

The City of Lake Forest
Historic Preservation Commission
Proceedings of the September 14, 2020 Meeting

A special meeting of the Lake Forest Historic Preservation Commission was held on Monday, September 14, 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 remotely: Chairman Bruce Grieve and Commissioners Carol Gayle, Jan Gibson, Steve Lamontagne, Ron Levitsky, Robin Petit, and Elizabeth Sperry

Commissioners absent: None

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. He noted that members of the public will be able to offer testimony on each petition and on non-agenda items by calling the number provided on the agenda and on the screen.

2. Consideration of the minutes of the August 26, 2020 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Consideration of the minutes of the August 26, 2020 meeting was postponed.

**3. Consideration of a request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Deerpath Streetscape Improvement Report.
Representatives: Jim Lockefer, Management Analyst, Public Works Dept.
Craig Bergmann and Erin Herrera, Craig Bergmann Landscape Design**

Chairman Grieve asked the Commission for any Ex Parte contacts or conflicts of interest. Hearing none, he noted that he represented the Historic Preservation Commission as a member of the Deerpath Streetscape Committee.

Mr. Lockefer stated that in 2018, the City engaged consultant Bergmann Landscape Design to work along with the City's Civic Beautification Committee, a group comprised of representatives of the local garden clubs and led by former Alderman Beidler, and City staff, to begin developing concepts for improving the Deerpath

streetscape in the City's Central Business District. He noted that following the completion of a conceptual plan, City staff identified a potential grant opportunity for the project. He noted that recognizing the importance of the Deerpath streetscape to various interest groups and the overall community, the City Manager appointed an ad hoc group, the Deerpath Streetscape Committee, to provide input as the concepts were further developed into a plan in preparation for submitting an application for the grant. He noted that the Committee included representatives from the City Council, the City's Boards and Commissions, the Chamber of Commerce and business and property owners along the streetscape. He added that a member from the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation and Chairman Grieve were part of the group to ensure that the project was considered in the context of its historic setting. He stated that the materials included in the Commission's packets were developed and approved by the Deerpath Streetscape Committee earlier this month.

Mr. Bergmann, the project consultant, reviewed the project area, Deerpath, between Oakwood and Western Avenues. He provided an overview of the existing conditions along the streetscape and presented images that guided discussions about how to incorporate trees and planting areas into the streetscape in a manner that allows the plantings to be viable. He explained that the plan as proposed eliminates a few parking spaces to improve sightlines at intersections and to provide for larger and more viable planting areas. He added that in order for the project to be grant eligible, the parking spaces must conform to the State standards, that is, they must be located a minimum distance from intersections which is currently not the case. He reviewed the changes proposed to hardscape along the street and described how landscape beds will be reconfigured. He stated that some decorative hardscape is proposed to enhance the aesthetics and provide visual cues at crosswalks. He explained that the materials were chosen for durability and are intended to be subtle in comparison to more prominent locations in the City, like Market Square. He noted that the curbing that is proposed is a composite material that will be complimentary to the granite curbing in Market Square. He added that the composite material is durable to support the volume of traffic on Deerpath. He reviewed the conceptual landscape plan. He stated that iron bracketed flower baskets are proposed on a limited number of street lamps. He stated that an expansion of the pedestrian space is proposed at the northeast corner of Bank Lane and Deerpath, pinching down the street width slightly to slow traffic. He pointed out the expanded landscape bed planned at that same intersection. He stated that the existing deteriorating sidewalk will be replaced with a new concrete sidewalk with a two foot permeable paver border adjacent to the street. He added that the permeable border along the street will allow for some water infiltration from the sidewalk which will be pitched slightly to drain water away from the buildings. He explained that in some areas, the water from the sidewalk will be directed into the tree wells. He stated that the proposed improvements are designed to avoid obscuring the architectural details of the historic buildings along the streetscape. He explained that the tree wells are sited to maximize the sunlight on the trees because the buildings on the south side of the street limit the sunlight. He stated that benches and stone bollards are proposed at

the northeast corner of Bank Lane and Deerpath recognizing that people congregate in the area. He stated that trash receptacles will be installed to match the receptacles on Western Avenue and in Market Square. He stated that planters are proposed in front of Northern Trust building to add some interest and soften the appearance of the limestone on the building. He presented precedent images of the proposed paving materials and bollards.

