

The City of Lake Forest  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Proceedings of the June 24, 2020 Meeting

A meeting of the Lake Forest Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, June 24, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was conducted remotely in compliance with Governor's Executive Order 2020-07, issued on March 16, 2020 that suspended certain Open Meetings Act provisions relating to in-person attendance by members of a public body due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Historic Preservation Commissioners present: Chairman Bruce Grieve and Commissioners Carol Gayle, Jan Gibson, Steve Lamontagne, Ron Levitsky, and Elizabeth Sperry

Commissioners absent: None (one position vacant)

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 announced that he made a determination that an in-person meeting is not prudent or feasible due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He 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 February 26, 2020 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission.**

The minutes of the February 26, 2020 were approved as presented. Commissioner Levitsky abstained from voting on the minutes, because he was not on the Commission in February meeting.

**3. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness approving various alterations and enhancements at Veterans Park located on the southeast corner of Deerpath and Green Bay Road. The proposed work includes a replacement retaining wall, replacement signage, installation of a flag pole and associated lighting.**

**Property Owner: City of Lake Forest**

**Project Representatives: Joe Mobile, Superintendent of Recreation, City of Lake Forest and Craig Bergmann, Craig Bergmann Landscape Design, Inc.**

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

Mr. Mobile introduced the project on behalf of the City. He explained that the City acquired the property, which was formerly Open Lands Park, in January 2016. He stated that since the City acquired the property, there have been several meetings to gather input prior to developing plans to enhance and refresh the Park. He added that the plans have been reviewed and approved by the Parks and Recreation Board. He explained that the mission of this project is to enhance the passive open space that serves as a gateway to the City's Central Business District. He added that a main objective of the project is to achieve a balance between recreational use and the protection of the natural features of the park. He stated that in renaming the park, Veterans Park, the Council intended to create a space to honor veterans.

Mr. Bergmann introduced the landscape design team. He stated that a reconfigured site plan, planting plan, and a lighting plan are included in the Commission's packet. He noted that the park is on the southeast corner of Deerpath and Green Bay Road, two of the most prominent streets within the City. He stated that the City has recently cleared the park of unhealthy and invasive plant material. He explained that in the proposed plan, existing healthy plantings are retained and unused areas of the park are reactivated with new plant material and site amenities. He stated that the wall along Deerpath and Green Bay Road was installed in the 1990's and will remain except for modifications planned near the intersection. He stated that new entrances into the park near the northwest corner are proposed and explained that openings will be added in the wall to allow pedestrians greater access to the park. He added that the access points will be ADA compliant. He stated that the new walkways in the park will be brick to match the existing walkway material. He stated that a limestone panel is currently affixed to the wall at the northwest corner, facing the intersection, and displays the former name of the park. He explained that the limestone panel will be removed and brick will be installed to fill in the area. He stated that a new sign of bronze letters are proposed in the same location as the existing sign facing the intersection of Deerpath and Green Bay Road. He added that the height of the wall will not change. He stated that a planter will be constructed on the inside of the wall, facing away from the intersection and serve a seat walls. He stated that bronze plaques will be affixed to the wall recognizing each branch of the military. He stated that a flag pole is proposed in center of the planter to fly the American flag which will be subtly lit in the evenings. He explained that the park adjoins St. Mary's green and noted that the intent is to retain the transparency between the two areas. He stated that with the changes proposed at the corner, views into the park will be opened up from the streets. He stated that one of the goals of the project is to encourage use of the park for more than just a cut-through from one street to another and to create a space that is used for various activities. He explained that in the center of the park, a raised lawn area will be created for small scale performance type activities. He stated that the east side of the park was not developed in the past and noted that removal of invasive understory vegetation and plantings in poor health is proposed to allow for new plantings and a meandering woodland path. He

