

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

February 17, 2021

1. Call to Order

Chairman Zellmer called to order the February 17, 2021 remote meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 p.m. and read a prepared statement regarding the electronic meeting and its protocol.

2. Roll Call

Present HPC: Chairman Zellmer; Commissioners Hartman*, McManus*, Salomon*, Stazin*, Warner*, Zinke*

Absent: None

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert, City Planner Chayton True

Others Present: Applicants Emily Pendergast and Brandon Coxen for 410 S. River Lane; Sean Gallagher* with Gallagher Associates Architects; Resident Terry Adams*; Mike Sweeney* with Red Oak Buildings, Inc.

(*remote)

3. Approval of January 20, 2021 Minutes

Minutes of January 20, 2021 – Chairman Zellmer noted on page 4 the adjournment time was 8:10 p.m. and not 7:10 p.m. **Motion by Commissioner Salomon to approve the minutes as corrected. Second by Commissioner Stazin. Roll call:**

Aye: Hartman, McManus, Salomon, Stazin, Warner, Zinke, Zellmer

Nay: None

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7-0

4. Review of Building Permit Applications

A. 410 S. River Lane (Case No. 2020-063). Applicant: Brian Hogan with Hogan Design + Construction – Developer/Contractor; Sean Gallagher with Gallagher Associates Architects. Change of Approved Siding Materials and Details. Mr. Lambert located the non-contributing property within the local Geneva Historic District and in the Central Geneva Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. A historical background of the property followed. The former Cape Cod home was identified in the 1999 architectural survey as non-contributing structure but was listed as contributing in the 2016 update of the Central Geneva Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. A request for demolition was granted by the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) in 2018 and the home was razed to allow for three by-right platted lots. A timeline of the proposed homes to be constructed by Hogan Design was shared. Mr. Lambert recalled that the commissioners discussed with the applicant at its February 2018 meeting that the in-fill houses should reflect the architectural character of River Lane that was part of the Kate Raftery's River Lane Beautification Project between 1926 and 1947.

At that time, the commissioners discussed that the in-fill housing would not be suburban in character and agreed that each new residence should be distinct from each other. The proposed

residence for this application was based on traditional details and color associated with a early 20th Century Craftsman bungalow. In the 2021 submitted rendering, the proposed exterior materials would be shades of black (except for the brick), including siding, trim, and the asphalt and metal roofing. Brick would be white in color with white mortar to match. The entry door would be a contemporary $\frac{3}{4}$ light door with a full side-light with both elements featuring contemporary glazing divisions. Per Lambert, because of a rendering error, any HPC approval would need to clarify the details of the approved door, side-light, including style and material.

Planner Lambert summarized the matter for consideration before the commissioners was identified in Section 10-6-2 of the City's code: 1) whether the proposed semi-permanent colored materials that result in a non-traditional, monochromatic palette for an intentionally-designed, Craftsman-inspired house in a historic neighborhood was appropriate, and 2) were the proposed exterior modifications consistent with the established context of the River Lane neighborhood. Mr. Lambert reviewed submitted renderings which he noted were not consistent with what was being proposed.

An additional rendering was submitted by applicant (left side of screen) this afternoon, which Mr. Lambert reviewed, noting the rendering reflected a lighter gray siding which was consistent with the submitted material sample. The contemporary door remained the same and the brick porch apron reflected a solid brick apron versus an apron with lattice. Comparable Craftsman-style homes within the district followed. A streetscape of River Lane from 2018 to 2021 was depicted. Examples of bungalow designs and their various color palettes were shown for reference purposes. Examples of black houses within Geneva's historic district also followed and included: 102 Bennett Street and 949 Batavia Avenue. The applicant's submittal of other monochromatic-colored homes within Geneva's historic district included: 320 S. Sixth Street, 120 S. River Lane, 421 S. First Street, 417 S. River Lane and 425 S. First Street. Examples of monochromatic-color homes outside the historic district and submitted by the applicant were also reviewed by Mr. Lambert.

Mr. Lambert proceeded to share his research on the trend for monochromatic-schemes/black exteriors as well as the recent trend for all-black facades dating back to 2014. He shared the thoughts of proponents and critics of the trend and reiterated to the commissioners that the issue before them was not the personal preference for a contemporary color palette, but instead was the appropriateness of the proposed, semi-permanently colored materials that result in a nontraditional, monochromatic palette for an intentionally-designed, Craftsman-inspired house in a historic neighborhood that is both architecturally diverse and characterized by diversity of materials, detail, and form. Also, was the proposal exterior modifications consistent with the established context of the River Lane neighborhood.

