

Historic Preservation Commission  
Proceedings of the August 27, 2025 Meeting

A meeting of the Lake Forest Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, August 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Lake Forest City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Historic Preservation Commissioners present: Chairman Lloyd Culbertson, and Commission members Elizabeth Daliere, Tina Dann-Fenwick, Geoffrey Hanson, Robin Petit, and Leif Soderberg.

Commissioners absent: Commission member John Norkus

City staff present: Luis Prado, Assistant Planner, and Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development

**1. Introduction of Commissioners and staff, overview of meeting procedures.**

Chairman Culbertson reviewed the meeting procedures followed by the Commission and asked the members of the Commission and staff to introduce themselves.

**2. Consideration of the minutes of the May 28, 2025 and July 23, 2025 meetings of the Commission.**

The minutes of the May 28, 2025 meeting were approved as submitted.

Consideration of the minutes of the July 23, 2025 meeting was postponed.

**3. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a single family residence and the associated hardscape and landscape at 375 E. Westminster.**

Property Owners: Chris and Anne Policinski

Presented by: Peter Witmer, architect, Witmer and Associates

Chairman Culbertson asked the Commission for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Witmer presented a survey of the property noting that the property is a front lot of a lot in depth and that due to the required setback on the east side of the property, the house is sited toward the west side of the lot. He stated that as a result, the east side of the house is the usable yard because it is connected to the house. He pointed out that the garage is located at the rear of the house to minimize views from the street but as a result, the house is cut off from the yard area to the south of the house. He presented streetscape images reflecting the proposed house in the context of the

existing homes on Westminster. He stated that the house is designed in an East Coast Shingle style and reviewed each elevation. He presented the elevations with and without the proposed landscaping and fencing. He stated that a copper roof is planned over the front entrance. He pointed out the open pergola extending from the east side of the home to provide some shaded outdoor space. He reviewed the landscape plan and acknowledged the comments offered in the written testimony pertaining to some of the species and agreed to look at changing out some of the plantings to incorporate the suggested species. He agreed to pull the driveway off the west property line to the extent possible, about eight inches, to allow space for vines to be planted to grow on the fence. He stated that as suggested by the correspondence received, additional landscaping can be added near the back door and a small roof can be added to provide protection from the weather. He stated that a solid front door is proposed for privacy. He presented sections with details of the fascia and trim proposed around the windows. He presented details of the pergola. He reviewed the exterior materials noting that the wood siding is grey with stone below. He stated that a wood shingle roof is proposed. He stated that the copper roof over the front entry and on the dormers will patina over time. He stated that light fixtures are proposed on either side of the front door and the bulb, the source of the light, will be hidden from view. He acknowledged that drainage is not under the purview of the Commission but commented that the house is raised about three feet and reviewed the stormwater improvements that were installed in the area as part of the development of the condominium building to the southwest. He stated that work, along with the improvements proposed on the subject property together, correct the previous drainage problems that existed in this area.

Mr. Prado stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals recommended approval of variances to allow the pergola and the roof overhang to encroach into the extended setback on the east side of the property. He stated staff support for the garage at the rear of the house as proposed noting that placement is consistent with other garages in the neighborhood. He stated that overall, the home is designed consistent with the chosen architectural style and aligns with the City's Design Guidelines and the Commission's standards. He stated that the house is close to the maximum allowed height at 29'-5" adding that an as built drawing will be required during construction to confirm that the height conforms to the approved plans and the Code. He stated that the conceptual landscape plan appears to provide sufficient screening of the home and plantings consistent with the Westminster streetscape.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hanson, Mr. Witmer commented on the cost of copper gutters and downspouts in comparison to aluminum. He stated that a final decision has not yet been made but noted that if aluminum gutters and downspouts are used, a bronze color will be used. He stated that the proposed half round gutter will be reviewed to make sure it provides adequate capacity.