explained that the intent is not to significantly change the character of the park but rather, to rework how the space is used and refresh the vegetation. He stated that the park is intended to serve as a both reflective and communal space. He explained that the planting plan reflects a mix of evergreens, shade trees, and shrubs. He added that the planter near the intersection will have colorful, seasonal plantings to welcome and invite people into the park. He explained that the park has a number of significant trees, including Hornbeam, Walnut, Sugar Maple, and Norway Spruce trees, that are featured in the new plan. He stated that the existing vegetation along Green Bay Road will remain to serve as a buffer from the traffic. He explained that the lighting plan includes path lights and lighting for the flag pole. He stated that two types of path lights are proposed; lights embedded in the brick walkways and bollard fixtures along the path. He stated that the only areas of the park that will be irrigated are along Deerpath and Green Bay Road, the most visible and cultivated areas of the park.

Ms. Czerniak stated that highlighting and updating this park has been a goal of the City Council for a number of years. She stated that the project is before the Commission because it is in the heart of the Green Bay Road Historic District, on the prominent corner of Green Bay Road and Deerpath. She explained that the proposed improvements are meant to call more attention to the park and allow views into the space and draw visitors in. She stated that the staff report includes a review and findings for each of the seventeen standards of the Historic Preservation Ordinance. She noted that staff's recommendation includes four conditions, two of which are standard conditions that speak to the plans submitted for permit and working closely to manage traffic on Green Bay Road and Deerpath during construction activity. She added that the other two conditions are related to lighting in the park. She stated that the conditions are recommended to ensure that the proposed lighting is subtle and appropriate for the location. She explained that once the lighting is installed, staff will visit the site and work with the Parks and Recreation Department staff to make any necessary adjustments to the lighting intensity. She added that there may be an opportunity to adjust the lighting on a temporary basis during evening activities.

Chairman Grieve invited questions and comments from the Commission.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the property owners surrounding the park received notice of the proposed improvements. She acknowledged that the lighting will need to be reviewed carefully to assure an appropriate level of lighting and to assure that the source of light is shielded from view from off of the site.

In response to questions from Commission Sperry, Mr. Bergmann stated that the path lighting will be set on a timer to go off at 8 p.m.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Bergmann confirmed that the lighting in the park could be set to for lighting later into the evening during

events in the park. He confirmed that the flag pole is intended to be lit 24 hours a day. He stated that the euonymus ground cover was selected because it is the most durable for foot traffic. He explained that to avoid the brick walkways from splaying, an edging restraint will be installed on either side of the walkway.

Commissioner Gibson stated support for the proposed improvements adding that the project will help to make the space more attractive and inviting.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Bergmann clarified that the concrete sidewalk at the corner of Green Bay Road and Deerpath will be removed and replaced to meet ADA ramp requirements and to address deterioration. He confirmed that the use of brick rather than concrete for the adjacent public sidewalk was considered however, for maintenance reasons and to keep the sidewalk consistent with the other three corners of the intersection, retaining the concrete was determined to be the best approach. He explained that the existing brick walkways in the park will be reset if necessary and if the budget allows. He stated that the brick and capstone on the existing walls in the park will be cleaned.

In response to questions from Commissioner Levitsky, Mr. Bergmann explained that Lake Forest Open Lands, the previous owner of the park, preferred to leave the existing boulder monument in the park to document the history of the park. He added that the boulder will be incorporated into the woodland area on the east side of the park. He stated that overtime, benches will likely be added to the park depending on how the park is used. He acknowledged that seasonally, tables and chairs could be set out in the park. He explained that the height and location of the flag pole was driven by the intent to highlight the flag from the streetscape given the recent renaming of the park to Veterans Park. He stated that the flag pole is proposed in a raised area. He stated that as proposed, the flag pole is close to 40 feet tall. He acknowledged that the pole height should be appropriate for the scale of the park. He noted that the pole should not be taller than the Norway Spruce trees which are about 60 feet tall. He suggested that a mock up could be installed to assist in determining the appropriate height for the flag pole.

Mr. Mobile added that the proposed flag pole is modeled after the flag pole at City Hall.