Applicants, Emily Pendergast and Brandon Coxen, were present via remote. Mr. Coxen shared how he and his wife arrived in Geneva and explained that he and wife were considering the dark color scheme over the years especially if they were to construct a new home. Also, he and his wife saw other homes in the area were colored as such. They liked being in a historic district and the darker homes contrasted nicely against other historic homes. Mr. Coxen relayed that he and his wife did take note of the comments being made regarding the agenda packet and he did work with his contractor to provide a lighter-colored rendering than originally proposed. He and his wife believed the home would be very sharp.

Architect for project, Mr. Sean Gallagher with Gallagher Associates, recalled the original color scheme for the proposal was during the conceptual review. Referencing the materials that were brought to staff today, Mr. Gallagher explained that his clients preferred the proposed dark colors but the body color would be a lighter tone, pointing out that there would be a tonal difference

so the color was not so monochromatic. Reviewing the contemporary door, Mr. Gallagher explained the door would have a two over three division (divided light) with a raised panel base and a divided light side-light. Gallagher commented that it may be the commissioners' first time where siding color had to be approved, but pointed it was reversible. (Lambert indicated this case was probably the second or third case to come before the commission.) Mr. Gallagher confirmed Hardiplank was being used. (Submitted sample materials were shown remotely.)

On the new rendering, Commissioner Stazin asked about the "cammo" color as it related to the stairs, columns, and porch wherein Mr. Gallagher explained the color depicted was not the correct color and would instead be the darker trim color. Referring to the skirt and lattice feature, Gallagher stated it would be an all white brick base across the front porch. Since it was a design change, Chairman Zellmer asked the commissioners to comment on the detail.

Dialog between the commissioners and Mr. Gallagher followed on why the rendering was submitted late, why the homeowners felt the commission needed to review the color, the fact that staff's report may have implied that the coloring would not be approved by the commission, and that a perception may have existed prior to the commissioners reviewing the application.

Mr. Coxen explained the reasons why they decided to lighten up the color scheme of their home prior to the commissioners reviewing the application .

Commissioner McManus explained that it appeared in staff's presentation and the applicants' examples, there were homes depicted in the area that had monochromatic themes and pointed out that the proposed home's color would not be out of place. To Commissioner Warner's question on the owners backing off from the original color palette, Mr. Gallagher explained it was the purchasers who wanted different colors. Asked if the proposal would have had to come before the commission if the colors submitted were from the Craftsman palette, Mr. Lambert explained why he decided to bring this case before the commission and recalled a previous application involving dramatic color change. Commissioner Warner felt the color palette presented, while trendy and contemporary, was incongruous with the home's style. Commissioner Zinke, however, shared her own comments on two homes recently painted, located on the East side, which looked dramatically different and became buildings more modern with the times rather than looking historic. She envisioned that more historic homes would be painted in non-traditional colors, which she supported. She noted the colorful colors, and dark colors, of the Victorian period.

Returning to comment, Mr. Gallagher added that the new rendering on the left of the slide, would have contrast of trim and would be seen versus the prior monochrome rendering.

Commissioner Salomon indicated that the rendering on the left was more appealing due to seeing more detail in the siding and textures. And, as long as it was reversible, the proposal could work. Commissioner Hartman had no opposition to the new color scheme either.

Discussion followed by Mr. Gallagher on the original intention of the skirt/porch, the difficulty seeing the chimney in the rendering, and whether the material was really reversible. Chairman Zellmer supported the proposal, knowing it could be changed (except metal roof). The new color scheme provided a contrast, but at the same time the commission could be setting a precedent on color schemes when it could be changed. Commissioner Stazin confirmed with Mr. Gallagher that the rendering on the right (January 2021) was the correct rendering and proportionally-sized but the left side rendering was just to illustrate the color contrast.

Commissioner Warner, referring to the Chairman's earlier comment, raised a question about commission's charge as it relates to color and reversible materials. In addition, Mr. Lambert

said he would be seeking the commission's position on the matter of semi-permanent factory-applied finishes. **Commission Warner moved to not answer the question because it was not the commission's jurisdiction and not take a vote to approve or disprove the application because it did not come properly before the commission. Motion died for lack of a second.**

Addressing the above point, Mr. Lambert, believed the commissioners needed to address the matter because it was in fairness to this applicant and to previous applicants and could affect what applications were brought before the commission in the future. Commissioner Zinke asked if it made sense to take a vote on the application tonight and until painting required a permit, the commission should not discuss painting. Mr. Lambert then proceeded to share background information on this matter for the new commissioners, summarizing that the commission in 2014 agreed that colors that are factory-applied to materials, with a sense of permanency, would be subject to review, while those materials that could be painted in the field and that did not require a permit, required no HPC review.