In response to a question from Commissioner Petit, Mr. Witmer confirmed that the height of the proposed residence is measured from the lowest point of existing grade to the tallest peak. He confirmed that the height as measured includes the proposed approximately three foot increase in grade proposed to appropriately manage drainage on the property. He confirmed that stormwater flows from the back of the site to the front, around both sides of the house, to Westminster. He confirmed that a fence is planned the full length of the east property line adding that there will be space to allow vines to be planted to soften the fence.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dann-Fenwick, Mr. Witmer stated that three quarter inch thick wood shingles are proposed for the roof. He stated that the house next door was just constructed with wood shingles. He acknowledged that some insurers are challenging the use of wood shingles. He stated that he would prefer not to install a synthetic roof product.

In response to a question from Commissioner Daliere, Mr. Witmer stated that the house is just under 30 feet in height, similar to the house to the west. He noted however that the subject property is lower than the property to the west. He pointed out that the proposed house is stepped back from the streetscape in comparison to the house to the west. He stated that if the proposed house is sited at the 40 foot front yard setback, more stairs would be required to reach the front door. He noted that the front porch as proposed has a series of wide steps. He stated that the siting of the house was carefully considered in the context of the pattern of other homes along Westminster and the characteristics of the lot.

In response to a question from Chairman Culbertson, Mr. Witmer reviewed the refinements being considered in response to the public testimony received. He stated that an overhang will be added at the rear door supported by a bracket to provide weather protection. He stated that the asphalt will be pulled back from the house at the rear door to allow space for some plantings. He stated that in the plans included in the Commission's packet, the front door has a window. He stated that the owners prefer a solid front door for privacy. He stated that the driveway will be pulled back from the west property line to provide a small area for planting to allow vines to grow on the fence. He confirmed that the fence belongs to the subject property. He reviewed the landscape plan noting that further consideration will be given to the species proposed, taking into account the suggestions offered in the written public testimony. He stated that the dead tree in or near the parkway will be removed.

In response to a question from Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that staff is comfortable reviewing the minor changes proposed by the petitioner if that is the direction given by the Commission.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Culbertson invited public comment.

Kelsey Kliner, 62 E. Westminster, read the statement submitted by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. The statement was distributed to the Commission prior to the meeting.

Rommy Lopat, 410 Woodland Road, stated that she sent written comments to the Commission. She asked whether the setbacks on the property are properly respected. She noted that setbacks along this portion of Westminster were purposefully staggered. She commented that with respect to Standard 6, the entrance porch appears large and out of scale. She questioned whether the porch is open or closed. She commented on the columns and sidelights and suggested that one or the other, but not both, would be appropriate. She commented that the columns do not appear consistent with either the Cottage or Shingle architectural style. She suggested that the style is a variation on a Nantucket type house. She complimented the curvature of the roof but questioned the angle of the dormer. She commented on the design of the scuppers. She questioned the comment in the staff report about restoring the landscape dominant character of the streetscape and questioned what that character is and how the proposed landscape is contributing to the streetscape. She suggested that the driveway be configured as two tire runs instead of a full width driveway. She suggested adding shrubs near the proposed parking pad. She encouraged consideration of water retentive plants noting prior issues with drainage in this area.

Hearing no further requests to speak from the public, Chairman Culbertson invited final questions from the Commission.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dann Fenwick, Mr. Witmer confirmed that the front porch is open.

In response to questions from Chairman Culbertson, Mr. Prado confirmed that currently the lot is vacant and that landscaping will at least be required to satisfy the minimum landscape requirements for new construction.

In response to a question from Commissioner Daliere, Mr. Witmer acknowledged that copper gutters and down spouts should be added to relate to the copper roof on the front porch.

In response to a question from Chairman Culbertson, Mr. Witmer stated that the house is small and understated with limited, but in his opinion, an appropriate amount of detail. He confirmed that alternate tree species will be considered, adding that he will discuss options with the property owners. He noted that the intent is not to block views of the prominent house to the east. He stated that development of this property will complete an extended period of construction in this area.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Culbertson invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Dann-Fenwick stated that in her opinion, the new residence will be an asset to the neighborhood and will fit in well. She stated that the scale of the front porch appears appropriate. She stated support for a roof over the back door.

Commissioner Dalieri commented that the new house will be a nice addition to the street and will blend in well. She stated support for a natural cedar roof.