Ms. Czerniak explained that the Ad Hoc committee formed at the start of the Deerpath Streetscape Improvement project was intended to bring together different perspectives, interests and areas of expertise to guide the project. She noted that the project is presented to the Commission for review not only because the streetscape is within the Historic District but also as a requirement of the grant offered by the Illinois Department of Transportation. She reviewed that the project was initiated by the City's Civic Beautification Committee which at the time was chaired by former Alderman Prue Beidler. She explained that the existing infrastructure along this stretch of Deerpath is in need of repair or replacement and prior to undertaking that work as a stand along public works project, the City is taking the opportunity to consider landscape and hardscape improvements as well. She noted that the goals of the project are to enhance the entry into the Central Business District, highlight the historic buildings and make the street safer and friendlier to pedestrians. She added that some sustainable features are incorporated into the plan. She noted that the plan presented to the Commission was recently presented to and accepted by the City Manager by the Ad Hoc Committee. She noted that the timing of the improvements is dependent on funding.

Commissioner Petit expressed enthusiasm for the proposed improvements.

In response to questions from Commissioner Levitsky, Mr. Bergmann stated that the design of the streetscape is not intended to restore the streetscape to its original appearance recognizing that many changes have occurred over the decades not only to the physical streetscape, but also with respect to how the corridor is used by vehicles and pedestrians. He stated that the proposed design is intended as a renovation of the streetscape in a way that is sympathetic to the historic setting. He explained that the design intentionally does not replicate the Market Square details but instead, serves as an entry way, with lesser detailing, leading up to Market Square, the community's show piece. He explained that the proposed landscaping along the street is intended to highlight the architecture of the historic buildings, not obscure it. He explained that many ideas for the streetscape were discussed during the meeting to date including, but not limited to, the feasibility of adding a planted median, adding diagonal parking, and adjusting the width of travel lanes and the sidewalk. He noted however that the narrowness of the corridor limits the options.

In response to comments from Commission Levitsky, Ms. Herrera explained that the parking spaces closest to the intersection will be eliminated to improve visibility and pedestrian safety. She noted modifications planned for the curb in some areas to mitigate trip hazards and pointed out locations where benches will be installed.

In response to comments from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Herrera explained that in order to be eligible for the grant, parking spaces must comply with the State parking standards. She stated that 28 of the existing 39 spaces comply with the State standards. She stated that some of the spaces are located too close to the intersections creating a safety hazard.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Mr. Bergmann stated that 14 parking spaces will be eliminated to meet the State standards and to accommodate tree islands and landscape areas. He noted that business and property owners were represented on the Ad Hoc Committee. He noted that the design creates an environment where trees will grow and thrive as opposed to the current conditions. He stated that the species of trees that will be planted has not yet been determined but noted that the trees will be appropriately scaled for the streetscape and durable. He stated that the bollards and chains are proposed on the northeast corner of Deerpath and Bank Lane because it is a gathering spot for pedestrians.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Herrera confirmed that three accessible parking spaces will remain. She confirmed that business and property owners in the area were invited to participate in a public workshop and offer input on the draft plan. She explained that during the plan development process, the group heard often that improved landscaping and softening of the streetscape was a priority even if it meant the loss of some parking spaces.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Ms. Herrera stated that the location of the curb only changes at the corners where the pedestrian and landscape areas are proposed. She confirmed that the width of Deerpath remains the same.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Bergmann stated that the beds will be planted with flowers, grasses and shrubs. He explained that the high curb across from City Hall, on the south side of Deerpath, results from underground utilities. He stated that the intention is to add steps at one or more locations to facilitate pedestrian access from the parking spaces to the sidewalk. He stated that there is no intention to create a mid-block crosswalk.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Bergmann confirmed that the plan presented to the Commission is intended to be submitted as part of the application for the grant. He stated that if the grant is awarded, the final plan will need to conform closely to the configuration and materials reflected on the plan for which the grant was awarded. He stated that the plant selection has not been finalized at this point. He noted that street furniture such as the trash receptacles, bollards, benches and hanging baskets will generally follow the precedent of Market Square and Western Avenue.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that some of the ideas from the Adhoc Committee are recommendations for future

consideration. She stated that ways to reduce congestion on Deerpath were discussed including limiting traffic on Forest Avenue and Bank Lane to one way. She explained that the concept will be explored, separate from the streetscape project, in the future.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Bergmann stated that electrical connections will be added in landscape beds and the street lights will generally remain in the current locations with a few exceptions where adjustments will be made. He stated that the number of streetlights will not change. He stated that overall, the project is intended to soften the streetscape and allow it to be welcoming and something more than a vehicle corridor. He stated that there will be opportunities for a few seasonal hanging flower baskets which will be maintained by City staff or an outside contractor.

