

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
109 James Street
Geneva, Illinois, 60134

April 20, 2021

1. Call to Order

Chairman Zellmer called to order the April 20, 2021 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*, Stazin*, Warner*, Zinke*

Absent: Commissioner Salomon

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

Others Present: Applicant Nick Smith with Old Republic Kitchen & Bar; Nicholas Manheim* with Manheim Architecture; Applicants Jason and Johanna Patterson*, 522 James Street

(*remote)

3. Approval of March 16, 2021 Minutes

Minutes of March 16, 2021 – **Motion by Commissioner Warner to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Commissioner McManus. Roll call:**

Aye: Hartman, McManus, Stazin Warner, Zellmer,

Nay: None

Abstain: Zinke

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 5-0-1

4. Review of Building Permit Applications

A. 101 W. State Street (Case No. 2020-003). Applicant/Owner: Nick Smith, Old Republic Kitchen & Bar; Architect Nicholas Manheim with Manheim Architecture. Application for Proposed Façade Rehabilitation at a Significant Property. Preservation Planner Michael Lambert located the property on the overhead and shared the historical background of the limestone “Wrate” building and block. The building was the work of local commercial workers and housed numerous historic businesses and organizations. The property is identified as a Significant property. The applicant is seeking approval to renovate the existing storefront with operable windows and install five windows as part of a larger, future project. The application was before the HPC 16 months ago but has since been modified to include an operable storefront comprised of sliding windows in place of the former fixed display window and recessed central entry portal at each storefront.

Two window options were being proposed: Option 1 provides fixed transoms with a depth to accommodate standard height, sliding window units. Within the three bays of each storefront, a fixed transom window will exist but the windows will be custom-sized. The recessed panels at the lower bulkhead will be reminiscent of the historic arrangement of the 1893 storefronts. The vertical columns will have a six-inch face. The face of the horizontal rail between the sliding windows and transoms would be approximately 8-1/8 inches.

Option 2 is similar but increases the depth of the fixed transoms to match the depth of the 1893 transom, reminiscent of the 1893 storefront and reflecting the historic divisions of the columns and horizontal rail (detailed plans followed). Examples of the proposed sliding window units were depicted on the overhead. To meet Kane County Health Department requirements, an operable screen will be installed on the interior side of the exterior wall and will not be seen at the exterior.

The applicant's proposal is to use the existing columns that create uneven bays across the front of the building. Normally, historic storefronts have a central, recessed entry with equal display windows on either side. Per Mr. Lambert, the columns have been moved over time (not uncommon) and are not centered on the rondels that remain at the cast iron, storefront lintel. Mr. Lambert noted that Secretary of Interior Standard No. 6 supports the repair of deteriorated historic features. As such, the deflected, storefront lintel should be investigated and, if possible, corrected. Lambert noted that the question was whether the building's corner was stable or required further investigation to determine the building's ability to integrate the proposed, operable windows in the storefront.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the January 2020 proposal that came before the HPC, for purposes of review. Lambert identified that the primary entrance would be located to the central doorway (that had provided access to the second floor) for the new restaurant and the front entrance step would be made ADA compliant. Additionally, in the January 2020 proposal, a steel door had been proposed but, to date, the owners were working to get a door more compatible with the 1893-1935 facade.

Proposed future work (Phase 2) included cornice and pediment repair and painting, repair/repainting of existing second floor windows, and masonry restoration. Mr. Lambert reminded the commission that—in January 2020—the HPC had requested the owner to submit plans for fixing the southeast corner of the building, since it had deteriorated significantly. The owner did not submit those plans but had proceeded with a cosmetic patch. Mr. Lambert believed confirmation of the building's stability was key prior to final approval of the applicant's request for operable windows, noting that the finished installation may not be as neat as depicted and, in fact, may require additional trim if the openings were not nearly square and plumb. Lambert identified other items that needed to be addressed and approved by the Commission, including replacement of the historic brick molding at the second floor (removed in June 202 without prior approval); painting of existing windows; repointing of building masonry (including the upper walls of the north façade); and the repair of the south cornice and parapet.

Lambert noted that of the 10 SOI standards, 9 of the 10 standards were applicable to this property.

Applicant, Nick Smith was present in the chambers while his architect, Mr. Nick Manheim was present remotely. Neither had additional information to present but were available to answer questions. Chairman Zellmer invited commissioner comments.

