

The City of Lake Forest
Historic Preservation Commission
Proceedings of the December 9, 2019 Meeting

A special meeting of the Lake Forest Historic Preservation Commission was held on Monday, December 9, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., at the City of Lake Forest City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Historic Preservation Commissioners present: Chairman Bruce Grieve and Commissioners Carol Gayle, Jan Gibson, Steve Lamontagne, Bill Redfield, and Wells Wheeler.

Commissioners absent: Elizabeth Sperry

City staff present: Catherine Czerniak, Director of Community Development, Jennifer Baehr, Assistant Planner

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

Chairman Grieve 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 November 20, 2019 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission.

The minutes of the November 20, 2019 were approved as presented.

3. Introduction of consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness approving at Ragdale, located at 1260 N. Green Bay Road. The proposed modifications include replacing the existing Friend's Studio with a new, slightly larger studio, a minor widening of the existing driveway entrance on Green Bay Road, softening of the curve of the entrance into the existing parking lot, rehabilitation and restoration of the garden, and reconstruction of an historic gazebo.

Property Owner: City of Lake Forest

Project Representatives: Jeff Meeuwsen, Executive Director of Ragdale

David Woodhouse, Architect

Phil Rosborough, Landscape Architect

Chairman Grieve asked the Commission for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he invited a presentation from the petition.

Mr. Woodhouse introduced the design team. He stated that the project involves the replacement of the existing Friend's studio at Ragdale. He noted that the existing Friend's studio was built in 1991 and is not original to the Ragdale property. He stated that the existing studio is not accessible for artists

with disabilities and replacement of the studio provides the opportunity to make it accessible while at the same time, provide a studio specifically designed for dancers and choreographers. He stated that initially, consideration was given to adding a stand-alone dance studio to the site however finding a location that was compatible with the overall site was problematic. He stated that protecting the historic character of the site and views is important. He stated that after extensive study and input, the decision was made to propose replacement of the non-historic Friend's Studio. He explained that the existing studio is comprised of two large spaces and two resident bedrooms and one bathroom. He explained that the proposed replacement studio follows the same programmatic concept two studios, with one of the studios designed for and dedicated to dance, and two resident bedrooms each with a bathrooms. He stated that the bedrooms are located in the center of the building. He stated that an open porch, similar to the porch on the existing studio, is proposed on the north side, facing the garden. He stated that a steeply pitched gable roof is proposed for the composer's studio, and a flat roof is proposed for the dancer's studio. He explained that the exterior of the composer's studio will have board and batten siding, in a soft gray color, and the dancer's studio will have horizontal siding in a dark gray color. He added that gray asphalt shingles are proposed for the sloped roof portion of the building, and the flat roof will have synthetic rubber roofing. He stated that to address the concern regarding light spillover from the interior of the studio, all of the windows will have power operated blackout shades. He provided sketches of the proposed studio as it will be seen from different locations on the property. He explained that some other minor modifications are proposed to the overall property including restoration of some hardscape and landscape features of the historic garden, widening of the driveway entrance from Green Bay Road by six feet, and slight reconfiguration of the drive into the parking lot to improve sightlines, and the addition of a gazebo to replicate a similar earlier structure.

Ms. Czerniak stated that this project has been the subject of discussions for over a year. She explained that there has been a number of meetings with neighbors and interested parties throughout the design process. She confirmed that the initial proposal was for an entirely new building on the site however, after receiving input from various interested parties, Ragdale took a step back to explore other options. She explained that as now proposed the replacement studio is sited generally in the footprint of the existing studio and is secondary to the main house and the farm house. She stated that the other site modifications that are proposed include dismantling the existing piers and walls at the entrance and reassembling them about three feet further apart to widen the entrance drive for safety. She stated that the access drive to the parking lot will be re-aligned to improve visibility and restoration of some earlier garden features is also proposed. She stated that because of the historic importance of the site, the petition is presented for information only at this point to allow public comment and Commission input. She stated that the

petition will be presented for Commission action in January.