Commissioner Gayle recognized that a great deal of work and thought has gone into the plans for the improvements to the park. She agreed with Mr. Bergmann that the height of the flag pole should be reconsidered and should be in keeping with the scale of the park. She stated support for incorporating benches into the park.

Chairman Grieve noted that the proposed improvements reinvent the space. He commended the work to date noting that the design process was thorough and detailed.

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

Laura Luce, 111 Ridge Lane, expressed concern about the potential for off site impacts from the lighting of the flag pole 24 hours a day. She stated that her home is located on the northeast corner of Green Bay Road and Deerpath, directly across from the park. She stated concern about seeing the flag illuminated in the sky all night long from the bedrooms in her house rather than seeing the dark sky. She explained that currently she is able to see lights from the building located adjacent to the park at 165 Deerpath.

In response to comments from Ms. Luce, Mr. Mobile stated that flags are required to be illuminated through the night or taken down each evening. He stated that staff is not available to remove the flag each evening and put it back up each morning. He stated that careful consideration will be given to the lighting level and the direction of the light.

Mr. Bergmann added that work is currently underway to develop a plan to improve the Deerpath from Green Bay Road to Western Avenue and there may be an opportunity to improve the parkway in front of the AT&T building at 165 Deerpath.

Venette Biancalana, 178 Illinois Road, stated that her property borders the southeast corner of the park.

In response to questions from Ms. Biancalana, Mr. Bergmann clarified that no work will be done on adjacent private properties. He stated that the intention is to keep a solid fencing along the south and east side of the park. He stated that once the construction details are further developed for the area adjacent to Ms. Biancalana's property, they will be shared with her.

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

Commissioner Gibson asked that the petitioner study the height of the flag pole and the lighting of the flag further to assure proper scale, height and intensity of lighting in the context of the surrounding area.

Commissioner Sperry stated that a mockup of the height of the flag pole should be provided prior to a final decision on the height of the pole. She stated that it is important that the height of the flag pole is appropriate to the scale of the park rather than be modeled after the flag pole at City Hall.

Commissioner Gayle stated that the park is relatively small and agreed that the height of the flag pole should be appropriate for the size of the park. She explained that the height of the flag pole at City Hall is somewhat diminished due

to its proximity to a two-story building, making it appropriate for City Hall but perhaps not be appropriate for a small park. She stated that her sense is that the flag pole should be shorter than the currently proposed height.

Commissioner Lamontagne expressed admiration for the amount of detail reflected in the plans. He noted that although the park is small, there are very large trees in the park, and agreed that the height flag pole should be considered in the context of the features of the site and surrounding area. He agreed that further study of the height of the flag pole is needed and that an on site mock up should be provided as part of the study process.

Commissioner Levitsky agreed with the comments of the other Commissioners. He explained that it is important that the elements of the site are consistent with the goal of creating a passive space to allow reflection. He stated that benches should be incorporated into the park.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Ms. Czerniak offered that staff will work with the consultant and Parks and Recreation staff to reconsider the height of the flag pole. She recommended that based on the Commission's discussion, additional conditions could include in the Commission's motion to direct further study of the height of the flag pole and review of the lighting on the flag consistent with the Commission's comments. She offered that consideration could be given to reducing the light level on the flag during the nighttime hours. She suggested a condition directing that the plans for the shared property line be provided to the neighbors at 178 E. Illinois Road.

Chairman Grieve summarized the Commission's comments. He stated that with the improvements, the park will appear cleaner, feel more open and become an attractive space to visitors. He stated that it would be helpful if the flag pole lighting could be on a timer that would dim in the evening hours. He invited a motion.

Commissioner Gibson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving various alterations and enhancements at Veterans Park subject to the following conditions.

1. Further study shall be conducted on the height of the flag pole. Consideration shall be given to the scale of the park and the residential character of the area. The height study shall include appropriate tools such as a mock-up or photoshop images.
2. Details of exterior lighting shall be clearly reflected on the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets of all light fixtures shall be provided along with confirmation that the various lights have the ability to be dimmed after installation. All light sources shall be screened from view from off of the site.

3. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission. If any modifications are proposed in response to Commission direction or as a result of design development, plans clearly detailing the areas of change or additional detailing 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.
4. After installation, City staff is directed to conduct an inspection of the lighting levels, in particular, the lighting level at the flag pole shall be carefully evaluated given the plan to illuminate the flag throughout the night. If determined to be necessary, the intensity of lighting shall be reduced or the source of light further shielded to preserve the dark sky character of the community at this high profile corner. When activity is not occurring in the park, lights shall be turned off at 8 p.m. Consideration shall be given to reducing the intensity of the lighting on the flag after 8 p.m.
5. Consider installing benches in the park after some use patterns have been established.
6. Communicate with the neighbors in response to questions about lighting of the flag pole and fencing in the southeast corner of the park.
7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials staging and construction vehicle parking plan must be submitted. Staging for construction and vehicle parking shall away from the site to avoid causing congestion on Green Bay Road and Deerpath. (The Oakwood City parking lot may be an option.)

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

**4. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness approving a new single family residence with an attached garage on a vacant lot at 450 Washington Road. Approval of a conceptual landscape plan and the overall site plan is also requested.**

**Property Owner: Lakeshore Historic Properties, LLC**

**(Arthur & Anne Mertes, 99%, & Kathleen Mertes, 1%)**

**Project Representative: Keith Labutta, Northworks Architects**

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

Mr. Labutta introduced the project on behalf of the property owners. He explained

that the property is located on the west side of Washington Road and was originally the location of the main house surrounded by seasonal cottages many of which remain today as full time homes. He added that many of the homes in this area, Brownsville, were built by the same builder. He stated that the 450 Washington Road property is currently vacant and has been since the main house was demolished decades ago. He described the surrounding homes as an eclectic mix of architectural styles that include Mediterranean, Mid-Century Modern, Colonial Revival and Shingle style homes. He noted that the surrounding homes reflect similar exterior materials, in particular the use of stucco and clapboard. He explained that the 450 Washington Road property is relatively narrow, with large front and rear yard setbacks as well as a number of utility easements crossing the property. He stated that the design team completed a number of site studies that responded to the challenges of the site and the character of the surrounding homes. He described the proposed site plan. He stated that the orientation of the house is slightly angled to follow the curve of Washington Road. He stated that the driveway into the lot is aligned with the front entry. He noted that the garage is a side load garage in an effort to minimize the view of the garage mass from the streetscape. He stated that the house is located toward the front of the lot and allows views of open space to be maintained between the homes to the north and south. He stated that a tree removal permit was issued last year in preparation for marketing the property. He stated that the tree removals included multiple trees that were in poor health. He stated that the property was not sold and the owners now plan to build a home for themselves. He noted that to accommodate the current plan, additional trees will need to be removed from the site. He stated that the house is sited to preserve some of the significant trees on the site. He explained that the approach the house is set on a slightly elevated pad to provide for proper drainage. He added that consideration is being given to how water moves from the north to the south given the grade change on the site. He reviewed the proposed landscape plan. He noted that replacement trees will be planted to replace some of the trees removed to date and the additional trees that will be removed. He added that the proposed landscape plan reflects a number of native species such as Aspen and Birch trees, and evergreen plantings to provide screening along the north and south property lines. He explained that the driveway will be asphalt with a cobblestone apron and cobblestone perimeter. He added that large planting areas are proposed around the motor court to screen the parking area and garage from views from off of the site. He noted that the patios and walkways are bluestone. He reviewed the floor plan. He stated that the floor plan is compact and economical with a simple rectangular footprint. He noted that the garage mass is connected to the house by a small single story mass. He noted that the style of the house is French country. He stated that the design of the house intentionally reflects a minimal ornamentation. He stated that the styles of the surrounding homes display a wide variety of detailing and elements and the new home is intended to have a reserved appearance so as to not compete with the surrounding homes. He explained that the front façade of the proposed residence reflects a hierarchy of forms and balanced placement of openings. He noted that larger openings are



