

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

April 21, 2020

(This meeting was held by video teleconference.)

1. Call to Order

Chairman Zellmer called to order the April 21, 2020 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call*

Present HPC: Chairman Zellmer; Commissioners Hamilton, Hiller, Salomon, Stazin, Warner, Zinke

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert

Others Present: Applicants Brian and Megan Morell, 428 Fulton Street, Geneva; Todd Augustine with Augustine Custom Development; Dan Marshall with Marshall Architects

3. Approval of February 19, 2020 Minutes

Minutes of February 19, 2020 – Motion by Commissioner Salomon, second by Commissioner Warner to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed by voice vote of 6-0-1 (Zinke abstains).

4. Review of Building Permit Applications

A. Brian and Megan Morell, Owners, 428 Fulton Street; Dan Marshall with Marshall Architects; Todd Augustine with Augustine Custom Development. Application: Proposed Exterior Rehabilitation and Addition to a Non-Contributing Property. Preservation Planner Michael Lambert recalled this project was a multi-phase project seen prior by the commission. In 2015 when the National Register of Historic Places survey was update, the property was identified as a Contributing property. However, in the 1999 Architectural Survey adopted by the City Council, the building was identified as Non-contributing because little was known about the house and its architectural style. Since the survey will be updated, staff will recommend it as a Contributing property for the associations of pattern of development and study of methods of construction and technology.

Planner Lambert reviewed a number of presentation slides reflecting the history of the home's progress since 2012. The proposal for tonight would focus on interior rehabilitation, rearrangement of spaces, and the demolition of the existing two-car garage. The proposed project included a proposed new front porch, rearrangement of the kitchen/master bathroom and a new three-bay garage with two garage doors facing Sixth Street and the other bay with fixed windows facing the street. The entire building will have shingle siding, windows by Marvin (Elevate Collection-formerly the Integrity Wood Alltrex) in a stone white finish with 7/8th inch muntins at the exterior/interior with a non-specular spacer between the glass (meets HPC window policy). The roof will be asphalt shingle to match the dormers and accent areas with standing seam metal roof

(color to be confirmed) and include a tradition rolled seam or similar narrow batten. James Hardi fiber cement shingles will be used on the dormers. LP Smart siding will be used for the soffit, trim and vertical board and batten and phypon architectural brackets with smooth finish.

Multiple elements of the project were summarized by Mr. Lambert as well as parts of those projects the commission should pay attention to: construction of a porch with attention to its design, massing, and scale; the proposed front door and side lights; and the composite columns and metal roofing. Concerns followed. Per Mr. Lambert, the windows proposed for the north elevation (Fulton Street) should be reviewed for their operation such as casement or double-hung. The exterior rehab of the mid-1980s addition will continue with the shingle siding, awning windows to be provided, and a panelized wall treatment (not seen before) to wrap around a small projection between the tower and the main house.

Photos of the current tower's condition followed, along with a historic view of the tower (circa 1890s to early 1900s), with clapboard siding, water table and a porch feature. Mr. Lambert explained the tower was the oldest architectural element on the property. The proposal was to replace the existing windows with double-hung windows on the first floor and casement windows on the upper floor with applied muntins and trim and a standing seam roof on the tower. Lastly, the owners wanted to modify the upper portion of the tower to be all glass, creating a lighthouse effect. Four elevations followed.

A review of the west elevation followed, specifically the completion of the historic dormer which would be replicated on the rest of the exterior. The proposed garage will have board and batten vertical siding to set it off from the main part of the home. Details followed. Roofing will match the asphalt materials of the main residence. A cupola or lantern is proposed for the top of the garage. Garage door details followed with color needing to be confirmed. Mr. Lambert pointed out that this specific line of carriage garage doors had embossed wood grain and did not have a smooth finish offered. The north and south garage elevations were visible from the public right-of-way and would have to be reviewed by the commission. Specifically, the commissioners were asked to pay attention to the service door on the north elevation and the simulated double-hung window on the south elevation which was a casement window.

Reviewing the east elevation of the residence, Mr. Lambert drew commissioners' attention to the front portion of the elevation, pointing out the tower and oval window as compared to the other rectangular windows. The rear elevations of the garage and home were also depicted. In closing, Mr. Lambert explained that eight SOI Standards applied to the proposal.

