



VILLAGE OF WILMETTE
1200 Wilmette Avenue
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-0040

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 2020
6:30 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEETING ROOM – SECOND FLOOR OF WILMETTE VILLAGE HALL
1200 WILMETTE AVENUE, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091

Members Present: Charles Hutchinson
Bob Furniss
Melanie Glass
Joseph Vitu
Carmen Corbett
Rick Daspit
Tanvi Parikh
Bob Fogarty

Members Absent: Christine Harmon

Staff Present: Kate McManus, Planner III

Guests: Ron Scherubel, Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy
Scott Krone, 631 Lake Avenue
Connie Casey
Susan Benjamin

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JULY 10, 2019

The meeting minutes from July 10, 2019 were approved as submitted. Motion to approve by Commissioner Furniss and seconded by Commissioner Parikh.

**III. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST FOR A CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS – 507 LAKE AVENUE (FRANK J. BAKER HOUSE)**

Mr. Venechuk introduced himself as the project architect. He provided a correction pertaining to the case report noting that 3 existing leaded glass windows will be removed as a result of the project. He stated that the windows will be safely stored in the basement for any future uses. He stated that he has enjoyed working with the owners to rehabilitate the much deteriorated home. He reviewed the current conditions and limitations of the existing kitchen and explained that the new kitchen will work within the existing footprint of the house. He added that the kitchen will be contemporary and a family room will be created in the lower level. He stated that all exterior

materials will match existing. He explained that he is in the process of sourcing cypress wood to match the existing trim, but that it is difficult to find pieces long enough. He noted that if the correct length can't be located, stained cedar will be used.

Ms. McManus reviewed the proposed project noting that it consists of three elements: reconstruction of a front entry wall, a rear addition, and exterior repairs to the existing soffit, fascia and trim. She explained that the proposed entry wall was part of the original design by Frank Lloyd Wright. She stated that the standards for review were summarized in the Commission's packet materials and that the project appears to meet the standards.

In response to a question by Commissioner Corbett, Mr. Venechuk stated that grading will be addressed on the site by the installation of a French drain.

In response to a question from Commissioner Furniss, Ms. Bauer confirmed that they are in the process of applying for the property tax assessment freeze. The application is currently under review by the State Historic Preservation Office and they are awaiting approval.

Commissioner Parikh questioned if the architect considered sinking the kitchen down a few steps in order to maintain the roof lines on the exterior. She noted that the house has two distinctive roof planes which is characteristic of a Frank Lloyd Wright house. She acknowledged that the approach might be more difficult and costly.

Mr. Venechuk said that he had not considered lowering kitchen but that it was an interesting idea. He stated that the interior spaces would function better if the kitchen were at the same level, as proposed.

In response to a question from Commissioner Parikh, Mr. Venechuk stated that the difference in height between the pitch of the addition roof and the soffit of the existing house is approximately two feet.

In response to a question from Commissioner Fogarty, Mr. Bauer stated that he is looking into salvaging the original garage door. He is hoping to store it permanently.

Hearing no other questions from the Commission, Chairman Hutchinson invited public comment.

Mr. Scherubel introduced himself as the former director and current board member of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy. He said he has been involved for over 20 years in the organization and that he is thrilled with the proposed project and is whole heartedly in support of it. He stated that the home is an asset to the community.

Mr. Krone stated that he lives at 631 Lake Avenue and that as a neighbor and architect, he greatly appreciates the proposed plans and noted that the previous owner, Walter Sobel would be very pleased.

Ms. Casey stated that she is a former Commission member and commended the architect and

owners for their sensitive addition to the home. She complimented the architect on the drawings provided in the Commission's packet.

Ms. Benjamin stated that she is a preservation consultant and is pleased that the homeowners are taking advantage of the property tax assessment freeze. She stated that the application process can sometimes be daunting and offered to assist the owners, pro-bono.

Hearing no further comments from the public Chairman Hutchinson final comments and questions from the Commission.

Commissioner Parikh stated that the project is commendable and that it is clear that the owners care a great deal about the house.

Commissioner Vitu moved to recommend granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for reconstruction of an entry wall, minor exterior repairs, and a rear addition to the local landmark at 507 Lake Avenue in accordance with the plans submitted.

Commissioner Furniss seconded the motion and the voice vote was unanimously approved (Commissioner Harmon not present). Motion carried.

IV. SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES REPORT

Ms. McManus stated that a demolition request was received for 1925 Wilmette Avenue, the old American Legion Hall. It will be replaced by an affordable housing development.

V. OLD BUSINESS/STAFF UPDATES

The Commission discussed the annual preservation awards and determined that it will be held during Preservation Month in May. The Commission and staff will work together to advertise the event and solicit nominations.

Ms. McManus stated that she will move forward with the National Register nomination of the Village Center as weather permits. She also noted that staff in the Community Development Department has created a useable database to begin updating the architectural survey last done in 1991. She stated that staff will update the survey as time allows.

The Commission discussed the proceedings of the July 10th meeting and the subsequent review of 301 Sheridan Road by the Village Board. Ms. McManus suggested that it may useful to hold a training session with the Commission to improve the processes and procedures of the Commission.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment on general Commission business.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:21 p.m. by Commissioner Glass and seconded by Commissioner Fogarty and approved unanimously. Scheduling of the next meeting date was postponed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kate McManus