on the first floor in the more public spaces, while smaller openings are found on the second floor in the private spaces. He stated that the design team paid close attention to the window lite patterns and detailing. He noted that the windows will have simulated divided lights. He added that a limestone front door surround and stone sills are proposed. He explained that the gable roof forms are proposed to create a hierarchy to draw the eye to the center of the front façade on axis with the drive approach. He noted that the gable forms on the front elevation are different sizes intentionally to present an asymmetrical, informal appearance. He stated that the windows between the first and second floors reflect different proportions but are aligned between the levels. He noted that window placement on the south elevation is different due to the interior layout. He explained that the exterior walls of the house are a light color stucco and asphalt shingle is proposed for the hip and gable roofs with metal standing seam for the low-pitch roofs. He stated that different shades of gray are being considered for the stucco. He explained that meeting the building scale requirements was a challenge due to the grade change across the site and the size of the house desired. He added that the clipped roof form was driven by the need to meet the City's building scale requirements but also helps to minimize the appearance of mass. He explained that design elements such as shutters and bay windows were studied in an effort to incorporate some more traditional detailing.

Ms. Baehr explained that the property is part of the Alling Subdivision which is comprised of seven lots. She added that five of the lots in the subdivision are currently developed with single family homes which were originally built as summer cottages in the early 1900's by the same local builder. She noted that most of the existing single family homes in the subdivision are very similar in architectural style, massing and detailing. She stated that across Washington Road, on the east side, the neighborhood reflects a mix of architectural styles and massing types. She explained that the 450 Washington Road property has been vacant since the 1970's, when the original farmhouse on the property was demolished. She stated that the property is irregular in shape and fronts on Washington Road, unlike most of the other lots in this subdivision which are setback from the street and are accessed from private driveways off of Washington Road. She explained that the design of the proposed residence is simple, with a rectangular floor plan and two-story massing, with minimal detailing, which is typical of recent trends seen in new residential construction. She noted that the staff report includes a few recommendations on the overall design of the house. She stated that as currently proposed, the house presents a large unbroken mass on the front elevation and staff recommends that some design elements such as covered entries or bay windows are incorporated to help break up the mass and provide a more human scale to the appearance of the home. She explained that the proposed exterior materials are generally consistent with materials found in the Historic District, however, staff suggests that materials such as wood shingle or slate tile be considered for the roof material in place of the asphalt shingle in an effort to incorporate more traditional materials that are found in the Historic District and provide more depth and texture to the appearance of the house. She added

that a clay chimney pot should also be used in order to be more consistent with the Historic District. She stated that the proposed color palette consists of a light color stucco, a dark gray roof, and black windows. She noted that as currently proposed, the color palette creates somewhat of a stark appearance and staff recommends that a more subtle color palette be considered. She stated that a letter was received from a neighboring property owner and was provided to the Commission and the petitioner in advance of the meeting. She explained that the letter raises concerns about drainage and the proposed landscape plan. She stated that the City Engineer is aware of the neighbors' concerns regarding drainage, and will consider the potential for off site impacts when the grading and drainage plans are reviewed. She added that the City can provide the neighbors with the drainage and grading plans to allow for further input and discussion prior to the issuance of permits. She added that the letter submitted by the neighboring property owner asks that due to the proximity of the proposed house to the south property line, more plantings be required to provide an adequate buffer between the proposed residence and the existing home to south. She explained that the petitioner submitted a preliminary landscape plan indicating a variety of plantings. She stated that inch for inch, and in some cases, double inch replacement for trees that are impacted as a result of the new construction will be required. She noted that prior to the presentation of the project to the Historic Preservation Commission, the property owners removed trees on the site and replacement inches for the past tree removals that have occurred will also be required as appropriate.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Labutta explained that the cornice will have a crown profile with a rake board that transitions into the fascia board. He stated that a roof overhang is not proposed, consistent with the French country style, but noted that the rake board will provide some shadow. He noted that the different size gable forms on the house were driven by the relationship with the openings below. He added that the placement and proportions of the openings are largely driven by the interior layout, however, the openings are organized and aligned on the exterior to the extent possible. He noted that the downspouts will be round and painted aluminum.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Mr. Labutta explained that with the reserved use of ornamentation, it is difficult to classify the home as a defined architectural style. He stated that the style of the home is a simplified French country style or European farmhouse. He explained that the style of the house was driven by the client's wishes to reflect traditional forms, but with a subdued appearance. He stated explained that detailing such as shutters or bay windows could be considered to enhance the home's appearance.