Chairman Grieve invited questions and comments from the Commission.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Rosborough stated that the existing stone gate at the entrance is original and was designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw. He explained that the piers and walls will be shifted two to three feet to the north and south to widen the entrance for safety. He stated that the appearance of the gate will not be changed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Woodhouse stated that the doors on the dance studio are hinged adding that on the south side of the building, sliding doors are proposed. He confirmed that the glass around the building will be clear. He stated that the flat roof on the dance studio is 18 feet above grade. He stated that the height of the roof of the dance studio is dictated by the interior height that is needed for the dancers. He explained that the flat roof was chosen as opposed to using another gable roof form in order to keep the height of the building low. He stated that if a gable form was used over the dance studio, with a 45 degree pitch to match the existing gables of the house, the studio building would be taller than the original buildings on the property. He explained that the style of the building is modern adding that the proposed materials will allow the building to fit quietly into the landscape.

Commissioner Gibson expressed excitement about the project and commended the petitioner on their thoughtfulness throughout the design process.

In response to Commissioner Wheeler, Mr. Rosborough confirmed that the row of Cedar trees to the south of the studio were part of the original garden. He stated that over the years, some of the cedars have been lost each season due to their age. He noted that with the loss of the cedar trees, views into the garden have opened up. He stated that the remaining cedar trees are proposed for removal as part of the project.

In response to questions from Commissioner Wheeler, Mr. Woodhouse stated that the energy demands of the replacement studio will be less than the energy needed to support the existing studio.

Commissioner Wheeler commended the petitioner on siting the new studio generally in the footprint of the existing studio.

Commissioner Gayle stated appreciation that the design of the studio was driven by the needs of the artists. She expressed admiration for the modern architectural style of the new studio. She stated that the proposed location is ideal in order to preserve open space and views on the property.

Commissioner Redfield expressed support for the project.

Commissioner Lamontagne commended the petitioner on the design of the studio.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Woodhouse stated that the location of the air conditioner units has not yet been determined. He confirmed that one of the existing sheds to the east of the studio will be removed. He stated that the proposed basement under the composer's studio will be available for storage. He stated that the location of the entry gate and walls is not proposed to shift east or west, but will remain in line with the existing fence with a wider opening.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Rosborough stated that the garden is primarily maintained by volunteers.

Chairman Grieve stated that although the design of the new studio is modern, it can incorporate some of the elements of the original buildings on the property. He commended the petitioner on utilizing new technology and sustainable concepts for the studio. Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited public testimony.

Art Miller, 169 Wildwood Road, commended the petitioner on the direction the overall project has taken. He explained that the siting and massing of the new studio preserves the light into the garden and is respectful of the historic buildings on the property. He stated that the new studio will appear understated and secondary in comparison to the original buildings.

Jeanna Park, President of the Ragdale Board, thanked all parties for working together to get to this point in the project. She stated that the existing studio was built for a very small price and is currently in poor condition. She added that providing an accessible studio is very important for the artists. She stated that with a generous gift from the Morrison-Shearer Foundation, Ragdale is able to fund a substantial portion of the project which will address a number of issues with the existing studio and provide the desired dance studio.

Hearing no further public testimony or comments from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited a motion.

Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to continue the petition for final action at the January meeting.

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

4. Continued consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness approving a new single family residence with an attached garage on a vacant lot at 1274 N. Sheridan Road. Approval of a conceptual landscape plan and the overall site plan is also requested.

Property Owners: Bill & Lucy Bickford

Representative: Nate Lielasus, architect

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

Mr. Bickford introduced the project. He explained that he and his family live in the residence directly west of the subject property. He stated that the proposed residence is for his wife's parents. He explained that the discussion at the previous meeting was very helpful and in response, the design team reevaluated the access to the site, the volume and scale of the residence and garage, and the proposed impervious surface. He stated that based on the Commission's comments at the last meeting, various revisions to the site plan and design of the home were made.

