

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

City of Geneva

109 James Street - City Council Chambers

February 22, 2023

Call to Order

Chairman Pro Tem George Stazin called to order the February 22, 2023, meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 pm.

1. Roll Call

Present: Chairman Pro Tem George Stazin and Commissioners Hartman, Jensen, Salomon

Absent: Chairman Zellmer and Commissioners McManus and Zinke

Quorum present.

Staff Present:

Michael A. Lambert - Preservation Planner

Others Present:

Kristin Sabatino - Recording Secretary

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes of 1/18/23:

Motion by Commissioner Salomon to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner Hartman. A voice vote followed, and the motion passed: (2-0).

Commissioners Jensen and Stazin abstained.

3. Five Minute Field Guide

Preservation Planner Lambert presented a review of the four treatment options for historic properties.

1. Preservation is the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Work is allowed in this type of treatment, including measures to protect and stabilize the property and focus on ongoing maintenance and repair of the historic materials and features without adding features that would complete the

building or replace materials. The intent is to limit the scope of work and sensitivity to maintaining the building but does allow for the intervention of modern mechanical systems, lighting, and security.

2. Rehabilitation is the act or process of making possible an efficient, compatible use for the property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values while ensuring the continued and future viability of the property. The most common treatment at the commission level. It could be extensive (such as the White House) or minimal as a commercial storefront or repurposing of a building, or an old house that is restored and additions were added to the property.

3. Restoration is the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period in time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and the reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. Typically see this with the most historic properties in the United States or properties being preserved for interpretive use, such as museums or historic sites. Typically, restoration allows for a limited and sensitive upgrade of minimal mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make the properties functional.

4. Reconstruction is the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replacing its appearance at a specific period of time and its historic location. This is the most intrusive treatment. Typically, reconstruction is complete or partial, often based on archeological research.

4. Review of Conceptual Development Plans

A. 330 South River Lane CASE 2022-088

Applicant: Igor and Guisi Leone, Owners Todd Augustine - Augustine Custom Homes,
Developer Dan Marshall - Marshall Architects, Architect

Application for: Additions and Alterations to the Second Floor, Front, and Rear of a Contributing property

Preservation Planner Lambert presented a brief overview of the subject property's history and proposed work. Noting the applicants are back with a revised concept for the commission's review based on comments from the November meeting. The property is located in the southeast corner of the local Geneva historic district and located at the southeast corner of the central Geneva historic district. It's identified as a contributing property of the local and national register districts. The house was built in 1927 and had an addition put on in 1948. Preservation Planner Lambert reviewed the neighborhood, which includes new homes and rehabilitated homes. The reason for requesting to expand the house is to provide more space because the second floor is built out underneath the historic roofline, the space is cramped, and the subterranean garage suffers from water issues.

Preservation Planner Lambert reviewed the site plan submitted by the applicant for review. The plan included highlighted areas for 1927 (in yellow), 1948 (in orange), the proposed two-car detached garage (in blue), and the pink area is the proposed second floor, including a significant expansion of the second floor set behind the historic bedroom. The proposed facade shows the roof line has been expanded, but the large gable that was found objectionable has been removed.

Two new dormers are being proposed. The historic dormer is being replaced, and a new dormer faces River Lane. Two windows are proposed to be altered with a single window at the front facade to meet egress, and new windows are proposed where the garage door had existed. All windows were replaced in 2010. A triple window will be altered to complement the historic windows on the Fulton Street facade. The majority of proposed new construction in the rear of the property is behind the original roof ridge.

Mr. Dan Marshall of Marshall Architects introduced himself and thanked Preservation Planner Lambert for explaining the project, noting they made design changes based on the Commission's feedback. Mr. Marshall opened it up for questions from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Hartman commented that they had done an excellent job on the front elevation and maintaining the existing roof line.

Commissioner Jensen also noted they did an excellent job with the recommendation and improvements. She asked if it would be possible to keep the original paired windows on the second floor. Mr. Marshall commented that the goal is to keep the windows but are waiting on the new building commissioner's approval.

Commissioner Hartman asked Mr. Marshall if the current units meet egress. Mr. Marshall confirmed they don't meet egress.

Preservation Planner Lambert confirmed that the previous building commissioner was of the opinion that if a bedroom did not change size and walls were not moved, then non-compliant/conforming windows could remain. But once the bedroom was enlarged or modified, he required the bedroom to meet egress. The new building commissioner is still reviewing the code for an interpretation. The applicants are offering that if the paired windows are approved, they can stay, but if the new building commissioner determines they have to put in an egress window, then the current plans are what you would see in the final project.

Commissioner Jensen asked (Fulton Street side view) how does the new dormer differ from the historic dormer that is currently there? Mr. Marshall confirmed it was the same but shifted over to the center line over the three windows on the first floor. Commissioner Jensen asked if it's using materials from the existing dormer or if it is all new material. Mr. Marshall confirmed that they expect it to be all new material but will base that on the current windows and dormer conditions. The trim and siding are in bad shape and not salvageable. Commissioner Jensen asked if Mr. Marshall had determined the materials for the low-maintenance siding and trim products. Mr. Marshall replied that they had not come to that decision yet. The siding material will be either the LP SmartSide or fiber cement.

Preservation Planner Lambert noted that LP SmartSide has temporarily discontinued the smooth siding and should be back in stock sometime in the third quarter of this year. There is still a supply chain issue with LP SmartSide in the smooth finish.

