

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**  
**109 James Street**  
**Geneva, Illinois, 60134**

**July 19, 2022**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Zellmer called to order the July 19, 2022 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

Present HPC: Chairman Zellmer and Commissioners Hartman, Jensen, McManus, and Zinke

Absent: Commissioners Salomon and Stazin

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert

Others Present: Applicant Elizabeth Wray

**4. Approval of June 21, 2022 Minutes**

Minutes of June 21, 2022 – **Motion by Commissioner McManus to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Jensen. Motion passed by a unanimous voice vote of 4-0 with one abstention (Zellmer).**

**3. Five Minute Field Guide**

Preservation Planner Michael Lambert presented on the topic “Sorting It Out: Authentic, Original, and Significant.” The presentation focused on the definition and application of these terms in conjunction with context, integrity, and condition.” Mr. Lambert answered several questions from Commissioners and stated that he would forward the presentation to each Commissioner.

**4. Review of Building Permit Applications (Certificates of Appropriateness)**

**A. 115 Hamilton Street (Case No. 2022-053). Applicant/Authorized Property Manager Elizabeth Wray. Application for the Modification of an Open-Air Porch at a Contributing Property.** Preservation Planner Lambert provided a brief introduction and noted that the request was for the rehabilitation of an existing, open-air porch and not a restoration of the 1928 sun parlor or original, 1923 porch. Mr. Lambert provided details from Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. maps from May 1923 (foundation only) and June 1930 (with the addition of the sun parlor at the front façade) along with a conceptual rendering of what the W. H. and Grace (Browne) Locke may have looked like between 1923 and 1928. Because no historic photos or other documentation has been discovered, the architectural character of neither the 1923 façade nor the 1928 sun parlor is unknown. In 2022, only a remnant of the sun parlor remains, and it has been in an altered state since the mid-1950s or mid-1960s. Mr. Lambert proceeded to give a brief history of the evolution, function, and purpose of sun parlors in the 1920s. Mr. Lambert continued with a description of the proposed modifications of the front porch, including the retention of the roof, porch lintel, porch columns at the corners, porch flooring, and existing stairs. Two, new columns will be installed to match existing columns and to reduce the span of the deflecting porch lintel; repairs will be made to the porch flooring; and a new balustrade will be installed in place of the existing, solid wall balustrade. Plans call for a vinyl lattice panel with a 45-degree pattern at the porch skirt. Ms. Wray approached the lectern and

thanked Preservation Planner Lambert for his assistance and acknowledged the skills of her architect and builder. Ms. Wray is both excited and anxious for the completion of the porch, which will be attractive and more appropriate. She then asked for questions. Commissioner Zinke inquired whether Ms. Wray was disinclined to accept any of the staff recommendations, particularly a 90-degree, dimensional lattice. Ms. Wray responded that Mr. Lambert had been very helpful and the 90-degree, dimensional porch screening was appropriate. She explained that this project began more than 3 years ago but had stalled due to contractor availability issues during the COVID pandemic. Commissioner Zinke complimented Ms. Wray for preserving and painting the historic trim and eaves. Ms. Wray appreciated the recognition because painting proved difficult during the COVID pandemic as well. Chairman Zellmer questioned the Commissioners about their feelings in regard to the pvc screen material and the 45-degree orientation shown in the architect's drawings. Commissioner Hartman inquired if PVC materials had been allowed in the past for materials in close contact with the ground? Preservation Planner Lambert said that approvals of PVC in similar situations had been approved previously. Ms. Wray clarified that it is her intent to use a dimensional, 90-degree screening similar to what Mr. Lambert included in the staff report; she is "not a fan of the 45-degree lattice." Ms. Wray and Chairman Zellmer postulated that the depiction in the architect's drawings was a template rather than an actual representation. Commissioner McManus stated that she had no objection to the use of PVC in this application and noted that the request utilizes what architectural elements could be retained of the 1928 porch and did not attempt to incorporate conjectural elements. Because the details and evolution are so undocumented, Commissioner McManus that the Commission was, in her option, "not tied in to retaining something we know little about." Commissioner McManus concluded that the scale of the modifications seemed appropriate. Commissioner Jensen concurred with Commissioner McManus' comments and added that the proposal appears to be period-appropriate. Commissioner Jensen asked whether the porch lintel was the only original element remaining. Preservation Planner Lambert summarized that the porch lintel, the hipped roof, and the corner columns appear to date to 1928. He continued that it is unclear when the flooring and balustrade wall were installed and to what extent each had been modified over time. Mr. Lambert repeated that the windows style, locations, and arrangement are unknown and that it is unusual to have a major addition to a front façade have so little documentation or physical evidence remaining. The porch, as it stands in 2022, is truly a remnant. Commissioner Zinke asked if the property is still a two-flat; Ms. Wray answered, "Yes, and it will remain a two-flat." Commissioner asked if the porch flooring will be replaced with wood to match existing; Ms. Wray responded, "Yes, it is probably fir." Commissioner Jensen asked if the 2 new columns will match the existing, corner columns; Ms. Wray responded, "Yes." Commissioner Zinke inquired if the new columns would be fabricated from wood; Ms. Wray replied, "Yes, and explained that she had investigated several different design options for the porch column arrangement but had settled on the one that had been submitted as the best and most appealing option." Commissioner Hartman inquired to what year the solid wall balustrade dated; Preservation Planner Lambert stated he believed the solid wall balustrades dated to 1928 but could not state with certainty if, how, or when the wall had been modified. Mr. Lambert also noted that the SOI Standards do not support the installation of conjectural features at a property. Chairman Zellmer asked if any other questions and, then, stated his opinion that the proposed solution—with 90-degree lattice—was appropriate, Chairman Zellmer called for a motion.

**Motion by Commissioner Hartman to approve the plans for 115 Hamilton Street as presented. Second by Commissioner McManus. Roll call:**

**Aye: Hartman, Jensen, McManus, Zinke, and Chairman Zellmer**

**Nay: None**

**MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0**

**6. Secretary's Report (Staff Updates)**

Because 2 of the 3 Commissioners interested in serving as Vice Chairperson were unable to be present, City Administrator Stephanie Dawkins recommended that the election be postponed until all 3 Commissioners could be present.

Preservation Planner reported that building permits had slowed, but that several languishing projects appear to have secured financing and labor to proceed; Mr. Lambert anticipates several cases coming before the Commission in August.

Preservation Planner also announced that Matt Buesing had joined the Community Development Department as Assistant Planner; he will provide support for both general planning as well as historic preservation projects and cases.

**7. New Business**

A. From the Commission: Commissioner Hartman asked about the status of the façade work at 128 N. Third Street; Preservation Planner reported that he and Code Enforcement Officer Jim Forni have been coordinating efforts and that Mr. Forni was proceeding with enforcement measures to move the project forward. Mr. Lambert noted that the original request for a full-width porch at the house had been rejected by the Commission, which required the Applicants to return to the Commission with revised plans for the entry stoop or porch. Chairman Zellmer inquired about the status of the 136 S. Fifth Street project; Mr. Lambert reported that it was his understanding that the financing details had been worked out recently and that work would be commencing in the near future.

B. From the Public: None.

**8. Adjournment**

**There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Zinke. Second by Commissioner Jensen. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote of 5-0.**