Mr. Lielasus stated that one of the main points of discussion at the last meeting was the dominant appearance of the garage. He explained that in order to diminish the appearance of the garage, the head height of the garage doors was lowered, and the width and height of the garage was reduced. He stated that the garage is now four feet shorter than the main house, which helps to establish a clear hierarchy of masses. He stated that alternative design studies of the garage were done and are included in the Commission's packet. He noted that those studies explored breaking up the mass of the garage by "telescoping" the north portion of the garage and incorporating dormers. He stated that as a result of further study, a pitched roof is now proposed on the connecting element between the main house and the garage to unify the appearance of the mass of the two structures. He stated that the hardscape on the site was carefully configured in order to preserve trees and reduce the amount of impervious surface where possible while still providing the required pavement necessary for vehicle to maneuver. He noted that the majority of the trees that are being removed are either dead or in poor condition. He stated that the grading plan was slightly modified and explained that as now proposed, the maximum grade change is 18 inches at the south end of the house to allow for a step out terrace and to create a level parking pad. He gave an overview of the proposed landscape plan. He stated that the proposed landscaping is intended to provide dense screening along Sheridan Road to minimize views of the garage from the street. He explained that the architectural detailing of the proposed residence will closely match that of the adjacent home at 1280 Sheridan Road.

Ms. Baehr stated that this petition was continued by the Commission at the October 2019 meeting with direction to the petitioner to reconsider the

massing of the garage in relation to the house, the access and to reduce the amount of impervious surface. She noted that sketches of the site plan and massing studies done by the petitioner are included in the Commission's materials. She stated that the revisions appear to address most of the concerns raised at the previous meeting. She noted that a letter from a neighboring property owner was received expressing continued concern about another driveway on the private lane due to the narrowness of the road.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Lielasus stated that alternate site plans with a curb cut located on Sheridan Road were studied. He explained that a curb cut on Sheridan Road, as opposed to on the private lane, would require more tree removals, a more complex driveway configuration, and would increase impervious surface on the site. He stated that they will work with the neighbors to improve sightlines at the intersection of the private land with Sheridan Road.

Commissioner Lamontagne commended the petitioner on the site plan and massing studies that were done in response to the Commission's previous comments. He stated that the changes made to the residence work well to reduce the appearance of mass and improve the relationship between the main house and the garage.

Commissioner Redfield expressed support for the project.

In response to comments from Commissioner Gayle, Ms. Bickford explained that the language included on the plat of subdivision for the area states that the fence and landscape buffer along Sheridan Road must be maintained. She stated that the lot is permitted to take access off of the private lane. She stated that as residents that live on the private lane they also want to be sure that the intersection of the private land with Sheridan Road is as safe as possible for vehicles and pedestrians.

Commissioner Wheeler commended the petitioner for working to address the concerns raised by the Commission and the neighbors. He stated that the site is challenging given its configuration and location on a corner. He stated that in his opinion, the revisions that were made to the site plan and design of the home are successful.

In response to questions from Commissioner Wheeler, Mr. Lielasus stated that the shutters on the home will be operable, with appropriate hardware.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Lielasus explained that if the garage was oriented to face the north end of the property, the garage doors would be visible from the private lane. He stated that if the garage was oriented to face the south end of the property, the garage doors would be more visible from Sheridan Road due to the grade change and curve of the

street.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Bickford stated that there is ample parking on the property and on his property to accommodate vehicles during construction. He explained that they will be carefully coordinating the phases of construction to minimize the impact to surrounding neighbors.

Chairman Grieve suggested exploring the idea of extending the length of the mass on the north end of the house in order to balance the appearance of the east elevation given the significant length of the garage. Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited public testimony.

Art Miller, 169 Wildwood Road, suggested incorporating fast growing evergreen plantings at the front of the garage to, in short order, begin to minimize views of the garage.

Hearing no further public testimony, Chairman Grieve invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Gibson expressed support for the project.

In response to comments from Commissioner Wheeler, Mr. Lielasus confirmed that one of the trees proposed for removal is a Dawn Redwood, a species not native to the area.