Commissioner Gibson commented that if the style of the home is French country or European farmhouse, the fenestration does not appear to be consistent with those styles. She added that the elevations of the home appear very flat and suggested elements to create depth and shadow should be considered. She suggested that

the profile of the windows, sills and cornice detailing could be used to create more depth. She encouraged the petitioner to rework the gable forms in an effort to create a symmetrical and balanced appearance.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Labutta stated that the garage doors are two panel wood doors. He stated that the 10:12 roof pitch was intended to relate to some of the surrounding homes in the neighborhood. He added that many of the surrounding homes in the area have large roof forms.

Commissioner Gayle stated that a reoccurring principle of the home appears to be symmetry. She observed that the different size gable forms disrupts the principle of symmetry on the front façade. She agreed with Commissioner Gibson that the the size of the gable roof forms should be reconsidered. She encouraged the petitioner to explore incorporating a roof overhang and to study the window profiles in an effort to provide depth and dimension to the appearance of the home. She stated that the home does reflect some type of style although it is not a historically defined style.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gayle, Mr. Labutta stated that the home reflects both symmetry and asymmetry, creating a quaintness in the character of the home.

In response to questions from Commissioner Levitsky, Mr. Bleck explained that during typical storm events, the majority of the storm water will be drained to the east, toward Washington Road which should result in a significant improvement for the neighbors to the south over the existing conditions. He stated that the plans reflect drainage structures at the northeast and southwest corners of house to intercept the flows and direct water to the storm sewer system to the west. He noted that under most conditions, the proposed plan will take care of drainage on the site.

Commissioner Levitsky explained that he understands the intent to keep the home simple and unpretentious, however he noted that as currently proposed, the home has a somewhat stark appearance.

In response to questions from Commissioner Levitsky, Mr. Labutta confirmed that additional detailing such as rafter tails, roof overhangs, shutters and bay windows were studied.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Mr. Labutta confirmed that the window muntins are black. He explained that if the muntins were white, it may diminish the appearance of the muntins and the windows may appear as a larger opening.

Mr. Labutta shared a massing model with the Commission.

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

Jim Carris, 430 Washington Road, noted that he and his family are the neighbors to the south of the proposed residence. He expressed concern about drainage noting the grade change in the area. He noted that since the site was cleared by the property owners, the water flows more quickly to his property and on to the ravine to the south. He asked that as the landscape plan is further developed evergreen plantings be added along the south property line to screen views to and from the 450 Washington Road property.

Ms. Baehr reiterated that the City Engineer is aware of the drainage concerns and will be directed to pay close attention to potential impacts to surrounding properties. She added that as the landscape plan is developed staff will ensure that there is an adequate buffer along the south property line.

Hearing no further public comment, Chairman Grieve invited final comments from the Commission. Commissioner Levitsky reiterated that design elements should be incorporated into the house to add depth and character. He added that the drainage plan should be reviewed carefully.

Commissioner Gayle agreed with Commissioner Levitsky's comments. She acknowledged that it is difficult when a design that suits the owner's taste is presented and the Commission, in order to more fully meet the standards in the Code, makes suggestions on modifications that could be made. She noted that it appears that the Commission is united in thinking that there would be value in revisiting the design of the elevations of the home. She stated that it is not the intent to lose the simplicity of the home, but rather, to enhance the character of the home.

