

**The City of Lake Forest
Building Review Board
Proceedings of August 3, 2023 Meeting**

A regular meeting of the Lake Forest Building Review Board was held on Wednesday, August 3, 2023 at 6:30 p.m., at the Municipal Services Building, 800 Field Drive, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Building Review Board members present: Chairman John Looby and Board members, Joanne Bluhm, Timothy G. Franzen, Eric Lohmueller, and Scott Renken

Building Review Board members absent: Board members Sally Downey and Justin Stamer

Staff present: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development
Jennifer Baehr, Planner

1. Introduction of Board members and staff, overview of meeting procedures – Chairman Diamond

Chairman Looby reviewed the role of the Building Review Board and the meeting procedures followed by the Board. He asked the members of the Board and staff to introduce themselves.

2. Consideration of the minutes from the July 5, 2023 Building Review Board meeting.

The minutes of the July 5, 2023 meeting were approved as presented.

3. Consideration of a recommendation for approval of additions and alterations at 797 Summit Avenue. The proposed work includes removal of portions of the rear of the home and most of the roof structure, expansion of the second floor living space, and the addition of a front porch, rear covered entry, and dormers on the north and south sides of the home. Changes to exterior materials, architectural detailing, and window and door replacement are also proposed.

Property Owners: Keene and Megan Addington

Project Representative: Randy Prueitt, builder

Chairman Looby asked the Board members for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petitioner.

Mr. Addington noted that he is a fourth generation Lake Forester and provided some history of his time in the West Park neighborhood. He stated that prior to purchasing the house, the real estate professional he was working with advised that the house should be demolished rather than rehabbed.

Mr. Prueitt reviewed the site noting that the garage behind the house is accessed from an alley. He stated that the house, with the modifications proposed, is under the allowable square footage and height. He stated that there are mature trees on the

property. He stated that the footprint of the house is not changing except for the removal of an earlier addition at the rear of the house. He presented photos of the property in its existing condition and described the house in the context of the neighboring homes. He presented the proposed site plan noting that currently, the house encroaches into the north side yard setback and the front yard setback. He presented conceptual renderings of the house with the proposed additions and alterations. He presented proposed elevations and noted that only a portion of the main roof will remain adding that most of the roof will need to be removed to accommodate the proposed dormers and a front porch. He stated that a porch is proposed at the rear of the home. He reviewed the proposed exterior materials.

Ms. Baehr stated that plans were submitted for this project prior to any initial review or discussion. She stated that after the plans were submitted, staff met with the petitioners and the project representative several times and offered comments in an effort to expedite the Board's review. She h that the overall design concept appears consistent with the applicable criteria she noted however that without more detail, it is difficult to understand how the project will ultimately be executed. She noted that the property is in the West Park National Register District therefore, it is important that the end product, after the additions and alterations, does not appear as a "production-type" home but instead, is compatible with the other homes in the neighborhood. She noted that additional details on various aspects of the project, including the window sills, windows on the front elevation, and the eaves could give the Board a clear understanding of the intent of the proposed modifications. She noted that the renderings that were submitted after the packet was distributed to the Board are not consistent with the elevations submitted by the petitioner and included in the Board's packet. She stated that clarification is needed on exactly what is proposed. She cautioned that if the plans are unclear, there will not be clear guidance for work in the field. She stated staff support for upgrading and removing the house. She noted that the staff report recommends continuation of the petition and appointment of a Board subcommittee to assist the petitioner and builder in making refinements and clarifications recognizing that an architect is not involved in the project and that the petitioners are anxious for the project to move forward.

Board member Lohmueller stated support for the general concept presented. He referenced the letter of the Historic Preservation Foundation noting that it, along with the information provided by staff, present good guidance for moving forward with further refinement and detailing of the project.

Board member Franzen thanked the petitioners for working with the existing house and stated support for the overall project and agreed that additional detail and thought is needed. He stated support for the intended farmhouse style with board and batten siding and noted that he is comfortable with the relationship of the two windows in the front facing gable. He stated that in his opinion, using natural materials would benefit the house.

Board member Bluhm stated support for the removal of the rear addition. She noted several differences between the rendering and the elevations presented by the

petitioner's project representative. She noted that the white board and batten will appear stark, like the modern farmhouse trend which is not compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood. She suggested consideration of clapboard siding and subdued colors to allow the home to fit into the neighborhood. She stated that the windows should be more consistent with the form, material, and detailing of the windows on the other homes in the neighborhood. She suggested consideration of expanding the size of the front porch to make it more functional. She stated that additional detail on the improvements planned on the home and a landscape plan should be provided to the Board.

Board member Renken commended the owner for preserving and upgrading the home. He stated that the removal of the rear addition and replacement with a porch is appropriate. He reiterated that there are inconsistencies between the rendering and elevations presented to the Board. He observed that the 12:12 pitch of the roof and overhang is consistent with the existing roof and overhang but suggested that consideration should be given to reducing the overhang of the eave on the dormers since they are secondary elements. He commented that there are little changes and additional detailing that could improve the overall appearance of the home. He noted for instance mulling the windows on the front elevation, eliminating the sidelights at the front door, and increasing the width of the front door all could be helpful. He commented on the roof of the front porch. He noted that horizontal siding, brick, and clapboard are prominent in the neighborhood rather than board and batten. He stated that the siding material is a major concern and selecting the right siding material could make a difference in how the house fits with the context of the neighborhood. He stated confidence that the details can be worked out with further study and refinement.

