

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
December 17, 2014
Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – Northville City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chair Johnson called the Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Argenta, Field, Gudritz, Hoffman, Johnson, Tartaglia, Vernacchia
Absent: None
Also Present: Consultant Elmiger

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: none

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: November 19, 2014

MOTION Gudritz, support by Hoffman, to approve the minutes of November 19, 2014 as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. REPORTS:

- A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:** None
- B. CITY COUNCIL:** None
- C. PLANNING COMMISSION:** None
- D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:** None

6. PUBLIC HEARING: None

7. CASES TO BE HEARD – BY CASE:

CASE #1

GREG PRESLEY/MALLOURE
500 W. CADY STREET

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Gregory Presley, 317 West Dunlap, Northville, MI and architect for this project, was present to speak on behalf of this application. Owners Mike and Julie Malloure were also present.

Mr. Presley explained that the applicants were proposing to construct a new house at 500 West Cady Street; the owners would live in the house after it was constructed.

Responding to the consultant's letter of December 5, 2014, Mr. Presley made the following points:

- The porte-cochere was included in the footprint calculations indicated on Sheet A-1.
- The garage loft would not be used for habitable purposes.
- Orange four-foot tall protective fencing would be placed at the drip line of the trees to be protected before construction began.
- The exposed foundation wall would be natural concrete; there would be plantings in front of this.
- The finish materials for columns and bases would be white cedar or Azek, for paint; Mr. Presley showed a sample of the Azek.

- Exterior doors other than the front door system and garage doors were factory-painted metal clad wood, by Jeld-Wen Sitrine EX or equal.

The construction schedule was planned for spring 2015, preceded by the demolition of the current structure, which demolition was described in Mr. Presley's December 16, 2014 letter to the HDC. Exterior work would be completed in about 10 months. Landscape and home occupation would be within 12 to 14 months from start of construction.

In response to a question from Commissioner Argenta, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that under the Zoning Ordinance, only 50% of the porch was used to calculate floor area. However, lot coverage used the size of the building (not floor area) which included anything under a roof. Therefore the calculation in the December 5, 2014 review letter of 27% lot coverage was correct, although Mr. Presley's November 24, 2014 letter showed 22% coverage in his narrative, as he used only 50% of the porch area.

Commissioner Argenta noted that in either case the footprint was under the allowable 30% of lot size.

In response to a further question from Commissioner Argenta regarding exterior lighting, Mr. Presley distributed modified and to-scale documents that showed the front door at the center of the home; a hanging chandelier would be placed in front of the door. Lighted brackets would be on each side of the French doors.

Included in the new documents was a *Neighborhood Lot Coverage Analysis*.

Mr. Presley said that after hearing neighborhood concerns, they had reduced the originally planned 3500 square foot residence to approximately 3,100 square feet, the same size as the home next door at 494 Cady Street.

Regarding massing, they deliberately stepped back the main mass of the house, so that it was now 17 feet behind the face of 494 Cady Street, by having wrapped porches that were forward of the main two-story body of the house. The porches also broke up mass, with a stepped forward cross gable at the roof, though the main roof structure was hip, a style that visually diminished the roof.

Regarding height, the average height of the proposed structure was about 26 feet; a 30-foot height was allowed. The actual ridge was 31 feet. The ridgeline at 494 Cady Street was 30 feet. However, in context, the ridgeline of the proposed structure was 34 feet behind the corner of the neighboring house, creating a perception of a shorter home; therefore the new house would not be perceived as being as tall as the house next door.

Mr. Presley explained that the applicants were intentionally creating a home where the historic house next door would be visually dominant.

In response to a comment from Commissioner Field that the proposed home might dwarf the house to the west, Mr. Presley explained that there was 62 feet between the two structures, or almost an entire lot width. The home to the east was 23 feet high; the proposed home had an average height of 26 feet. He did not feel the home to the east would be dwarfed.

Commissioner Field initiated a conversation regarding the nature of the Historic District. The Historic District Design Standards emphasized Gothic Revival, Victorian, etc. The proposed structure, with its cedar-shake upper exterior and swing-open doors at the front of the structure, reminded him of Nantucket homes, and did not seem to fit with the Historic District.

Mr. Presley emphasized the wrapped porch was set back 40 feet and provided a fair weather extension to the living portions of the home. Porch furniture would also break the visual impact of the front of the house, which would be observed at a 2.5-foot elevated position. Whether a window or French doors, the visual appearance from the street would be very similar.

Commissioner Hoffman said that with the door in the center, the eye was drawn toward that center in the manner of a traditional symmetrical home. The front railing softened the height of the French doors.