Commissioner Gayle thanked the petitioner for the efforts made to address the previous concerns of the Commission.

Commissioner Lamontagne stated that the new residence will be a great addition to the neighborhood.

Chairman Grieve commended the petitioner on the reconfiguration of the driveway and the reduction in the amount of impervious surface on the site. He agreed that the location of the curb cut off of Sheridan Road would make the garage more visible. He suggested that the property owners work with neighbors to improve visibility and safety on the private lane. He invited a motion.

Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving a new residence, attached garage, conceptual landscape plan and overall site plan on property located at 1274 Sheridan Road, subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. The proposed residence must comply with the building scale limitations after the land area of the access easement and private road are removed from the equation as required by the Code.
2. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project with modifications as directed by the Commission. All modifications made to the plans presented to the Commission in response to direction from the Commission, or as the result of final design development, shall be clearly called out on the plan and a copy of the plan originally provided to the Commission shall be attached for comparison purposes. 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. The final landscape plan shall be subject to review and approval by the City Arborist to assure that all vegetation removed or impacted by construction or grading is replaced and to assure adequate, year round screening of the house, garage, hardscape and parked cars from Sheridan Road. In addition, the plan must reflect, at a minimum, 93 replacement inches to account for impacted trees as now understood. If additional trees are impacted, additional replacement inches, or a payment in lieu of on-site plantings may be required. Plantings shall be installed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or, if that is not possible due to the time of year, a cash bond shall be posted in an amount of 110% of the plant materials and labor to assure planting during the next available planting seasons.
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 as may be appropriate, 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, if any is proposed, shall be reflected on the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets of all light fixtures should be provided and all fixtures shall direct light downward and the source of the light shall be shielded from view from off the property. The right to night, dark sky goals shall be satisfied. All exterior lights, except for motion detection lights, shall be on timers set to turn off no later than 11 p.m.

6. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan for construction 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 construction parking is permitted on Sheridan Road. The adjacent private road must remain open and accessible at all times and a plan for repairing damage to the private road shall be in place.

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

5. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for an infill addition and a second-story addition to an existing residence at 811 N. Sheridan Road.

Property Owners: Stephen and Adriana Metcalf

Project Representative: Zisong Feng, architect

Chairman Grieve asked the Commission for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest.

Mr. Metcalf introduced the petition and noted that he and his wife relocated from New York to Lake Forest a few years ago. He stated that he and his wife were drawn to the property at 811 Sheridan Road due to the extensive tree canopy on the site and the large amounts of glass around the house. He explained that although they admire many qualities of the property, after living in the house for a while, they have found that the layout of the home is not functional for their family. He stated that the existing kitchen is relatively small based on modern day standards, the master bedroom is awkwardly located adjacent to the kitchen, and all the existing bedrooms are fully occupied. He stated that they have spent over a year developing a functional design that complements the existing home. He explained that initially, they had explored an addition to the house that would expand the existing footprint, however that concept would have been more invasive and impactful to the site which led them in the direction of a second story addition. He noted that the proposed second story addition is located on the northeast side of the house. He stated that the proposed addition follows the geometry and architectural detailing of the existing home. He added that the proposed second story would only be two feet taller than the tallest peak of the existing home. He stated that he has contacted the surrounding neighbors regarding the proposed work and they have expressed support for the project.

Ms. Baehr gave an overview of the different components of the project. She noted that no changes to the footprint of the house or changes to the site are proposed. She explained that as expressed by the petitioner, the current layout and size of the house is insufficient for a growing family and the proposed additions are intended to make the home more functional for the current property owners. She noted that the existing residence is a contemporary style

home and the proposed additions follow that style. She stated that a few recommendations are included in the staff report that speak to the rhythm of solids and voids and the proposed exterior materials. She stated that the existing front elevation of the home features large expanses of glass, however the proposed front elevation of the second story addition reflects a more solid appearance. She suggested that it may be appropriate to incorporate more openings on the front elevation of the addition in order to more closely match the existing home. She added that the petitioner is proposing to use fiberglass windows on the additions, however the existing windows on the house are wood. She stated that consistent with the City's Design Guidelines, staff recommends that wood windows be used in order to be consistent with the existing home.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Metcalf stated that the windows on the south side of the second story addition are located in a stairway. He read a letter from the east neighbor that expressed support for the project.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Feng stated that the proposed fiberglass windows on the addition will replicate the existing window profile and detailing. He offered to provide a sample of the window for staff review.