Commissioner Jensen asked if the historical shingles could be used or salvageable. Mr. Marshall has yet to inspect the materials close up but noted that looking from the street level, it appears to be in bad shape. Mr. Marshall asked for feedback from the Commission on whether it was necessary to use the existing materials noting the owner has indicated they would prefer the horizontal siding. Commissioner Jensen pointed out the standards for how the Commission makes decisions; it would be preferable to use existing historical materials.

Commissioner Hartman asked if the existing siding on the gable was cedar shakes. Mr. Marshall confirmed it is shakes of some sort. Commissioner Stazin stated that the rendering didn't show the materials and noted that materials are yet to be decided.

Preservation Planner Lambert confirmed that if you replace a historic material with new materials, it should replicate the historical materials of the historical portions of the house.

Commissioner Hartman suggested using a composite shake, given supply line issues. Preservation Lambert confirmed that wood shingles (differentiating shingle from shake material) should be replaced with wood shingles. Mr. Marshall asked for feedback regarding a synthetic shingle, and Commissioner Hartman felt that would be acceptable.

Commissioner Stazin asked when an addition is being added to a historic building, are we trying to copy the style of the original or differentiate from the original to preserve the character? Mr. Marshall said the design of the addition is sympathetic to the existing details and original trim. Commissioner Stazin asked if the dormer and double window were original or was the upper level modified. Mr. Marshall commented that he was unsure, but it could become more apparent as they strip away interior finishes and roofing materials.

Preservation Planner Lambert clarified that, typical of bungalows, a dormer lit the stairwells to the "walk-up" attic. He believes that the attic of this house was not intended to be a built-out space at the time of the original construction. At some point, the owners finished off what was a "walk-up" attic. The dormer location appears to be part of the original construction, but historical images are not available to architectural details from the past.

Commissioner Stazin stated that the northerly dormer on River Street is new but doesn't compete with the existing elevation. He expressed concern about how it sits and asked if there were any other alternatives considered. Mr. Marshall replied that they looked at the option of a shed dormer, but it became too elongated. Commissioner Stazin questioned the Fulton Street (southerly) dormer and asked if it was needed. In his opinion, the Fulton Street dormer seemed to be crowded on the south elevation. Mr. Marshall would need to confirm if the dormer is required by code, but thought it helped to minimize the rear addition. The new dormer is centered over the historic, triple windows at the Fulton Street (south) elevation.

Preservation Planner Lambert noted for the Commission that, if the Fulton Street (south) dormer were to be removed, the east wall of the rear addition would be exposed to River Lane at the second floor. The dormer on Fulton Street is masking any exposed wall of the second floor, and Commissioner Salomon agreed that the dormer conceals the rear addition; the dormer is there but provides the function of bringing in light and coordinating with the windows underneath.

Commissioner Jensen asked about the size of the windows replacing the former area of the garage door. Mr. Marshall confirmed they are filling in the existing opening with the triple windows and confirmed it would be part of the basement. Commissioner Hartman commented that he appreciates how it mimics the garage door, and Commissioner Salomon agrees. BY way of clarification, Preservation Planner inquired of Commissioner Jensen whether it was the width of the individual windows or the overall width of the historic garage door opening being filled. Commissioner Jencen confirmed it was the width of the individual windows which seemed proportionally wider than the windows above. Preservation Planner asked Mr. Marshall whether the windows could be reduced with larger mullions between. Mr. Marshall would look at that option but felt that the selected windows were consistent with width of the existing basement window to the south.

Preservation Planner Lambert summarized it's the Applicant's and the Commission's preference to keep the pair of windows on the second floor, if possible. If the single window is the only option, it is acceptable to the Commission. If the wood shingles can't be preserved in the gable, a composite shingle should be installed. The LP SmartSide or the fiber cement siding is acceptable on the addition as long as either is installed with a smooth finish. The window arrangement as proposed is acceptable. The Commission is accepting of the Fulton Street dormer. The majority of the Commission is comfortable with the windows replacing the garage door. Commissioners had no comments about the proposed, detached garage. The Applicant is getting the "green light" from the Commission to move forward with permit drawings.

5. Secretary's Report (Staff Updates)

Preservation Planner Lambert shared that the survey permits are up to date.

Preservation Planner Lambert participated in the listening session for the statewide conference for the guiding principles for the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office. He provided written comments on behalf of the City of Geneva to the state preservation office regarding their long-term planning.

6. New Business

A. From the Commission

Preservation Planner Lambert shared that the Commission has two meetings next month, a public hearing and a regular meeting on March 14, 2023 (Special Meeting - Continued Public Hearing) and March 21, 2023 (Regularly-scheduled HPC Meeting).

Commissioner Salomon asked if there would be a time limit for speaking. Preservation Planner Lambert confirmed that would be the Commission's choice. The tradition in Geneva is at 10 pm the Commission can decide to end the meeting at that point or add more time. Commissioner Hartman asked if there was a time limit per person. Preservation Planner Lambert shared that the City of Geneva doesn't impose a time limit; however, if a point has been made, it is at the discretion of the Chairman to move on. Commissioner Hartman asked if the analysis had been done on the project. Preservation Planner Lambert stated he preferred not to talk about the continued public hearing outside of the public hearing.

B. From the Public

There were no comments from the public in person or online.

7. Adjournment

At 7:52 pm., Commissioner Salomon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Hartman. Motion passed by a unanimous voice vote: 4-0.