From the public, Mr. Terry Adams, architect and former Geneva HPC commissioner, recalled when he was on the commission that color was not discussed and the homeowner could choose color. He did not understand why this topic was being discussed tonight, noting the subject home was brand new, not historic, and the color preference should be up to the owners.

Commissioner McManus provided her comments, summarizing that she did not believe a monochromatic home was out of touch with what was occurring in the neighborhood and it was not an aesthetic decision. A brief dialog followed on material warranties with the Chairman commenting that the commission did not necessarily have to make a decision on whether the materials were reversible or not and should discuss the matter at a later time.

Chairman Zellmer addressed the commissioners on what should be considered: one scheme that was originally presented as part of the permit process and another scheme that the applicants came up with later, which was a reaction to staff's report. He believed the commission needed to decide whether either one of them was appropriate and to leave it up to the owners and contractor. However, Mr. Lambert clarified that the issue the commissioners needed to focus on was whether the proposal met the terms of the ordinance that governed this commission.

Motion by Commissioner McManus to approve the proposed exterior material changes for a single-family home located at 410 S. River Lane, in either scheme proposed. Second by Commissioner Hartman. Discussion of the Motion followed.

Commissioner Warner stated this ability (to review permanent and semi-permanent colors) would not be in the ordinance if any house (building) could be any color at any time with any material. But, because there was an ordinance (allowing review of permanent and semi-permanent colors), in his opinion, he would not support the request and found the proposed color scheme incompatible with the architectural style. Commissioner Zinke agreed with Commissioner Warner's comments that the (trendy) color choices the owners were choosing were not compatible with the architectural style of the building and the building was designed as a Craftsman style home; however, it would not influence her vote since painting did not require a permit in Geneva. **Roll call:**

Aye: Hartman, McManus, Salomon, Stazin, Zinke, Zellmer

Nay: Warner

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6-1

B. 521 Hamilton Street (Case No. 2021-003). Applicant: William "Bill" and Jackie Docimo, Owners. Application for Front Door Replacement. Preservation Planner Lambert located the property within the two historic districts of the City. Because the HPC's ordinance did not define as to which historic district (local or National) and Geneva's status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) community requires the oversight of the National Register districts as well as the local district. Therefore, due to the ambiguity in the local ordinance regarding review of contributing properties, Lambert erred to caution and brought this case before the HPC for consideration. The historical background of this Mid-Century Modern (concrete block) home, built for Ray and Shirley Schuett, followed. Per Mr. Lambert, the current owners are Mid-Century Modern enthusiasts and have made a commitment to return the home to the original character of the 1960s home. The proposed replacement door was sensitive to the period of the home and the original door swing and entry sequence would be restored. Replacement of the worn threshold was also planned. Photos of the door's existing deteriorated conditions were depicted.

Commissioner Warner pointed out the sufficient evidence of damage to the door, while Zinke was disappointed the applicants were not available to discuss the door. (The Applicants had been connected virtually but were not online when the case was called.)

Motion made by Commissioner Warner to approve the replacement door, as presented. Second by Commissioner McManus.

Despite Commissioner Zinke's concerns about the applicants availability, other commissioners agreed that a decision could be made at this meeting. Mr. Lambert relayed that—although the Applicants were not online—he had spoken with the applicants on-site and did see the door in the field. Mr. Lambert offered to answer questions about the existing door. Zinke did not necessarily support the proposed door's design and would have preferred a door design more appropriate for a house constructed in the 1960s. Commissioner Stazin believed the proposed door was in keeping with the home's design but was not so sure the current door was original. In response, Mr. Lambert indicated that he had spoken with the original owner's son (Scott Schuett) and the door was most likely purchased at the John Wheeler Lumber Company (in Geneva) and was original to the house. Mr. Lambert explained the interior of the house was dark, given the large overhangs, the overhang of the trees, and the distance the door was set back of the street. Mr. Lambert relayed that the owners were trying to get more light into the home and options for additional windows were limited by the concrete block construction. The proposed replacement would restore the original swing of the door as well as the entry sequence into the living space as intended by the original architect. Chairman Zellmer also concurred that the existing door was in poor condition and the proposed door went well with the house. **Roll call:**

