

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

**October 19, 2021**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Zellmer called to order the October 19, 2021 meeting of the Geneva Historic Preservation Commission at 7:00 p.m. and read a prepared statement.

**2. Roll Call**

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

Absent: Commissioners Salomon, Stazin

Staff Present: Preservation Planner Michael Lambert

Others Present: Applicants Matt and Shannon Mayer, 218 Peyton Street; Jeremy and Melinda Sharp, 116 Campbell Street; Scott and Carrie Drumheller, 122 N. Sixth Street, Recording Secretary Celeste Weilandt

**3. Approval of September 21, 2021 Minutes**

Minutes of September 21, 2021 – **Motion by Commissioner Zinke, to approve the minutes, as presented. Second by Commissioner Jensen. Roll call:**

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

**Nay: None**

**MOTION PASSED. VOTE:**

**3. Five Minute Field Guide – Exploring Architectural Terminology**

Preservation Planner Michael Lambert provided a presentation on architectural terminology explaining variation definitions and providing clarification for certain architectural terms. After the presentation Commissioner Zinke asked Mr. Lambert if the commission had previously reviewed a building that had used Vitrolite wherein Mr. Lambert indicated that the referenced storefront did not but that the B. F. Goodrich Tire store at 129 West State Street was a good example of a Vitrolite storefront. Mr. Lambert stated the 12 terms in tonight's presentation could be viewed on the City's web site, where all Five Minute Field Guides are available for viewing.

**4. Review of Conceptual Development Plans**

A. 218 Peyton Street (Case No. 2021-090). Applicant/Owner: Matthew and Shannon Mayer; Sean Gallagher Architect with Gallagher Associates. Application for addition to a Contributing Residential Property. Preservation Planner Lambert located the property on the overhead map which property was located in the North Geneva Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places and in the northern half of the local Geneva Historic District. The 1906 building was constructed as a parsonage for the Methodist Episcopal Church (now the Geneva United Methodist Church) but was later moved from its original location on Second Street to its present location on Peyton Street in April 1997. Historic photographs followed (and verify) of the pad being constructed in preparation of the move. Mr. Lambert clarified in his staff report that the garage was not historic as he had identified previously. A site plan followed, noting a small

portion of the addition is visible to the public right-of-way, which was why it was before this commission.

Applicants Matt and Shannon Mayer were present. They extended their appreciation to the commission and shared that they just moved to Geneva in July. Their intention is to embrace the historical aspect of their home and grow their family in the home. As part of their design process, they have reached out to the Geneva Historic Museum and the church for any historic records or photographs of the home to see the previous character of the home. Mr. Mayer has contacted the state's preservation agency as well.

Turning to the front elevation, architect for the project -- Sean Gallagher -- explained the existing garage currently sat less than 8 feet from the east property line. The new garage would be six feet from the property line. The current garage will be demolished and the new garage will be an attached garage. Per Gallagher, about 1 foot of the western portion of the addition can be seen. The garage will sit 93.6" feet from the front property line, while the west addition will set 83 feet from the property line. The owners are looking to remove the current siding to see what is underneath and then possibly restoring the original siding. The owners also plan to remove the current metal storm units and insert Marvin combination wood units which will look, from the outside, like a more traditional wood storm unit. Smooth LP siding is planned to be used on the home's addition.

Questions followed and Mr. Gallagher explained the owners will have to make the decision on how to proceed when the aluminum siding is removed. Whatever follows, he said the owners will return to the HPC with a request to install LP Smart siding -- smooth side out -- with an appropriate lap for the style of the house, and with everything to follow the lap.

Mr. Lambert explained that the coordination of the Tax Assessment Freeze program and the City's siding policy would include coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (IL-SHPO). The lot coverage for the addition appears to meet City code and, per staff, this was the first project being reviewed under the City's new, downtown zoning districts.

Mr. Gallagher expected the petitioners to return to the HPC in the winter with a formal proposal. Commissioners were fine with the conceptual proposal.