Chairman Zellmer invited the applicant or a member of their team to speak.

Applicant and owner, Mr. Brian Morell corrected staff, stating the new dormers were cedar siding and not Hardi board. The entire home would use cedar siding. In addition, he noted that some of the windows were misrepresented and were not casement windows. The architect would clarify better. Mr. Morell said he and his wife were excited to be in this phase of the project and would work with the commission on any adjustments.

Mr. Dan Marshall, architect for the proposal, proceeded and clarified for commissioners some of the items on the plans that pertained to the windows. Specifically, the oval window would include a cross grid. Mr. Marshall said he intends to do as much of the smooth wood as possible.

Builder, Tom Augustine, clarified that the front door will be fir or mahogany and the garage service door will be wood, if required or, as the owners preferred, a metal door due to its heavy use.

Chairman Zeller confirmed again with Mr. Morell that the siding on the home would be cedar shake siding to match what was on the dormers, and the garage would be Hardi-board plank with board and batten siding.

The Chairman invited the commissioners to speak.

To Commissioner Zinke's question about the commission's purview of the garage and its materials, Mr. Lambert indicated the only elevation not under the commission's purview was the east elevation. He reminded the commission that they had approved prior Hardi-board plank board and batten siding. Responding to Commissioner Hamilton's inquiry on why the owners decided to change the siding to shingle siding versus the horizontal lap siding, Mr. Morell explained he and his wife did not like the existing aluminum siding but the more they lived in the home, they liked it. It had a New England feel so they leaned more toward it. Also, he recalled the commission had given a prior option to go either cedar shake, Hardi-board, or real cedar.

Asked if any of the current siding was historic, Mr. Morell explained the home was all aluminum and there was nothing under the garage aluminum. The siding under the existing aluminum was in a mish-mash of repair state. Details followed. Mr. Marshall recalled that the change to the cedar shake over the Hardi-board was that the open corners could be done and not do the corner boards to get a real shingle style look.

Commissioner Warner supported the proposal and felt the shingle style siding was appropriate for the home and the neighborhood. As for the windows he believed the fixed windows at the top of the tower made sense to appear as double-hung; however, he inquired about the operation of the rest of the windows. Mr. Marshall explained that the triple windows on the north front elevation had two side windows which were casement windows. On the west elevation, right side, first floor, the two windows appeared as double-hung but were casement windows due to egress code. If necessary those windows could be changed to double-hung. However, as explained by Mr. Augustine, if those windows were changed to real double-hung they could be as wide as the windows in the dormer, which could cause issues on the interior for the owners, which was why the casements were chosen. Mr. Morell voiced that if the two windows worked out as double-hungs in the plan and it could be done, he was fine with the change. Further, he noted the windows in the dormer had to be customized.

The laundry windows in the connection part of the home were shown as fixed but were not correct in the plans. Commissioner Warner supported double-hung windows as much as possible due to the age and style of the home, including the oval window, or unless something functionally or code-wise would prohibit it. Mr. Morell explained the oval window was a personal desire. Commissioner Zinke also supported the proposal, favored the window placements and the oval window, and also liked the shingle material. She inquired whether the older of the two dormers had the shingle style wherein Mr. Morell explained the contractors who removed the existing siding relayed that it could have once been shingle but it looked like the horizontal siding had been on the dormer for a long time.

Regarding the front porch, Zinke thought it was on the "grand" side; Chairman Zellmer had no issues with it and thought it would be less imposing than it looks; Salomon believed it would add character to the home but not overly too much. Commissioner Hiller also supported the proposal and felt the home needed a porch, referring to a Columbine house. The columns, he believed, could be a lighter style and a bit less.

Architect, Mr. Marshall, discussed how column styles changed over time, recalling that many of the columns on the shingle homes were thin, wherein on the Craftsman style home, the columns began to “beef” up. He reminded the commissioners that the shingle and stick style came after the Queen Anne and Victorian homes. Commissioner Zinke asked for better clarification of the columns that were being discussed. A floor plan followed. Mr. Lambert explained how the porch element met the SOI Standards.