Commissioner Hanson agreed with the comments of the other Commissioners and stated that in his opinion, the petition satisfies the applicable criteria. He stated that given the copper roof over the front porch, copper gutters and downspouts should be specified.

Hearing no further comments from the Commission, Chairman Culbertson invited a motion.

Commissioner Hanson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving a new residence and the associated hardscape and landscape at 375 E. Westminster. He stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report which are adopted as part of the motion adding that the Commission's deliberations are incorporated as additional findings. He stated that the motion includes the following conditions of approval.

1. Prior to submitting for permit, the plans shall be revised to reflect the following:
  - a. A small roof over the rear door for protection from the weather.
  - b. The asphalt near the rear door to the home shall be scaled back to allow space for limited plantings near the rear door.
  - c. Copper gutters and downspouts shall be specified.
  - d. The driveway shall be shifted slightly away from the west property line to allow space for limited plantings to soften the fence.
  - e. The tree species specified shall take into account the suggestions offered.
2. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission with the refinements as directed above. Any refinements made in response to direction from the Commission, or as the result of final design development, shall be clearly called out on the plan submitted for permit. Staff is directed to review any changes, in consultation with the Chairman as appropriate, to determine whether the modifications are in conformance with the Commission's direction and approval prior to the issuance of any permits.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a detailed, landscape plan shall be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist. The plan shall meet the minimum landscape requirement for new construction and provide the required replacement inches on site using good forestry practices. The

plan shall also clearly detail existing vegetation intended to remain along the east property line and new trees and vegetation planned in that area to provide screening between patio areas and the existing driveway to the east and limited plantings along the west property line to soften the fence.

4. Tree Protection Plan – Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect any trees identified for preservation during construction as well as trees on neighboring properties, must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist. In addition, for any trees that, as determined by the City Arborist, may be impacted by construction activity, a plan for protection, including pre and post construction treatments must be prepared by an independent Certified Arborist and submitted with the building permit application. The tree protection plan shall be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
5. Details of exterior lighting shall be submitted with the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights. All exterior lighting shall be sensitive to the impacts on neighbors and on the dark sky character of the neighborhood.
6. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan for contractor parking and materials' staging shall be submitted to the City for review and will be subject to City approval in an effort to minimize impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. No parking is permitted on Westminster. Off site parking by contractors may be required at the City's discretion.
7. An as built drawing shall be submitted once framing is in place to confirm that the height of the residence does not exceed the maximum allowable height of 30 feet as measured from the lowest point of existing grade to the tallest peak and conforms to the approved plans.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dalieri and approved by the Commission by a vote of 5 to 0.

Commissioner Soderberg joined the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

**4. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for rear yard enhancements including replacement of a pergola with a pool house, gardens, exterior lighting, a terrace, sport court, children's play area, and a small equipment shed at 901 Rosemary Road.**

Property Owner: Chicago Title and Trust on behalf of the owners of Trust #9002389143

Presented by: Albert Yadao, architect

Adam Cesnak

Chairman Culbertson asked the Commission for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Yadao reviewed the landscape improvements proposed for the rear yard of the property. He stated that the house was constructed in 1916 and was originally on a larger property prior to subdivision. He stated that the property retains the original historic character noting that the thoughtful enhancements and amenities proposed for the rear yard will not impact the historic integrity of the property. He stated that no changes are proposed to the street facing portion of the property. He stated that the existing swimming pool in the rear yard will remain. He stated that the undersized pergola located to the west of the pool will be removed and replaced with a modest pool house. He presented the elevations of the proposed pool house noting that the structure picks up cues from the service wing of the house. He stated that the areas around the pool house will be organized as a series of connected "rooms". He stated that the terrace on the south side of the house, to the north of the pool, will be expanded to relate to the terrace on the front of the house. He reviewed the site plan noting the formal garden, sport court, and children's play area. He stated that the plan addresses ongoing drainage issues and includes the planting of 73 new trees. He stated that the path material was selected for durability and includes limestone and decorative gravel. He stated that subtle lighting will illuminate the path and stairway. He presented photos of the existing rear yard and conceptual images of the planned improvements. He stated that the improvements are intended to enhance the historic character of the property.