Commissioner Wheeler commended the petitioner for maintaining the style and detailing of the existing home with the design of the additions. He stated that although the use of wood windows is preferred, the quality of today's windows have improved and may be appropriate in this case.

Commissioner Gayle stated that the proposed addition is a good solution to accommodate the needs of the property owners. She explained that the wooded nature of the site helps to screen the increased appearance of mass. She noted that in regard to the proposed windows, typically, the Commission looks for natural materials and consistency with existing materials. She suggested that the windows be reviewed with staff.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Metcalf explained that to address the concerns raised by staff, more vertical windows are now proposed on the front elevation of the second story addition. He noted that the existing roof is wood shingle. He stated that the entire roof will be replaced with asphalt shingle.

Commissioner Lamontagne stated that the fiberglass windows may be appropriate if the detailing matches the existing windows.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Mr. Metcalf stated that the overhang on the north side of the addition matches the dimensions of the existing overhangs around the house.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Mr. Feng suggested that the overhang on the north side of the addition could be reduced since it is oriented toward the rear of the property and not very visible.

Chairman Grieve suggested that because glass is such a dominant feature of the existing home, additional openings may be appropriate to break up the expanse of solid walls on the second story addition. Hearing no further questions from the Commission, he invited public comment. Hearing none, he invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Gibson stated that the proposed addition greatly improves the functionality of the home.

Commissioner Wheeler commended the petitioner for incorporating the elements of the existing residence into the design of the additions.

Commissioner Gayle expressed support for the project.

Commissioner Lamontagne suggested that consideration be given to adding windows to break up the appearance of solid mass and to the extent of the roof overhang on the north side of the addition.

Chairman Grieve summarized the Commission's comments. He comments that the proposed additions maintain the integrity of the original design of residence while updating the home to meet the needs of a modern day family. Hearing no further comments from the Commission, he invited a motion.

Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving a second story addition at 811 N. Sheridan Road subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. The plans shall be modified and additional information provided as follows:
 - a. Windows shall be added to the addition to break up the solid mass of the front facing elevation and to achieve greater consistency with the design of the existing residence.
 - b. The extent of the eave on the addition shall be studied further.
 - c. Information on the proposed windows shall be provided to staff and shall demonstrate that the profile and detailing of the windows are consistent with the windows on the house.

2. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission with the modifications detailed above. If any additional modifications are proposed in response to Commission direction, or as a result of design development, plans clearly detailing the areas of change must be submitted at the time of submission for permit, along with the plans originally presented to the Commission, and will be subject to review by

staff, in consultation with the Chairman as appropriate, to verify that the plans are consistent with the intent of the Commission and the approvals granted.

3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect trees and vegetation during construction must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
4. Details of exterior lighting, if any is proposed, shall be reflected on the plans submitted for permit. All fixtures shall direct light downward and the source of the light shall be shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on timers to turn off no later than 11 p.m. except for motion activated security lighting.
5. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials staging and construction vehicle parking plan must be submitted to the City for review and will be subject to City approval in an effort to minimize and manage impacts on the neighborhood, neighboring properties and existing trees and landscaping during construction. No parking of construction vehicles or staging of equipment is permitted on Sheridan Road.

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

OTHER ITEMS

8. Opportunity for the public to address the Historic Preservation Commission on non-agenda items.

No testimony on non-agenda items was presented to the Commission.

9. Additional information from staff.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr
Assistant Planner