

## Rockford Historic Preservation Commission

July 14, 2004

6:30 PM

Rockford City Hall, Conference Room B

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Val Olafson; Laura Bachelder; Jeanne Ludeke; Vickie Krueger; Frank St. Angel, Scott Sanders

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ald. John Beck

**STAFF:** Ginny Gregory, Jackie Bernard

**OTHERS:** Joann Rossi (Stepping Stones), Larry Morrissey and Gary Anderson (Garrison School)

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The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Val Olafson.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders to approve the minutes of June 9, 2004. The motion was seconded by Laura Bachelder and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

#### CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS

##### ► 420 South Third Street

Joann Rossi was present to ask the Commission to review the decision it made in June concerning a proposed porch, based on evidence of other porches in Haight Village built in the same manner they would like to build this one. She proceeded to show a drawing of what the porch will look like, as well as producing pictures of other Haight Village homes with similar porches. She felt that if she had a better picture and a drawing, the Commission would get a better understanding of what they are proposing. If the porch was brought straight out, it would look like it was hanging off the side of the building as well as taking up the patio space. As for the type of skirting and balusters, they plan to match what is on the back porch and she produced a photo of those.

Val commented that she thought this drawing appeared a lot different from what was shown at the June meeting. She said the earlier drawings made the proposed porch look more like a deck.

Frank said his problems previously were the pickets, but he liked what the new drawing showed. Val said that her concerns were gone. Joann said the skirting and balusters will match the existing back porch.

A **MOTION** was made by Frank St. Angel, to replace the Certificate approved June 9<sup>th</sup>, and approve the design as submitted today with the railing design and height and the picket style character to match the existing back porch. The new porch is to run parallel to the house, not perpendicular as stated last month. The **MOTION** was seconded by Laura Bachelder and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

► **922 C Street**

The applicants were not present, but had supplied complete information and drawings of their proposal to build a 14' x 12' storage structure on the back corner of the property.

Val said that she had driven by the property; since they are on a corner, the storage would be seen from the street. She questioned if it would be clapboard. Frank said that it shows having redwood gutters, so he assumes it would be wood.

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders to approve with the clarification that the materials, siding and trim materials are all wood, preferably painted to match the house. The **MOTION** was seconded by Frank St. Angel and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0

## OLD BUSINESS

► **1105 North Court Street (Garrison School)**

Larry Morrissey, the applicant, and Gary Anderson, the architect, were both present to go over the details of their proposed plan for redevelopment of the building and site. While displaying various drawings, Gary went over each individual item as submitted and defined by the 18 items shown in the staff review.

1. Gary said that Renaissance Masonry had done a test patch on the masonry and it will match up with the existing joints as well as whatever tuckpointing that needs to be done.
2. The original diamond shaped window on the main entrance will be retained and a storm window will be added. All other windows will be replaced to match the profile and style of the original windows, double-hung throughout. There will be two types of windows for the gymnasium section and the original Garrison School section.
3. All of the doors will be restored.
4. The mercury vapor light at the front entrance will be removed. They have not decided what kind of lighting to use to replace it. The railing on the porch will remain intact as is.
5. They will retain the existing stairway and railings at the front entrance.
6. They intend to install a wrought iron fence around the window wells at the lower level. Areas where there is pipe railing around the light wells at the lower level will end up becoming bedrooms. They would like to provide additional security there, using the same type of railing as on the porch.
7. They are replacing any boarded and broken windows with new double-hung units. They haven't picked the manufacturer yet, but are looking at several. They are looking at both wood and aluminum windows to match the profile. They would also like to have the availability of using a variety of colors on the windows as well as on the trim.
8. They plan on installing new round gutters and downspouts that will match the original ones.
9. They have spoken with Mike Jackson with the Illinois Preservation Agency about adding balconies to the north and east sides of the original school building. He has indicated that he would not want to see any balconies on the public right-of-way side but felt they would be acceptable on the back side.

They feel it is important to have exterior space for the tenants and they won't have any balconies in the corner unit. They do not want to cut into the masonry to cut a door in. What they plan on doing is a step up to the window ledge and these are 8 foot windows. They will look like a double hung window and the masonry detail that is below it will not be covered up. They can also take the balcony off so it will be a reversible change to the exterior. Scott asked how the balconies would be attached. Gary Anderson said that they want a light appearance, so the deck will be open grate and they are keeping the fascia board around it down to about 5 inches. The balconies would be bolted through with a plate on the back side. There will be 4 balconies on the north side and 1 on the east side. All of them will be elevated, approximately 4 feet wide by 7 feet long, and there will be french doors leading out to each balcony.