Ms. Czerniak noted that several years ago the property was on the market for an extended period of time and the real estate professional representing the property at that time insisted that the house should be demolished. She stated that now, three ownerships later, the house and property continue to be preserved, enhanced, and the owners continue to invest in this unique property. She stated that the project has various components, some of which could have proceeded without Commission review and approval. However, she noted that given the overall scope of the work, staff requested that the complete master plan for the rear yard be presented for Commission review. She reviewed the various elements of the project noting the high quality materials and thoughtful design. She stated that findings are included in support of the petition.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dann-Fenwick, Mr. Yado explained that the flat roof is intended to achieve symmetry.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dalieri, Mr. Yado noted that the lavatory is separate from the shower and accommodates areas for changing.

In response to a question from Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Czerniak stated that a lighting plan has not yet been submitted. She noted that based on the presentation, only limited path and stairway lighting is proposed. She stated that if more extensive lighting is proposed, the plan will be brought to the Commission.

Chairman Culbertson invited public comment.

Kelsey Kliner, 62 E. Westminster read the statement previously submitted by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation in support of the petition.

Rommy Lopat, 410 Woodland Road, complimented the plan and the provision for off season storage of outdoor furniture. She provided historical information and questioned the historical information presented by staff.

Commissioner Hanson stated support for the overall project.

Commissioner Soderberg stated support for the project and commended the owners for the carefully developed plan and their stewardship of the property.

Commissioner Dalieri acknowledged the need for a pool house to support the pool.

Commissioner Dann-Fenwick commented that Rose Standish Nichols would have included more hornbeams in the planting plan.

Commissioner Petit stated support for the petition.

Chairman Culbertson invited a motion.

Commissioner Dalieri made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for a pool house and new pergola, expansion of the terrace, tree removal, limited exterior lighting, and various enhancements throughout the rear yard. She acknowledged that a sport court, children's play area, and utilitarian shed are part of the site plan. She stated that the motion is based on the findings detailed in the staff report which are adopted as part of the motion. She added that the Commission's deliberations are incorporated as additional findings. She stated that the following conditions are included in the motion.

1. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission. Any changes made as the result of Commission comments or final design development shall be clearly called out on the plan. Staff is directed to review any changes, in consultation with the Chairman as appropriate to determine whether the modifications are in conformance with the Commission's direction and approval prior to the issuance of any permits.

2. A detailed exterior lighting plan shall be submitted with the plans submitted for permit. The plan must identify all exterior lights including landscape and path lights, and lights on structures. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights. All exterior lighting shall be sensitive to neighbors and respect the dark sky character of the neighborhood.
3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, plans for tree protection fencing, construction access, contractor parking and material and equipment staging shall be submitted and will be subject to City approval in an effort to preserve and protect trees and vegetation and minimize impacts on the surrounding neighborhood. Due to the narrow condition of Rosemary Road, no on street parking is permitted.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Petit and approved by a 6 to 0 vote.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

### **5. Opportunity for the public to address the Historic Preservation Commission on non-agenda items.**

Mr. Schramer questioned what standards need to be met prior to the Commission continuing consideration of his petition for property at 10 N. Mayflower Road. He stated that he is anxious to move forward with his project.

Rommy Lopat, Woodland Road, provided feedback on the Commission's previous discussion of the plans for restoration of the Library Courtyards. She stated that many details were missed because complete landscape plans were not presented. As a landscape designer, she expressed frustration with the process. She stated that information on what existed historically was not provided. She commented on the 375 E. Westminster petition.

Chairman Culbertson reminded the speaker that comments at this time must be directed to non-agenda items.

Ms. Lopat suggested that it is the petitioner's job to provide a master plan for the entire property noting that the review of the structures and hardscape cannot be thorough unless landscaping is considered as part of that review. She stated that more than five days are needed to review plans. She suggested pre-meeting conversations to improve the process regarding landscape reviews. She suggested that the City engage an independent landscape designer when petitions involve significant landscape issues. She urged the City to elevate landscape as part of the

review process.

**6. Additional information from staff.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Czerniak  
Director of Community Development