Mr. Presley commented that the style of the home was not a Nantucket-cottage style home, but was rather a traditionally styled two-story home, with a wrap porch that diminished the visual block that would have occurred otherwise.

Commissioner Argenta said that the Commission had studied the guidelines intensively prior to the demolition hearing for this property. His understanding was the Historic District was originally formed *as a beginning* to preserve the Gothic and neo-Gothic houses of a certain period. However, over the years there had been other styles constructed including farmhouse, Craftsman, Arts and Crafts, bungalows, etc. Most preservationists did not encourage constructing new neo-Gothic structures in Historic Districts. Mr. Argenta felt the proposed construction did fit in with the neighborhood.

Continuing his presentation, regarding scale, Mr. Presley said that the proposed construction was in scale with the rest of the neighborhood, especially the homes in the immediate vicinity of this property. Mr. Presley showed scale drawings of eye-level driver views from the west and the east. Most of the near homes were two-story, making this construction similar in proportion to others around it.

Regarding rhythm, the windows and columns mimicked the existing rhythms of the neighborhood, with the orientation of the windows and the repetitive pattern of the columns repeating patterns already existent on the street.

The hierarchy of the proposed structure allowed 494 West Cady to be more prominent than this home, but also within the new building itself the ornamentation was simple. Window hoods, gable end, the porch with no fretwork – all these elements created an intentional simplicity of design.

At this point, Mr. Presley displayed some of the sample materials, with material specifications listed in his November 24, 2014 letter to the Commission as follows:

- Roof: Dimensional asphalt, Certainteed Landmark “Colonial Slate.”
- Siding: Upper wall: HardiePlank Shingle Siding, 7” exposure.
Lower wall: HardiePlank Lap Siding, 7” exposure.
- Trim: Azek, painted white per sample.
- Chimney: Porte Cochere column base: General Shale brick, “Willshire.”
- Windows/Doors: Jeld-Wen Sitrine EX, aluminum-clad wood, white sash and frame.
- Porch floors: Azek “Marado,” per sample.
- Garage Door: CHI Carriage House Overlay 5300 series, #30, “Madison” windows per cutsheet.
- Exterior lighting: Pendant: Chart House CHO5033BZ per cutsheet.
Sconce: Williamsburg “Henry Street” B2010C1 per cutsheet.
- Exterior Specialty Doors: Antigua Doors, “traditional” series per cutsheet.
- Paint Colors: Walls: HardiePlank “Iron Gray” per sample.
Rim: Benjamin Moore “Arctic White”

Mr. Presley concluded by saying that he believed the proposed construction fit in with the neighborhood, easily met Code requirements, and in terms of lot coverage was in the 70th percentile while in terms of lot size was in the 90th percentile of the neighborhood.

Noting that Mr. Presley had said they had changed the original plans to meet neighbor concerns, Commissioner Hoffman commented that he felt this proposed construction did significantly soften the height and the approach to the house.

Mr. Malloure said that they had tried to honor the 60 plus neighbors who had signed a letter of support for this new construction.

In response to a question from Commissioner Vernacchia regarding the perspective of the proposed northbound streetscape view, Mr. Presley said the perspective was from eye-level.

In response to a further question from Commissioner Vernacchia, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that all outstanding issues had been addressed this evening.

In response to a question from Chair Johnson, Mr. Presley said that there would be no more than one-foot difference between the grade at the sidewalk and the grade at the steps. Because each of the steps would be about one foot high, the porch would be no greater than four feet above the sidewalk.

Commissioner Tartaglia commented that the grades were noted on the site plan.

Seeing that discussion had ended, Chair Johnson said that he was ready for a motion.

MOTION Vernacchia, support by Field, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Johnson opened the meeting for public comment. Hearing none, he returned the item to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Tartaglia, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness, referencing Northville Historic District Design Standards as follows:

- 3-2 landscaping
- 3-14 setback and spacing
- 3-16 mass
- 3-17 height
- 3-18 scale
- 3-19 proportion
- 3-20 hierarchy
- 3-21 rhythm
- 3-21 materials
- 3-22 details
- 3-23 dormers
- 3-23 decks
- 3-24 garages and carports
- 5-14 windows
- 5-17 siding
- 5-18 paint and color

with the materials and samples as described and provided this evening, including:

Flooring: Azek, color “Marado”
HardiPlank siding, color “Iron Grey”
Trim boards: Azek, paint color “white”
Roof: Dimensional asphalt, Certainteed Landmark, color “Colonial Slate.”

Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #2

**PATRICIA HEATH
125 N. ROGERS**

**PORCH ENCLOSURE, PAINT,
ROOF**

Patricia Heath, owner, was present on behalf of this application, which was to renovate one of the two units (125 N. Rogers Street) of a duplex. The application was to enclose the rear porch on the northern unit, put on a new roof, and paint the structure.

Responding to the consultant’s letter of December 9, 2014, Ms. Heath made the following points:

- The new rear second-floor balcony would be constructed of wood.
- The vertical siding currently on the back of the porch – Cedar Shift Black - would be shifted and re-used.
- All the trim around the new windows and glass doors would be rough sawn wood trim, as currently existed.
- The existing rear, ground level deck would be repaired, cleaned, and retained.
- The proposed shutters would be plastic.
- The entire structure would be painted.

Ms. Heath continued that the shutters would be the same on both sides of the duplex. The paint colors on the two units would be similar, but with enough differentiation to give the appearance of two houses.

In response to a clarifying question from Commissioner Field, Ms. Heath said she owned the entire duplex.

In response to a question from Planning Consultant Elmiger, Ms. Heath said she was replacing the entire roof, and showed samples of the shingles.

MOTION Field, support by Vernacchia, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Johnson opened the meeting for public comment. Hearing none, he returned the item to the Commission.

In response to a question from Planning Consultant Elmiger, Ms. Heath said the roof shingles would be Landmark Designer/Weathered Wood. Additionally, the paint colors for 121 Rogers would be Sherwin Williams Whiteduck LL04 and Barcelona Beige LL07. Paint colors for 125 Rogers would be Sherwin Williams Tony Taupe 7038 and Canvas Tan 7531. The shutters would be Pier SW 7545.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Vernacchia, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness, referencing Northville Historic District Design Standards as follows: 3-21 materials, 3-22 details, 5-9 asphalt shingles, 5-14 windows, 5-17 siding, and 5-18 paint colors as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION

SHPO Grant Information

Planning Consultant Elmiger referred the Commissioners to her memo of November 18, 2014 regarding *State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Grant Information*, which memo had been in response to a request from the Commission for more information regarding obtaining a grant for an Intensive Level Survey from SHPO. The memo described the grant process and what types of projects SHPO had been involved with in the past, especially regarding Intensive Level Surveys. The HDC needed to decide whether or not this was something worth pursuing.

In response to a question from Commissioner Vernacchia, Planning Consultant Elmiger said that the best information at present, based on her conversation with Historic Consultant Kristine Kidorff, was that the entire cost for an Intensive Level Survey would be \$25-\$30,000. If a grant were received from SHPO, it could cover up to 60 percent of that cost.

Commissioner Field initiated a discussion regarding the fact that the grant would be paid on a reimbursement basis. Per Planning Consultant Elmiger's letter: *"After financial documentation has been approved, payment is processed for project costs up to 60 percent, not to exceed the federal funds reserved for the project. Therefore, it is possible that SHPO could offer a grant of less than 60 percent of the project's total."*

Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that the grant would be approved before the work began. The City would enter into a contract with SHPO, then complete and pay for the work, and then document for SHPO that the work has been completed and paid for and provide other project documentation. At this point SHPO would pay for up to 60 percent of the project, as agreed before the project began. Additionally, the project must be placed for bids.

Commissioner Vernacchia thought it would be helpful to understand SHPO's reimbursement record, and also to clearly understand what documentation was necessary in order to obtain reimbursement.

Commissioner Field wondered about the ratio of applications to grants received.

In response to a question from Commissioner Argenta, Planning Consultant Elmiger said she would find out whether a low bid had to be accepted, or if weight could be given to other factors.

While it was the consensus of the Commission to move forward and apply for a SHPO Intensive Level Survey grant, and after a further discussion regarding process, requirements, and cost, Chair Johnson suggested presenting this project to City Council before the formal request to SHPO was submitted.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that she would follow up with City Manager Sullivan about getting this item on a City Council agenda, and provide background information including potential costs and a sample contract for this project.

Other Discussion

Citing enabling legislation regarding forming Historic Districts, Commissioner Argenta said that Historic District homes should be clearly labeled as such so that potential purchasers would know that a property was located in the Historic District. This should show up on title documents and in the Assessors' records.

Chair Johnson suggested having the City Attorney review current enabling legislation and give an opinion/make recommendations regarding notifying potential buyers that a property was in the Historic District.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Seeing that there was no further discussion, Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as published 1-21-2015