and structure of special significance.”

To date, Mr. Lambert reported the recent façade rehabilitations since 2005 have resulted in local recognition for the preservation of portions of the historic facades. Discussed was the proposed restoration of the upper masonry façade and the owner’s intent to install a series of contemporary storefronts of glass and metal framing within the street level bays. The façade restoration followed the guidelines of the Secretary of Interior Standards. The storefront system, however, did not replicate the appearance or original architectural details of the building but could be considered a reversible interpretation of the original street level bays that promoted automobiles rather than present day retail services.

Turning to staff’s Finding of Fact and historic photographs, Mr. Lambert noted that eight Secretary of Interior Standards were being met. However, outstanding issues included: the proposed storefront façade does not include masonry bulk heads as reflected in the historic photographs; the current openings have brick infill above the storefront glazing where historically it was a glazed transom panel; the proposed windows should be wood, per policy (yet, is it appropriate to use a metal storefront system for the existing bay openings?); and if the commission decides that the glazing should be full height, how will the lighting be integrated into a different scheme?

Applicant/owner, Mr. Mike Simon, along with Mr. Dan Marshall, architect, and Bob Rasmussen, the general contractor were present. Mr. Simon described his excitement to bring back the historic details of the building yet making it viable for retail. He recalled the commissioners and their involvement in the restoration of the complementary building to the south of this project and he was proposing to do a similar project on this building without replicating it which is how he came up with the proposed details.

Per a question on the transom lights, Mr. Marshall explained that the fill between the transom windows were at different heights due to the various prior facades and he was not aware of any of the original transoms existing, commenting he would know more once material was removed. Mr. Marshall reminded that owner, Mr. Simon, wanted this façade to be distinctive from the south façade and not be repetitive, yet favorable to retail. Regarding signage, it would be proposed by each tenant and it could be on the awnings or possibly in the brick panel above, but signage above was rarely noticed due to the height of the trees. Per a question, Mr. Rasmussen stated that the brick would be matched closely and that there were some existing, dislodged cap stones above the parapet, which he would remove and clean. Commissioner Adams confirmed the brick detailing with the general contractor but then was not sure if the transom area should be filled in with brick.

In response, Mr. Marshall considered it not filled in since he was placing a storefront into a brick wall. He did not believe much brick would be found behind it. Adams then discussed that the band material under the lights should be filled in with a different material; Andersson concurred. Mr. Marshall, however, did not want to introduce another type of material for the infill bay, as it was an industrial-looking building. He stated the transom area being discussed by Adams would be covered by the awnings. Responding to a lighting question, all lighting would be done from the interior. Commissioners Bruno and Wehrmeister were pleased to see this project moving forward. Chairman Roy concurred and pointed out that the storefront system will be reversible and the light location was fine. Further clarification followed that the color of the storefront system would be bronze. Regarding the infill, Andersson stated it should not be brick because it was less reversible than the storefront system. She suggested either spandrel glass, a metal panel, cement fiberboard, etc, for an industrial look, and because brick looked very permanent. Mr. Rasmussen, however, explained that all new brick was coming down in the two wider bays and it was all removable since there was a steel beam above it.

Furthermore, Mr. Simon stated that the brick, to him, completed the building and it was a strong design. From a historic point of view, however, Andersson reminded the commissioners that anything new should be clearly delineated as such, and, the new brick being proposed could be confusing to someone thinking it was the original. As a compromise, Andersson suggested filling in the transom areas with a slightly different colored brick or spandrel glass at the top, which the applicants did not support. Dir. Untch interjected and reminded them that the HPC previously, over the years, has applied the delineation for buildings with large massing issues.

No comments received from the public.

Per Mr. Lambert, staff recommended the approval of the upper masonry façade rehabilitation proposed with the conditions that the full height masonry openings be retained and a new, full height glazing and aluminum storefront system that mimics the historic glazing patterns be installed in the open bays between the masonry piers, which basically supported Andersson's and Adams' argument. **Commissioner Wehrmeister made a motion to approve the petition for 11-21 N. Third Street, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Hiller. Roll call:**

Aye: Bruno, Hiller, Wehrmeister, Chairman Roy

Nay: Adams, Andersson

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 4-2

5. Concept Reviews

A. 202 N. Third Street, Applicant - Mike and Tiffany Douglass - Planner Lambert reviewed the history of this property and the physical changes to the home over the years. Prior to the owners closing on the home, he said the future owners were seeking comment and input from the commissioners. Proposed was the removal of synthetic siding; the restoration of historic clapboard; the demolition of twentieth century additions; expansion of the home at two elevations (first floor addition on the west and a new addition to the north); replacement of windows; and construction of a new detached garage. Site plan and floor elevations were reviewed. Mr. Lambert stated that Mr. Gallagher, the architect for the project, prepared a zoning compatibility worksheet which met the city's requirements.

Applicants Mike and Tiffany Douglass were present. Mr. Douglass confirmed that a contract was pending on the residence and the plans and specifications were contingent upon approval by this commission and the City of Geneva. Mr. Douglass reviewed the current architectural details of the home -- aluminum sided, architectural trim details missing or in disrepair, and most of the current windows were vinyl replacement with one original window. The current owner of the home

did not reside in state and the home was a two-tenant residence. Mr. Douglass stated his intentions were to work within the guidelines of the HPC and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and to restore the exterior home to its 1880s character, repairing where possible and replacing where necessary, under feasible conditions.

Planned was the restoration of the simple trim details of the vernacular-style of architecture, replace the vinyl windows with new, period-appropriate windows (to be installed according to IHPA specs); and add an addition to the tertiary façade with a detached garage. The home would return to a one-family home. Commissioners clarified to Mr. Douglass that his proposal was strictly a concept review and that commissioners were not bound by a contract review, to which Mr. Douglass acknowledged.