10. They will restore and repair the exterior chimneys, saving all of the tuckpointing. All of the decorative features on the chimney on the original school building are on the inside of the attic because of the first addition that was made. They hope to expose those, but they are approximately 40 feet up from the attic floor. Gary mentioned that one of the most spectacular views of the entire structure is in the attic. He feels that it will help sell the units. Each unit will have a true loft appearance.
11. They plan to remove the connection between the gym and the original building, fully restoring the brick masonry on both buildings where the connection was made.
12. They also intend to remove the 1969 pod addition and the concrete block used to block up windows at that location. All of the brick masonry will be restored, and new windows installed to match the originals in the profile and detail on both the lower level and first floor.
13. They will remove the roof flashing from the gym and clean all asphalt from the brick; tuckpoint the brick where needed to match the existing masonry in texture, color and content; and carry out the same restoration where the pod abuts the gymnasium.
14. Construct a 2-story garage to the north of the gym that will be accessed from the upper grade elevation and that of the lower grade elevation at the alley. The garage will be of the same material as the gym, and will use stone and brick details matching what is on the gym.
15. They will remove existing paved areas throughout the site, replacing them with landscaping, grass and plantings, and a new paved driveway and parking area.
  - a) The grade will be raised at the back of the new condo units so that from the street side, the grade entrance to each unit will appear to be elevated, mirroring the rest of the neighborhood. Grade changes will occur in the paved driveways coming in from John Street.
  - b) No existing trees will be removed from the site.
  - c) The new driveway and parking area will be either street print or blacktop.

Gary continued by explaining that the gym floor will actually be the bedroom floor. As they come into the units, the living room, dining, and kitchen room area are all on the second level. What they are trying to do is expose all of the steel trusses as part of the living space. All of the living space will be on the upper level, rather than having it on the first floor. He continued to explain how the units were being designed.

Gary said they felt it is important to have an appearance of an elevated first floor. All of the buildings on the block go up to 3½ feet off the ground. They felt that they need to make it look like the little porches would be part of the entryway. Since the land is flat, the only way to do that would be to raise the grade up and some of the area would be elevated 2-3 feet. Then, it

would taper up into the garage. They wanted to try to change the appearance from street side of being garageville with townshouses, and do a mixture of both front and back.

Gary stated that this application only addresses Phase I of the project.

Scott asked how much paving would occur in Phase I. Gary explained that the progression would be in a counterclockwise fashion until they are finished. He said that part of their financing requires them to have a certain number of units pre-sold before they begin construction. The other units do not require that since they will be units on a lease with an option to purchase five years out after their tax credits are fully vested. The plan is to get the go ahead and the financing and, shortly after, get the approval on this.

Scott said he was not favoring street print, but wasn't sure if the Commission had a say over that anyway. Gary said that they had not decided on that as of yet. Ginny said that the guidelines only talk about driveways, not parking lots. It says brick, concrete, or concrete tracks, textured concrete, or asphalt design. Brick pavers are also acceptable. Gary said they are taking down considerably the amount of impervious surface from what is there today.

16. They will remove the overhead power lines in the alleyway, relocating them underground.
17. They would like to extend existing windows on the gymnasium down to the top of the foundation. Gary went over the drawings and explained the design of the windows.
18. They would like to replace the existing door on the east side of the gymnasium with a new entry door for 2 of the units. Gary pointed out that they would not be changing the door that goes into the boiler room.

Gary said that the driveways were approximately 24 feet to allow enough room so as not to disturb green space. Frank had concerns with the windows in the gym visible on John Street. He said it appeared to change the elevation a lot. He suggested keeping these two windows in their present configuration, which would also give more flexibility on the interior as well. Val commented that on the interior, in the bedroom, you would actually have clerestory windows, i.e. windows that are just at the ceiling line rather than two huge windows in the bedroom. Gary felt that was a good idea.

Ginny asked Gary if the list she provided covered everything that he wanted approved at this point.

Larry said that they will be meeting with lenders and they want to see approval at the local level. And they will be discussing revisions with Mike Jackson at the State Historic Preservation Office to make sure they are in compliance with what they want them to do for the federal tax credits. Ginny stated that they are also on the ZBA next week.

Larry asked when they come back to demonstrate what they are doing and giving more detailed information, what is the Commission looking for when talking about a site attached to a building? Ginny said the Commission would need to see actual elevations for the new structures with a description of what materials are being used. Basically, the buildings must be complimentary to other buildings. Val read from the guidelines.