Chairman Looby suggested consideration of shutters noting that shutters could break up the solid mass of the wall. He stated concern about the foundation of the home noting that it appears to be brick noting that it may require repair and re-enforcement work. He agreed that the drawings need to be detailed further. He cautioned the petitioners about painting the siding stark white and asked that color samples be provided to the Board. He stated that a matte finish should be used on the siding.

Board Lohmueller stated that in his experience, when detailed properly, fiber cement can be visually pleasing.

In response to questions from the Board, Ms. Addington stated that in her opinion, the spirit of the neighborhood is eclectic. She stated that they decided to restore the house, rather than tear it down, and noted that they are not proposing to make the house too big. She stated that all of the neighbors are supportive of the project as presented. She stated that they started the process over six months ago with their builder and asked for quick Board action. She stated that their goal is to make the neighborhood better.

In response to questions from the Board, Mr. Pruitt stated that the windows in the front gable are separated by a wall. He stated that if the windows are pulled apart, they will intersect with the slope of the roof. He stated that the frieze and trim boards can be appropriately sized, and sills can be added to the windows. He pointed out that the first

floor is not being enlarged and the second floor will be extended seven feet in length and six feet in width. He stated that the dormers were originally proposed with a 4:12 pitch but in response to comments from City staff, a hip roof is now proposed on the dormers. In response to comments about the size of the dormers, he noted that there are similar dormers on the house at 761 Summit Avenue. He stated that the board and batten siding will not be rustic or production in appearance. He presented a sample of the proposed siding product noting that it will have a smooth finish and will be low maintenance. He stated that the product comes in different dimensions for the different elements of the house. He stated that the proposed vinyl windows do not have a tract home appearance. He presented images from the window manufacturer's website and stated that grills can be affixed if desired. He stated that the manufacturer does not make a fiberglass product. He stated that portions of the foundation will be reconstructed to make the basement water tight.

Chairman Looby suggested widening the panels of the board and batten siding to achieve a less busy appearance.

Board member Renken strongly encouraged the use of horizontal siding noting to achieve greater compatibility with the style of the house and the neighborhood. He stated that as an alternative, a combination of board and batten and horizontal siding could be used.

Mr. Addington stated that his wife does not want a farmhouse style house. He stated that the goal of the project is to be in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

Chairman Looby invited public comment.

Pete O'Malley, 791 Summit Avenue, stated that he remodeled his house 15 years ago and won an award from the Preservation Foundation. He acknowledged that the house that is the subject of the petition needs work and would like to see improvements move forward. He stated support for the comments offered by the Preservation Foundation.

Brian Norton, 90 Woodland Road, President of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation, stated that the Foundation agrees with the comments offered in the staff report. He noted that several years ago, he purchased a house that in the West Park National Register District which needed significant renovation and repairs. He acknowledged that the process can be frustrating by noted that his project was improved as a result.

Chairman Looby commented that in this case, a Board subcommittee could be helpful in order to provide additional guidance to the petitioners. He stated that the goal is to assist the homeowners in returning to the Board with a project that is detailed and refined to allow the full Board to make a recommendation on the petition. He encouraged the petitioners to provide the Board with samples of the proposed color palette, the exterior materials, and the windows. He commented that good input was offered by the Board and encouraged the petitioner to carefully consider the comments and suggestions. He confirmed that after input from a subcommittee of the

Board, the petition should be presented again to the full Board.

In response to a question from Mr. Pruitt, Board member Renken explained that simple detailing around the windows is appropriate, not necessarily a crown molding.

Hearing no further comments from the Board, Chairman Looby invited a motion,

Board member Renken made a motion to continue consideration of the petition and the appointment of a subcommittee of the Board by the Chairman to provide additional guidance to the petitioners on the suggestions, comments, and requests offered by the Board and members of the public. He noted that the motion includes recommendations to the petitioner to give further consideration to the following aspects of the design.

- Dormer roof style and pitch.
- Proportions of the fascia, frieze and rake boards.
- Eave detailing.
- Size of the roof overhang.
- Proportions and details of the window trim and sills.
- Proportions of the sidelights proposed on either side of the front door.
- Placement and alignment of openings around the home.
- Grouping and detailing of the two windows on the front gable.
- Height of the rear covered entry.
- Use of natural wood for window and door trim.
- Window material, profile, and muntins.
- The proposed color palette. Physical material and color samples of the proposed siding, window, trim and roofing shall be provided for review.
- A preliminary landscape plan shall be submitted.
- Consider alternate siding types that are compatible with the neighborhood such as horizontal siding or shingle. Stucco and brick should also be considered.
- If board and batten siding is used, the spacing of the boards shall be refined.
- Consider a more subdued color palette.
- Eliminate the sidelights adjacent to the front door.
- Study the window muntin pattern to be more compatible with the neighborhood.
- Consider widening the front porch to align with the width of the home.
- Consider adding shutters to the windows.

The motion was seconded by Board member Franzen and approved by a 5 to 0 vote.

5. Opportunity for the public to address the Building Review Board on non-agenda items.

No additional public testimony was presented to the Board.

6. Additional information from staff.

No additional information was presented to the Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr
Planner