## **5. Review of Building Permit Applications**

A. 116 Campbell Street (Case No. 2021-091). Applicant/Owner: Jeremy and Melinda Sharp; Nicholas Manheim with Manheim Architecture and Richard Csekme with Full Throttle Contracting Network, Inc, Contractor. Application for Front Porch Addition at a Contributing Property. Preservation Planner Lambert located the house on the overhead map, noting that the property was located in the southern half of the local Geneva Historic District and also in the Central Geneva Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The 1923 Colonial Revival / Dutch Colonial home was a contributing property in both historic districts. Materials on the building included a concrete foundation, clapboard siding on first floor and shingle siding on the second floor. Currently a synthetic siding covers the original home, the home has 3 over 1 double-hung windows, and has an inside recessed porch. A history of the home followed. A new front porch is being proposed to be added in front of the historic front porch.

In reviewing the 3-D rendering from the applicants, Mr. Lambert pointed out how the front façade will change with the proposed changes: it will include a wall reduction of the dormer about two-thirds, a new curved roof will be located over the porch, a large arch entry bay with no porch lintel, the existing eave will be removed so new siding can extend upward beneath the new porch,

an open railing system, and a closed apron at the base of the proposed porch. The original roof line will change. Details followed.

Owners, Mr. Jeremy and Melinda Sharp were present with Mr. Sharp discussing how they came to Geneva a few years ago and the fact that both he and his wife love historic homes. They relayed they would like to accentuate the home's character. Mr. Sharp walked through a PowerPoint depicting photos of other homes in the area which he said provided the inspiration for their home's front facade.

Mr. Nick Manheim, architect for the project, explained how he planned to use the applicant's inspirations, specifically the curvature of the Dutch Colonial, to create the proposal.

Commissioner McManus discussed the defining features of the home and voiced concern on how much the original front façade was changing – pointing out the SOI Standards – and mentioning the shortening of the wall from the first level to the second level. She believed the rendering was burying some of the Dutch Colonial and felt the commission had a responsibility to protect how the house looks. Commissioner Zinke concurred and added that this home may have been constructed to be smaller and with more simpler Dutch Colonial design versus some of the larger homes in the presentation. She suggested reopening the original porch, adding a railing, and returning the original front door, thereby returning the original porch to the home. Commissioner Hartman was fine with the newer roofline and front porch.

Ms. Sharp added that she and her husband chose the roof line and arch based on the research they did; however, they did not necessarily have to keep the arch and were open to keeping it straight if they had to.

Chairman Zellmer believed the changes were modifying the character of the home completely, especially the front façade, and it was difficult for the commission to approve the change because it was coming across as a false sense of historicism. The commission was bound to follow the state's SOI standards but not design a home for the applicants. While the chairman explained the commission understood what the applicants were going for, he stated the application would probably not be approved. Chairman Zellmer suggested the applicants speak to Mr. Lambert and use him as a resource. As for how to move forward, Mr. Lambert explained the options before the commission and the applicants at this point: commission approval; commission denial with potential appeal process before City Council; or withdrawal of the request by the applicants for further revision of the porch proposal.

Per Ms. Sharp's question about the return of the original porch, Chairman Zellmer stated the commission would be open to reviewing the plans for returning the original porch. He further emphasized that the applicant could use Mr. Lambert as a resource. After discussing the matter with their architect, the applicants decided to withdraw their application.

B. 122 North Sixth Street (Case No. 2021-092). Applicant/Owner: Scott and Carrie Drumheller. Application for Proposed Siding Replacement at a Contributing Property. Preservation Planner Lambert located the house on the overhead map which was located in the North Geneva Historic District and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It was also located in the far northwest corner of the local Geneva Historic District. The minimal traditional home was built in 1938, as referenced in two articles from the *Geneva Republican*, and which plan was also taken from the Better Homes and Garden magazine as a BildCost Gardened Home. A rear addition (with cement fiber siding (rough texture)) was added to the home in 2015.

The current siding on the home, however, was deteriorating, as confirmed by Mr. Lambert who went on-site on September 21, 2021. Deterioration was across the entire house which included damage from sandblasting, rotting underside (possibly caused by caulk placed under each joint of siding), and termite and carpenter ant infestation.

The owners provided a cost breakdown for removing the original siding, disposing the materials and installing the new siding.