Ginny asked Gary if they wanted approval for the garages now, and if so, said she would need an elevation. Gary did not have one available, but said he would drop one off the next day. Since Ginny would be out of town then, Gary will leave it with Elizabeth Kinsinger. Gary said the garage doors would be wood and they would be adding a lot of trim to them. It won't be a standard garage door.

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders to grant the Certificate of Appropriateness for Garrison School as submitted and defined by the 18 items listed in the Staff Review, with the following revisions:

- ◆ **Item 15c**, which refers to the paved surfaces: Further information must be provided concerning the material to be used – street print or blacktop.
- ◆ **Item 17**: The existing windows on the gymnasium on the John Street side will not be extended lower than their existing sills.

The motion was seconded by Jeanne Ludeke and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

Ginny distributed the information on Garrison School that would be going to ZBA the following week and explained the process. The Commission directed her to send another letter to the ZBA recommending approval and suggesting that they include provisions for infill construction such as this when they rewrite the Zoning Ordinance. Ginny will give everything to Elizabeth Kinsinger, since she will be out of the office for 10 days.

#### **7<sup>TH</sup> STREET NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION – PUBLIC HEARING**

Gary Anderson said that the Advisory Council and the staff making recommendations is what is driving it. Ginny said that she was told by IHPA that as long as she got them the Commission's recommendations by September 15, 2004, they would deal with it. It was decided to conduct this Public Hearing at 6:00 PM, prior to the regular HPC meeting on 8/11/04. Ginny said that since she is unsure as to how many people would attend, she will reserve both Conference Room B and Council Chambers, if needed.

### **OTHER**

#### **VIOLATIONS**

##### ◆ **303 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**

Ginny reported that the owner replaced the original front porch with railroad ties last year. When notified that this was a violation, he replaced these with something resembling the original porch but missing some details. The railroad ties that were in the yard were referred to Neighborhood Standards. In January, he agreed to replace the posts with something that more closely matches what was there originally, add finials to the posts, and paint the entire thing. None of this has been done. She sent a letter to the owner last month informing him that he needed to either complete this work or appear before the Commission to request something different. To date, nothing has been done. Ginny recommends the Commission refer this to the City Legal Department for further action. The Commission directed her to do so.

##### ◆ **326 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street**

Ginny mentioned that this went to Code Hearing, but she was not sure what the outcome was. This home is in really bad shape and the owner is incarcerated. Ginny said that even if we took them to court over minimum maintenance, she is not sure what could be accomplished. Gary Anderson mentioned that the owner had said she wanted to remain there for two more years, but he didn't think the house would even last that long. There are people interested in buying the property, so maybe she could be encouraged to sell. Ginny said that minimum maintenance falls under the Commission jurisdiction. A letter has to be

sent by registered mail, which needs to be signed. Then, they have to be taken into court. Ginny proceeded by reading the sections from the guidelines regarding this process. Val indicated that she had taken a close look at the property when she drove by it and asked if this would be considered inspecting the property. Ginny said she would check with the Legal Department on that.

A **MOTION** was made by Scott Sanders that the Commission recommend a request to the City Legal Department to require the owner to keep up minimum maintenance at 326 South Third Street. The **MOTION** was seconded by Vickie Krueger and **CARRIED** by a vote of 6-0.

Gary commented that the porch could be condemned. Ginny said that the Building Department is already involved and had taken them to Code Hearing.

Gary said that he had requested, through Alderman Mark, to have the Public Works Department cut off a couple of dead limbs on that property so that they would not fall on people. Instead, Public Works actually cut the trees down. They were 21 and 22 inches in diameter at the narrowest part. Gary thinks that they should replace those trees. He explained that they were on the south side, next to the back driveway. The trees were not dead, but only had some dead branches.

◆ **1656 Ethel Avenue**

Ginny reported that the previous owner came in about 1½ years ago and asked to replace the concrete stoop with two wood steps, and to remove the railing. The Commission denied the request. She was driving past the property a couple of weeks ago, and noticed there are two wood steps with no railing. Ginny called the owner and he informed her that he no longer owned the property and did not know who made the changes. Vickie said that she could pull it up if they went through a real estate agency. Ginny will check with Attorney Giliberti to see if the original owner could be fined.

**STAFF REPORT**

Ginny informed the Commission that Therese Rose Schmeltzer had died on Wednesday, June 16. She was the owner of the Graham-Ginestra House.

Ginny reported that Alderman John Beck is officially on the Commission now, but he was on vacation this week.

Ginny said that on Saturday, July 17, she is doing a presentation at the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions in Indianapolis on the designation of religious properties.

Jeanne Ludeke informed the Commission that she will not be able to attend the next meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup>.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Bernard  
Senior Clerk