Commissioner Zinke raised discussion about the proposed door and inquired why the applicant chose to do what he was proposing. She voiced that the commissioners will have to determine how the building will evolve into the future, given that sliding windows are being proposed, and the applicant will have to determine what date it wants to renovate the building to in order to avoid a mix of different decades. Zinke voiced her concerns about the existing door (circa 1985) as compared to the historic photos and cautioned the commissioners on what they approve. Mr. Lambert, in explaining the definition of the period of significance, pointed out that nothing in the

Secretary of Interior of Standards requires an entire storefront be returned to a specific date in time. From his understanding of the SOI Standards, Mr. Lambert explained that the applicant has several options at his disposal. The design could provide historic replication of architectural elements and details, based on photo documentation. Alternatively, the design could consist of a contemporary solution for replacement of all or specific, missing elements as long as any new work is reversible without damage to significant features of the building.

Mr. Smith stated his intent was to have the doorway dark to match the new storefronts and the custom-made door would include a double-hinged door, but he did not have any shop drawings for review and approval currently.

Asked if it was the applicant's intent to have the columns centered on the rondels, Mr. Manheim indicated that the columns are proposed to remain slightly off-center (in their current locations), resulting in unequal storefront bays. Commissioner Stazin voiced caution about proceeding in light of the building's potential structural issues, including lintel deflection and corner movement. Therefore, Commissioner Stazin expressed concern about the true dimensions of the transoms, and—referring to a similar, prior application with operable windows—questioned any decision regarding the final design and details of the transoms was premature without understanding how the structural issues would be remediated. Additional concerns were voiced by other Commissioners. Regarding that point, Mr. Lambert conferred with the applicant and clarified that the intent of this meeting's discussion was whether the commissioners favored the operable window concept. If the operable storefront concept was determined to be appropriate, the applicant will follow up with a historic structural engineer and proceed with shop drawings for the window units.

Applicant Smith, explained the middle interior of the building was removed, and he would like to have the building more open "to breathe life back into it." Commissioner McManus asked the owner for the compelling reason for Option 1, as she felt Option 2 was the better option. Mr. Smith explained that he believed Option 1 provided a greater sense of openness from the interior. McManus stated that, for the project to work as the applicant intends and to meet historic design guidelines, the storefront should respect the historic lines. She preferred Option 2 so that the transom lines lined up. Commissioner Hartman inquired about the height of the floor, from floor to transom line, wherein Mr. Manheim explained that it would vary from side to side with the former Flagstone side being shorter (approximately 12 feet from floor to ceiling) as compared to the former Little Owl side (approximately 14 feet from floor to ceiling). Per Mr. Manheim, the goal was to create a more open feeling when looking out "to the main street (State Street)".

Commissioner Warner favored Option 2 where the size of the mullion will have a small impact on the amount of light entering the interior. The reduced height of the sliding windows would have a minimal effect on the natural ventilation of the interior. Commissioner Warner noted that Option 2 mimics the historic dimensions of the earlier storefronts. He also expressed concern about the building's structure and that, potentially, the building appears to have on-going movement.

Commissioner Warner queried staff on why the columns did not rest under the rondels. Mr. Lambert did not have definitive knowledge regarding why decisions were made over time. However, it was not an uncommon practice when storefronts were modified in the early to mid-20th century. Mr. Lambert explained that—even if the building was not continuing to have movement at the storefront—the existing, window bays are not square. Given that the existing openings are not square, the windows would have to be trimmed out for the worse case so that the sliding windows can function due to minimal tolerances of the proposed window system. Additional trim would be

required, most likely, to compensate for the actual conditions at each opening; the additional trim would be greater than what is depicted in the architectural details.

Commissioner Warner favored returning the rhythm of the columns to the early 1900s image and possibly saving window fabrication costs by having standardized windows at each storefront. Commissioner Zinke preferred that a structural engineer confirm whether the building was stable before voting on this matter tonight. Mr. Lambert reiterated that the owner and architect were asking the commissioners to identify an appropriate/acceptable window concept (Option 1 or 2) so that the applicant may proceed with the production of shop drawings and coordinating with a structural engineer, as needed. Commissioner Hartman favored Option 2 with the transom line at the bottom of the historic brick arch.