Commissioner Gibson stated that as currently proposed, the home does not appear to fit the context of the neighborhood. She agreed that the home will benefit from enhanced details. She added that the fenestration needs further study. She encouraged the petitioner to use a more subtle color palette. She asked that drainage be carefully considered to avoid impacting the neighboring properties.

Commissioner Sperry agreed with the comments of the other Commissioners. She reiterated that the property is within the Historic District, and noted that the Commission is charged with protecting the visual character of the City's Historic Districts and as currently proposed, the petition does not appear to be consistent with the Historic District's character. She stated that in her opinion, the plans as presented are not complementary to the surrounding neighborhood. She commented that the front façade appears as a singular plane and appears stark. She suggested that consideration be given to adding elements that project from

the main mass of the house to break up the façade and provide depth. She suggested that either slate tile or wood shingle be considered for the roof in an effort to incorporate more natural materials in keeping with homes in the surrounding neighborhood.

Commissioner Lamontagne agreed with Commissioner Sperry's comments. He suggested that the petitioner review the standards in the Code that the Commission is charged with evaluating each petition against. He asked the petitioner to consider modifications as suggested by the other Commissioners including modifications to the roof.

Hearing no further comments from the Commission, Chairman Grieve summarized the Commission's comments and suggestions. He recognized that the exterior of the residence is driven in many ways by the interior layout however, he noted that it appears that there may be some opportunity to refine the proportions of the windows. He added that as currently proposed, the windows appear very modern and inconsistent with a French Country style home. He explained that French Country or European Farmhouse style homes have smaller windows and openings and different proportions. He asked the petitioner to think about elements that might be incorporated to add some level of detailing to the home. He added that although the neighborhood reflects many different architectural styles, the homes in the surrounding area consistently have a great deal of character and charm.

In response to questions from Mr. Labutta, Ms. Czerniak stated that the staff notes taken during the meeting will be shared with the petitioner. She offered that staff is available to provide input on revised plans and concepts developed in response to the Commission's concerns and comments in an effort to bring the petition back to the Commission as quickly as possible. She noted that in the past, the Commission has used a subcommittee to resolve one or two very specific issues of a petition when the overall standards have been determined to be satisfied. Hearing no further comments or questions, Chairman Grieve invited a motion.

Commissioner Lamontagne made a motion to continue the petition to allow the petitioner to consider and respond to the comments, questions and discussion of the Commission including, but not limited to:

- Reconsider the design in an effort to achieve more visual compatibility with the surrounding historic neighborhood and consistency with the standards that the Commission is charged with using.
- Identify an architectural style and remain generally true to that style.
- Reconsider the roof pitch in an effort to adjust the gables.
- Add depth and detail to the residence, consider allowing certain elements to be proud of the rest of the elevation.
- Study the gable roof forms in an effort to create a more balanced and symmetrical appearance.
- Reconsider the design in an effort to break up the front elevation and

- present a more human scale.
- Refine the architectural detailing in an effort to vary and soften the appearance of the home.
- Refine the fenestration pattern in order to align the openings between floors and present a more regular pattern across all elevations of the home. Consider the windows in the context of the chosen architectural style, both style and placement.
- Use a more subtle color palette in an effort to fit in more quietly with the character of the surrounding homes and streetscape.
- Consider different roof materials to incorporate some materials found more commonly found throughout the surrounding neighborhood.
- Consider adding an overhang to the roof to add depth to the appearance of the house.
- Enhance and refine the landscape plan to recognize the utility easement and existing underground utilities and to provide screening along the north and south property lines.