Applicants Scott and Carrie Druhellers were present. Mr. Drumheller discussed that he and his wife have learned much about the history of their home and would like to preserve it. They received much information from the Geneva History Museum. They would also like to eradicate the damage done by the termites, carpenter ants, and a woodpecker. Mr. Druheller said he did not realize the siding had been sandblasted on three sides; Mr. Lambert had pointed that out. Mr. Druheller also believed the caulking under each board probably created the environment for the insect damage, which he believed was now damaged beyond repair.

Tonight, the petitioners were seeking approval to use either the cedar wood plank siding or the Hardi-plank product that was currently on the rear addition. Mr. Druheller stated he wanted to preserve the historical window trim and details, the few architectural features of the home -- the eave bracket, the front stoop and the curving walkway. After the current siding is removed, Mr. Druheller intends to have an exterminator look at the home before installing the new siding. And, any future interior work would also be inspected to ensure the home is preserved. He extended appreciation to staff for pointing out items he had not seen.

Mr. Lambert proceeded to walk through a comparison property at 201 N. Third Street (Giampoli residence) approved for cement-fiber siding replacement in November 2019, summarizing that the Drumheller proposal before this commission was a very similar case.

Commissioner Zinke inquired as to how the front siding compared to the sides of the home, thinking that some of the original siding on the east elevation could be salvaged for the front façade while doing something different on the sides. Mr. Lambert indicated the cupping and sandblasting was significant overall and piecing it together would not be sympathetic to the home's historic look. Details followed.

Mr. Lambert shared his insight on the siding dilemma before the commissioners and explained there was no clear solution other than to consider the longevity of the home and to preserve its appearance, understanding that the termites can return. He pointed out that the commission should, as well as the applicants, discuss whether it is appropriate to use a cedar-mill finish (used on the 2015 addition) or use a smooth finish on the historic portion of the home.

Commissioner McManus, understanding that the SOI standards talk about wood replacing wood, believed in this case, switching to a different material was a better choice, given the previous infestation and said it was protecting the property in general. As a suggestion, Commissioner Zinke mentioned that the east facade could be done in a clear cedar while the north and south façades could be re-sided in Hardiboard (smooth finish) as opposed to the rough cedar finish. After all, it was the front façade of a home in a historic district. Chairman Zellmer recalled that such option was done previously but with the front façade being replaced with salvaged wood from other areas of a home. But, Chairman Zellmer questioned whether sufficient material existed at this property and whether the salvaged material was appropriate given the prior sandblasting and other condition issues. Commissioner Hartman supported all three sides matching the addition's siding texture while Commissioner Zinke was not supportive of matching the finish to the

addition. A hearty discussion followed with commissioners agreeing that the Hardiplank material would be used with the smooth side out, relying on the SOI Standards.

**Motion by Commissioner McManus to approve the request for the proposed siding replacement using the HardiePlank cementitious siding and trim (smooth side out) to replicate the historic siding finish of the home (per the adopted Siding Policy); historic window trim, frieze, soffit, fascia, and eave bracket shall be retained. Notably, the approval of cementitious siding (instead of wood as required by the adopted Siding Policy) was granted, specifically, due to the potential of future insect infestation of new, wood siding. Second by Commissioner Hartman. Roll call:**

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

**Nay: None**

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

## **6. Secretary's Report**

Staff Updates: Preservation Planner, Mr. Lambert introduced Mr. Al Watts, Community Engagement Director with the Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley, a non-profit agency. The agency encourages the sense of place through preservation. The agency focuses on the importance of educating the public through local history and offers free guidance on preservation methods and local ordinances. Mr. Watts announced The Japanese Gardens will hold its Light the Gardens event (just after Thanksgiving) for the upcoming winter months. Also, an upcoming event called Energy Efficiency in Historic Homes will be held this Thursday, October 21, 2021, 7:00 PM at the St. Charles Public Library.

Mr. Lambert relayed that he is working on the survey and engaging some students from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Their assistance on the survey will be used toward class credit. Lastly, Mr. Lambert reported that he was six months into the fiscal year and was already at two-thirds the number of permits issued last year, approximately a 56% increase in permit reviews over this date last fiscal year.

## **7. New Business**

A. From the Commission: None

B. From the Public: None

## **8. Adjournment**

**There being no further business to come before the Historic Preservation Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. on motion by Commissioner Zinke, second by Commissioner Jensen. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote of 5-0.**