Aye: Hartman, McManus, Salomon, Stazin, Warner, Zinke, Zellmer
Nay: None **MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7-0**

C. 422 W. State Street (Case No. 2021-007). Applicant: Mike Sweeney / Red Oak Buildings, Inc., Contractor; Mike Deagle, Owner. Application for removal of bay window and restoration of original window openings with replacement windows at the front facade. Preservation Planner Lambert located the property within the City's two historic districts. A historical background of the home followed along with the various changes that occurred over the years. A bay window existed on the front elevation and commissioners were to consider whether the 1957 modification of the bay window had gained significance on its own merits. Furthermore, they were to consider whether the workmanship of the 1957 bay window was of high-quality design that was valuable for study or represented a significant development of the property. Additionally, if the bay were to be removed, was the proposed work based on the restoration of a critical

architectural feature that was otherwise preserved and well-documented. Mr. Lambert reported the historic window openings remained unchanged and intact; however, the circa 1870s sash had been removed in 1957.

Per Lambert, the applicant was proposing to install wood, 2-over-2 sash within the existing, historic openings. The new window sash would closely match the other, circa 1870s, wood windows that remained in the historic building. The applicant planned to remove the 1950s bay window and return the 1854 limestone building closer to its mid-1870s appearance. The second modification being proposed was to modify the door that faced State Street at the rear, wood-frame addition (1891-1897), making it slightly wider and replacing it with a new door that had an upper window with two panels below (very similar to the existing door). The window replacement request was also consistent with the *Design Guidelines* and SOI Standards.

Mr. Sweeney, on behalf of the applicant, stated the owner -- Michael Deagle -- planned to have his own office in the building and rent out the front space. The door needed to be replaced with an ADA-compliant door and the existing door trim would be reused. Regarding the bay window, Mr. Sweeney explained the owner wanted to bring back the building to the time when the building was constructed. The building may need some tuckpointing, and the mortar (color, strength, texture and joint style) would be matched by using a company from Chicago. A masonry contractor would be hired who has worked with such mortar on historic homes. Per Mr. Sweeney, the window air conditioners would be removed, and the window manufacturer will match the mullions in the window panes.

Commissioner Warner inquired about the status of the lintels and window sills wherein Mr. Sweeney said they were covered over with some of the bay window wood framing, but he was confident the sills were in place. Commissioner Stazin asked if there was an elevation depicting what the front facade would look like once the bay was removed. Mr. Lambert explained that staff normally did not require architectural drawings of window replacements and felt the pictures were self-explanatory and the openings were not being altered. However, Mr. Lambert offered to provide that information in the future.

Commissioner Warner pointed out language in the SOI Standards that addressed the window replacement request was consistent with what the commission was tasked to review. Commissioner McManus pointed out the bay window was not the original design of the home; no commissioner identified the bay window as having gained significance due to its construction as a retail display window for the original dress shop occupant. Asked how the new door would fit into the narrower space, Mr. Sweeney explained that the framing of the existing jamb was such that the opening did not have to be altered to accept the proposed, wider door that has a thinner jamb. The swing would match the existing door. He further explained that the existing, historic window openings (inside the 1957 bay window) were similar in size to the historic windows located on the east façade. He confirmed that the original stone lintels above the original window openings were exposed and were the same as the others on the building. However, he could not confirm the condition of the sills or how/if the bay window framing had been installed around the sills.

Motion by Commissioner Salomon to approve the windows and door changes, as presented, with the condition that the replacement windows keep to the historic aspect of the jambs and sills and that any stone work is to be restored to its original condition/ appropriate look, with staff to review the exposed conditions after the bay window has been removed. If stonework is damaged and replacement required, the application shall return to the HPC for review. Second by Commissioner Zinke. Roll call:

Aye: Hartman, McManus, Stazin, Solomon, Warner, Zinke, Zellmer

Nay: None

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7-0

6. Secretary's Report

Mr. Lambert noted that he was continuing his work on the updated survey of the historic district. Based on tonight's discussion, he would seek clarity from the Commission, regarding permanent and semi-permanent colors at the March meeting that would include revisiting the 2014 ordinance language. Mr. Lambert expressed concern that each applicant's request be treated equally and fairly and referenced last year's discussion of permanent and semi-permanent colors for a proposed townhome development at Hamilton and First Streets as well as other reviews of recent projects.

7. New Business

A. From the Commission: Asked if the March meeting would be held virtual, Mr. Lambert stated future meetings will be virtual until further notice.

B. From the Public: None.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Solomon. Second by Commissioner Stazin. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote of 7-0.