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 approving the design of historic identification and information signage, a new initiative of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. The Foundation will coordinate with interested property owners on the installation of the signs in an effort to raise awareness about significant historic buildings and locations throughout the community.**

**Project Representative: Peter Countant, President of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation**

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

Mr. Coutant introduced the project on behalf of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. He stated that the purpose of the project is to bring awareness to the rich architecture in and around the Central Business District through interpretive building plaques. He explained that idea for the project came out of a 2017 program sponsored by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation and the City, in which renowned urban planner, Edward McMahan, came to Lake Forest for a day to tour the community and presented a lecture titled "The Power of Uniqueness." He noted that Mr. McMahan talked about the importance of a sense of place. He explained that Mr. McMahan discussed the importance of unique elements that given certain communities a special character adding that character is why people prefer to spend time in a place like Lake Forest, rather than in communities that are indistinguishable from other places. He stated that Mr. McMahan noted that Lake Forest could benefit from raising awareness of the historic buildings in the community.

He explained that each year, the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation raises money to support various preservation related projects in the community. He added that in the past the projects included research and studies, as well as restoration projects. He stated that this year, the Foundation voted to support this project adding that funds are available to support 18 plaques. He stated that a committee of the Foundation has developed a list of buildings of historical and architectural significance where plaques could be installed. He added that each of these buildings on the list are also eligible for the National Register listing due to their age and integrity. He stated that the buildings also reflect a wide range of architectural styles and dates of construction. He clarified that plaques will be offered to the building owners and will only be installed with their approval. He noted that the Foundation worked with local designer, Guy Berg, on the plaque. He stated that the plaques will be bronze with raised lettering and a bronze border and will have a slight texture. He stated that the plaques are 10 inches by 12 inches. He explained that the plaques will list the year of construction, the historic name of the building, and information on the history of the building and the property. He clarified that the plaques are not an award or type of designation. He explained that as a related project, later this year, the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation will be starting an update to the previously released "Preservation Guidebook". He stated that the book details walking tours in Lake Forest adding that the location of the plaques will form the basis of a re-worked walking tour for the updated Guidebook. He reiterated that the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation will work with property owners noting that the plaques are voluntary. He added that the plaques will be located near the entrance of each building, at eye level. He stated that the method of installation will be sensitive to the exterior of the building.

Ms. Baehr explained that this project has been in the works for some time and noted that the City is grateful to the Preservation Foundation for taking the lead on the project.

Commissioner Sperry expressed admiration for the project and thanked the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation for coming up with an innovative way to honor the City's historic character.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Coutant explained that the drawing of the plaque included in the Commission's packet is conceptual. He confirmed that the size of the lettering and the font will be studied further to make sure the text is readable from the sidewalk and easily replicated. He explained that the method of installation will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis given the unique conditions at each building. He stated that the text on the plaque will be limited to three lines.

In response to questions from Commissioner Levitsky, Mr. Coutant stated that the Lake Forest Foundation has received encouraging feedback from property owners in

response to early discussions about the plaques. He confirmed that the size of the text across all the plaques will be consistent.

In response to comments from Commissioner Levitsky, Commissioner Lamontagne explained that for the average person, eye level is generally between 60 to 62 inches.

Commissioner Lamontagne expressed excitement about the project and stated that the plaques will help to continue to tell the story of Lake Forest. He added that he anticipates many property owners will be proud to display the plaques. He suggested that the location of the pins in the plaque should be driven by the most common brick and mortar joint sizes so that the plaque can be installed through the mortar to avoid damage to the face of the brick.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Coutant stated that the Foundation will work with the owners of properties that have existing plaques to coordinate an appropriate location for the new plaque.

Commissioner Gayle agreed with previous comments made by the Commission. She suggested that the Foundation consider providing a map of the plaque locations. She suggested that the plaque locations and method of installation be tailored to each individual site.

Chairman Grieve expressed support for the project. He reiterated the point that the shape, size and font should be consistent across all the plaques. Hearing no further comments from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited public testimony. Hearing none, he invited a motion.

Commissioner Gibson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving the design of historic identification and information signage sponsored by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation subject to the following conditions.

1. The approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness does not approve of specific locations of the building markers.
2. Installation of the building markers shall be subject to approval by the property owner.
3. Permits shall be obtained prior to the installation of the plaques.



The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gayle 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 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr  
Assistant Planner