Reviewing the tower, Chairman Zellmer believed it lost its historicism; Commissioner Warner, on the other hand, noted the prior stair and balcony on the tower in the historic photo. Commissioner Salomon stated the tower was a unique feature and the proposed changes made it more exciting. Commissioner Hamilton agreed the proposed tower was different from the limited photos but believed the proposed changes, overall, were going to make the home very different than what was current.

Adding to the comments, Commissioner Zinke viewed the tower as a utilitarian building on the property and was pleased that it was not being razed, given its current use as compared to its original use. She recalled that other buildings on properties were saved and used for something else. She supported the proposed use of the building. Commissioner Hiller appreciated the structure’s “bones” were being kept intact and, according to SOI Standard No. 10, the building could be returned to its original state. Leaving in the tower was a positive.

Turning to the proposed garage, Commissioner Warner felt it was too large as compared to the home wherein Mr. Marshall explained that he used the board and batten materials to separate the garage from the house to try to get the feel of a collection of buildings. Furthermore, he explained that the two-car garage portion was pulled out in front of the blank bay to bring down the scale of the mass. The roof pitch matched that of the existing building. The inspiration for the garage’s board and batten style was to keep the building looking utilitarian with a carriage-style feel and as a separate building.

Chairman Zellmer inquired if the petitioners had considered setting the gable over one of the doors and setting the other door back in line with the rest of the garage, thereby bringing the gable down somewhat. Referring to the south elevation he further asked whether the petitioners were matching the roof pitches of the house to the garage, wherein Mr. Marshall confirmed they were close to matching. Mr. Marshall further reminded the commission that the third bay was not a garage door and to have the door and blank bay, the single gable looked out of scale and not very good. Also, the petitioners wanted a nice size garage. He did review the plans with a single gable.

Commissioner Hiller inquired generally about board and batten use in Geneva structures and further inquired about the setback of the garage, which was about the same as the house. Other similar structures were then mentioned.

Commissioners were fine with the cupola detail. Regarding the main home, Commissioner Warner asked if the connector section between the main home and the tower could be clapboard siding versus the panel material, wherein Mr. Marshall thought a horizontal material would not look appropriate; rather he was trying to create a rhythm. Asked what other commissioners thought, Commissioner Stazin noted that a material change would break up the linear character of the elevation and it was a question of whether the owners wanted to reduce the horizontal scale or not and whether breaking up the elevation was the intent.

Mr. Marshall indicated that it was the intent and he wanted to keep the base with the shingles to tie it together since it was a low horizontal element.

Mr. Lambert interjected and recalled that if the commissioners wanted to keep the bones of the building but give it a new face then the commission needed to consider that consistently around the façade. However, if another element other than the panelization belonged there, and horizontal clapboard had been suggested, why wouldn't clapboard be placed on the tower if it was known to be the original finish. He recommended that the commissioners decide whether the petitioners should use materials that were found historically on the building or allow a new interpretation. If there is to be a new interpretation then the panelization was probably considered appropriate under the SOI Standards. Consistency was necessary.

Commissioner Zinke believed that once the materials were seen in reality, they would look much better, as compared to the black and white drawings. The Chairman found the proposal appropriate as well. He entertained a motion.

Motion by Commissioner Hiller, second by Commissioner Zinke to approve the request for the renovation of the property at 428 Fulton Street, subject to the commission's comments. The commission also directs staff to work with the applicants for any issue that may arise. Roll call:

Aye: Hamilton, Hiller, Salomon, Stazin, Warner, Zinke, Zellmer

Nay: None

MOTION PASSED. VOTE: 7-0

Mr. Morell asked for clarification of the motion.

5. Secretary's Report

Mr. Lambert thanked Commissioner Hiller for his nearly 17 years of service on the City's Historic Preservation Commission. His institutional knowledge would be missed. Architect Sean Gallagher also extended kind words to Commissioner Hiller and thank him for his years of service and knowledge. Other commissioners extended their appreciation and thanks.

6. New Business

A. From the Commission: None.

B. From the Public: Mr. Gallagher inquired about the Rebe petition from last month wherein Mr. Lambert provided some details to that project, which was approved administratively. Mr. Gallagher thanked him for the approval.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Hiller, second by Commissioner Salomon. Motion carried unanimously by voice vote of 7-0.