Mr. Sean Gallagher, architect for the project, offered a supplement set of sketches (dated 4/16/2013) that addressed the concerns raised by Commissioner Zinke and a consideration offered by Anthony Rubano in order to maintain the tax credit. Mr. Gallagher walked through the floor plans and stated that the existing chimney (northwest side) should remain. The addition would begin on the back side of the chimney, which moved the addition west another four feet. Regarding Commissioner's Zinke's concern about the mass of the addition (and possibly an issue with the IHPA), the new sketch reflected a reduction in the mass with some gable adjustment to keep all ridges below the main ridge of the home. Further details followed regarding the fascia lines. Comments followed that the chimney actually delineated the old from the new, the five feet space between the garage and the house acted as a court yard area, and the lot coverage requirements were being met.

Overall commissioner comments included that the proposal was a nice solution but the north roof had many gables coming together and possible leakage could occur, wherein Mr. Gallagher discussed the crickets he used on the house at 327 N. Second Street which he said he would use on this home. Per Mr. Douglass, all current windows were not original, except for one rear (north side) window. Mr. Douglass stated he planned to have aluminum clad wood windows (2 over 1) as recommended by Mr. Rubano. Andersson and other commissioners also suggested a revision to the garage bump-out but stated it was not required. In response, Mr. Gallagher explained his clients' need to be able to open their car doors in the garage.

Chairman Roy read an email received from Commissioner's Zinke regarding the petition:

"My concerns are as follows: I feel that: 1) the addition is much too large for this house -- the original historic house will be dwarfed by it; 2) too much of the addition is visible from the 3rd Street side; 3) the setback of the addition on the 3d Street side is not large enough to help diminish the impact of the addition to that façade; and 4) the garage is too close to the house which increases the impact of its size."

Dir. Untch discussed that while he has not reviewed the zoning worksheet closely, he noted that if the zoning is met and the bulk standards are met, then the commission cannot change the massing or restrict the project. He also pointed out that the proposal includes a detached garage which was an objective of the city.

Returning to the windows, Mr. Gallagher recalled during his tenure on the HPC if a structure's windows were not original, there was leniency toward aluminum cladding. However, Andersson pointed out there was leniency only if the facades were not on the primary façade and, in this case, there were two primary facades. She preferred the two primary facades have wood windows. However, Mr. Douglass stated he had a letter in writing from Mr. Rubano supporting aluminum clad. The commissioners strongly recommended that Mr. Douglass confirm

Mr. Rubano's position. (Planner Lambert discussed that the State of Illinois was reviewing its window policy and the HPC may have to review its policy as well.) Mr. Douglass reiterated that he wanted to restore the home to its historic character, as long as it was financially viable.

6. Secretary's Report (Staff Update)

A. Historic Preservation Month Photo Contest - Planner Lambert announced that he is looking for feedback from the commissioners regarding the contest. The idea came up that the residents of Geneva can tell the HPC, via photographs, of what is important to them, focusing on wood, brick and stone materials. Contest details were explained. The first prize winner would win a dinner with the mayor. Dialog followed on the various ways to exhibit the photographs.

B. Administrative Review of Permits - Planner Lambert reminded the commissioners that he completes administrative reviews on behalf of the HPC and a summary of administrative reviews are available to view on line. Andersson asked if he could email the commissioners on upcoming reviews and provide the commissioners with a deadline time. Staff agreed to try the process. However, Dir. Untch reminded the commissioners that if there was a significant concern on a petition he could determine whether to bring it before the HPC or not. Comments followed suggesting that staff put together the list of administrative projects and emailing them out to the commissioners to review but also place the monthly report in the commissioners' packets. Dir. Untch mentioned that he would like to codify the administrative review process in the ordinance.

7. New Business

A. From the Commission

1. Andersson: Legislative Update SB336/HB122 - Commissioner Andersson updated commissioners regarding Senate Bill 336 regarding the Illinois Rehabilitation and Revitalization Tax Credit Act which is supported by AIA and Landmarks of Illinois. The proposed legislation mirrors a tax credit program called Rivers Edge (in effect since 1976) but instead of allowing tax credits for certain river towns, the legislation allows it for the entire state. In order to receive the tax credit, an owner must complete the rehabilitation before they redeem any sort of tax credit; once rehab is done, there is a 20% credit off eligible expenses (or any project spending over \$250,000.00); the cap is limited to \$3,000,000. Andersson reported the legislation makes economically viable rehabs of mostly vacant properties in historic towns, especially since the state is losing private investment to other states in the region. Positives of the legislation followed: it creates jobs, places properties on the tax roll, and the annual return for the program is \$7.00 for every \$1.00 spent. Dir Untch said he would follow up on the status of this bill.

2. Bruno: Financial & Economic Impact of Local Preservation - Commissioner Bruno stated he hopes to hold future presentations in front of the Geneva City Council on the importance of the financial and economic impact of local preservation. Dir. Untch commented it may be something that the commission can develop into a program, noting that the decisions the HPC has made over the years, has made a positive effect on value and those decisions return value to the community in many ways. He further discussed that the commission's meetings could be televised, thereby acting as a public information tool; however, costs would have to be considered.

Lastly, Commissioner Bruno announced his newly elected position to Alderman and acknowledged his time spent on this commission and the wonderful stewardship the commission has done over the years. He thanked the commission for the opportunity to participate in the process.

B. From the Public: None

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Wehrmeister, seconded by Commissioner Bruno. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote of 6-0.