Discussion followed whether the owner or architect had considered relocating the columns to restore the original symmetry of the building, wherein Mr. Manheim explained there were costs associated with moving items and re-shoring things. Time and resources were spent cleaning up the building's interior. The outside was not considered so much, and the applicants preferred to work with the existing conditions.

While Commissioner Warner did not object to the columns not being under the rondels he would preferred that the original architecture be restored while inserting the modern, sliding window system. Commissioner Warner was fine with the sliding windows, but wanted to see the specific details. Asked if the mullions were shown to scale, Mr. Manheim confirmed they were and explained further.

Commissioner Zinke favored the larger transom windows similar to the historic photograph due to the similar heights (Option 2). She did not favor the sliding windows, since she did not believe that the sliding windows would be used very much (due to weather conditions and traffic noise). Commissioner Zinke raised concerns that the sliding window feature did not replicate the historic profile of the storefront for such a significant building located on State Street.

Chairman Zellmer inquired about the possibility of fabricating the new windows so that the sliding units could be easily replaced with fixed glass in the future, Mr. Manheim explained that the transom window was combined with the lower window as a single unit for installation. Chairman Zellmer preferred a design solution that allowed for the future removal of the sliding windows without removing the transoms.

Chairman Zellmer asked commissioners for their thoughts on the applicant returning with shop drawings and were asked to provide their input on the sliding windows. Overall, the commissioners preferred Option 2. The details of the front door were discussed; and Chairman Zellmer believed that the plans for the door should be brought back to this commission for review and approval.

Chairman Zellmer entertained a motion to approve the sliding window concept.

Motion by Commissioner McManus to approve the exterior rehabilitation of 101 W. State Street using Option A101B (Option 2), subject to future approval of the custom storefront and entry door by the HPC.

Commissioner Zinke raised concern that the proposal should have been brought to the commissioners as a concept, wherein Mr. Lambert explained that the current request is a modification of the permitted plans on file with the Building Division. Therefore, based on the motion under consideration, the commission will be reviewing this case again when the shop

drawings are submitted for approval. If the submitted drawings do not meet the Commission's expectations, then the petitioner will have to revise the plans again before being allowed to proceed.

Second by Commissioner Warner. Roll call:

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

Nay: None

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6-0

B. 522 James Street (Case No. 221-019). Applicant/Owner: Jason and Johanna Patterson. Application for Proposed Addition to a Contributing Property. Preservation Planner Lambert located the property on the overhead and discussed the history of the 1917 home. After being remodeled between 1960 and 1995, the home was heavily renovated in 2012 (photographs followed), which Mr. Lambert summarized. Current views of the home were referenced on the overhead. The applicants are proposing to build a small addition on the east side of the home, about 45 feet from the front of the property line at the sidewalk. The proposed north front wall of the addition will extend east towards the alley (about 10 feet) and south along the alley (about 10 feet beyond the existing back wall of the house). The proposed siding of the addition will match the 2012 siding (fiber cement); windows will be Pella clad windows to match those installed in 2012. Also submitted is an alternative design for the north wall of the addition. The first option includes the addition with hipped roof that mimics the roof of the front porch. The second option is a shingled gable on the north side of the addition. Either option can be built with or without the small square window; however, the applicants prefer no window due to the interior arrangement of the kitchen. Per Mr. Lambert, the project is subject to SOI Standard Nos. 1 thru 6, 9 and 10.

Applicants, Jason and Johanna Patterson, were present remotely. Mr. Patterson added that the new addition will support a larger kitchen and living area. While their initial preference was the shed roof because it allowed the use of some shingle siding, they were willing to work with the hipped roof. They do not prefer the square window because it disrupts the interior design of the house. Ms. Patterson shared that a large tree was on the property that covers much of the addition, and they will be installing additional landscaping that will further mask the addition.

Chairman Zellmer invited commissioner comments. Commissioners Hartman, McManus, and Zinke noted that either option was fine. Per questions, the lap siding would match the existing house. Stazin asked the reasoning behind the window on the north elevation (Applicants' response: to provide some relief on the north wall and to match the windows of the 2012 west addition). Commissioner Stazin did not prefer the window. Chairman Zellmer had no issues with either option. A motion was entertained.

Motion by Commissioner Stazin to approve the submission for 522 James Street for the proposed addition, with the elements of a hipped roof and without the window on the north elevation. Second by Commissioner Hartman. Roll call:

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

Nay: None

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 6-0

Ms. Patterson extended her appreciation to the commissioners for their work.

5. Secretary's Report

A. HPC Review of Color and Semi-Permanent/Permanent Materials – Mr. Lambert reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on how color can play an important role in how architecture is

perceived and how color helps historic neighborhoods establish an authentic sense of place and time. Examples followed. Reviewing Section 10-6-2, Review of Color, Mr. Lambert explained the presentation was intended to initiate discussion that would clarify the Commission's approach to the review of colors of certain materials used in the Historic District so that staff can appropriately advise future applicants. Regarding color review, he proceeded to review the commissioner's legal authority to review permanent and semi-permanent material for compatibility with the architectural style of a building and for general compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Details followed, and examples of brilliantly colored buildings in other communities were depicted as examples of why some communities regulate color. Lambert presented information about other commissions and how color selection is reviewed in their communities. As an option, Mr. Lambert referenced a sampling of communities across the country that regulate historic color palettes but not specific colors.

Mr. Lambert recalled some of the discussions he had with the commission regarding factory-finished material. He also presented examples of how most pre-finished materials can be refinished with stain, paint, or other coatings. Examples followed.

The Geneva Historic Preservation Ordinance does not state that color cannot be discussed; however, the ordinance defines a narrow scope for the review of color in regard to specific materials. Going forward, Lambert explained that a better understanding of the Commission's interest in reviewing color and the Commission's understanding of specific terms is essential. Mr. Lambert noted that the issue of color has been treated differently from project to project in recent months. He pointed out that the Geneva HPC strives to be consistent to be fair, credible, and reduce the chance for appeals of Commission determinations. Mr. Lambert raised several questions for consideration by the HPC: How the HPC wants to proceed with matters of color and color palettes? Does the commission not want to render any opinion on color for any material or element? Should the ordinance language be changed to identify field-applied vs. factory-applied finishes (as opposed to semi-permanent and permanent finishes)? Mr. Lambert explained that some of his colleagues require that applicants submit plans only in black and white and "hope for the best" when it comes to the final colors selected for a property.

Responding to Commissioner Hartman's question, Mr. Lambert explained that—with regard to the ordinance—the intent in 2016 (when the current ordinance was adopted) was that materials that had some sense of permanence in the historic district should be reviewed to ensure those colors were compatible to the architecture of the subject property as well as with the neighboring properties.

Commissioner Zinke asked why this matter was being raised at this time. Mr. Lambert explained that, from staff's perspective, it is unclear which materials the Commissioners were interested in reviewing for color compatibility as well as why the HPC was reviewing some materials but not others. He wanted to ensure that all applicants were being treated equitably. Furthermore, Mr. Lambert wanted to understand the expectations of the commission, given that all of the present commissioners (except for Commissioner Zinke) had not been appointed to the HPC when this issue was last discussed at length. Chairman Zellmer shared that he had a difficult time with reviewing factory finish versus non-factory finish materials. Mr. Lambert suggested that this topic be an on-going discussion.

B. Project Update: 422 W. State Street Facade – Mr. Lambert shared an update on the proposed window replacement for the 422 W. State Street facade. Previously, the HPC granted approval (Certificate of Appropriateness) for the removal of a 1957 bay window with the stipulation that staff review the condition of the stone once the window was removed. The bay window was removed a week ago. (Photos were provided). Per Mr. Lambert, the bay window was anchored into the stone sills, and the historic limestone lintel at the east, first floor window was cracked completely through. The contractor is working with a masonry restoration company. Mr. Lambert pointed out that the first floor lintel was finished with a bush-hammered pattern; it is a significant feature that should be retained and repaired. The owner will be cleaning dirt build-up from the stone facade. A corner of the building has some structural issues, basement windows have been infilled with brick and mortar that may be more stiff than the limestone wall. The general contractor is conducting structural investigation and analysis. The general contractor will provide a proposal

for stone repairs for approval by staff. Due to his professional background, Commissioner Stazin asked if he could be involved in the process.

6. New Business

- A. From the Commission: None
- B. From the Public: None.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Stazin. Second by Commissioner Warner. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.