In response to comments from Commissioner Gayle, Mr. Bergmann confirmed that technical drawings have been prepared to address drainage.

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

Rommy Lopat, 410 Woodland Road, commented on the consistency and the lack thereof with elements in Market Square and asked for an explanation of the design rationale.

In response to Ms. Lopat, Mr. Bergmann stated that it is intended that there is a relationship between Deerpath and Market Square, but the streetscape plan is not intended to replicate the elements in Market Square. He explained that replicating the features of Market Square on Deerpath would lessen the significance of Market Square.

Hearing no further public testimony, Chairman Grieve asked staff to provide further explanation on the loss of parking staff.

Ms. Czerniak explained that a focus was placed on pedestrian safety. She stated that over the years, additional parking spaces were squeezed in near the corners limiting sightlines. She explained that the plan resets parking spaces with a focus on functionality and improved sight lines. She noted that the biggest challenge is that employees who work in the Central Business District, including real estate agents, park along the street in spaces intended for customers. She stated that employees should park in the public parking lots nearby in the spots intended for employees. She noted that there may be opportunities to add parking in the area in the future as redevelopment occurs. She stated that the plan that is before the Commission is not yet a final, fully detailed plan but a plan with sufficient detail to allow submittal of an application for a grant. She added that if the City is successful in getting the grant, final design and engineering work will get underway. She stated that if the

Commission chooses to do so, the motion could acknowledge that further refinement and details will occur after receipt of the grant.

Commissioner Gayle expressed appreciation for the attention to detail and the many aspects of the streetscape. She acknowledged that further refinement of the plan and details is necessary and will occur if the project is funded.

Commissioner Gibson expressed concern about the loss of parking and the appropriateness of the proposed bollards and chains. She stated that care should be taken to avoid introducing too many different elements into the streetscape. She stated support for coordinating the elements more closely with Market Square. She asked that the color of the concrete be thoughtfully considered.

Commissioner Lamontagne commended the project team on the amount of work and the careful thought that has gone into the plan. He agreed with Commissioner Gayle that some further refinement and detailing of some elements is needed.

Commissioner Levitsky asked that as the plan is further developed attention be paid to assuring that the street is accommodating to individuals with disabilities.

Commissioner Petit stated that initially, she had concerns about the southern corner of Deerpath and Western Avenue however the proposed element in that area appears to enhance safety at that corner. She encouraged the petitioner to revisit the proposed bollards and chains.

Commissioner Sperry suggested that the motion include language directing further discussions with the business owners in the area. She expressed concern about elements of the plan that may lead to increased congestion along Deerpath. She added that the curbs on Deerpath have been damaged by snow plows and encouraged consideration of how to prevent future damage.

Chairman Grieve summarized the Commission's comments and asked that as the final details of the plan are worked out, safety remain a high priority. He noted that the plan appears to be sensitive to and highlights the historic buildings. He invited a motion.

Commissioner Gibson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Deerpath Streetscape Improvement Plan, based on the findings presented in the staff report and subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Refine and detail the practical implementation of the concepts presented in the plan prepared for construction of the improvements. The plans will be subject to review and approval by City staff prior to the start of work.
2. Develop a communication plan to assure that prior to and during the improvement project, the business and property owners along Deerpath are

kept informed.

3. Develop an ongoing maintenance plan for the hardscape and landscape.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Levitsky and approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

4. Continued consideration of a request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new residence on a vacant lot located at 740 Washington Road. The Commission will also consider the associated site plan, proposed tree removal and the landscape plan.

Property Owners: Hugh and Diane Zentmyer

Representative: Edward Deegan, 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. Deegan stated that in response to the comments at the last meeting, some modifications were made to the plans. He reviewed the challenges associated with the site in particular, the topography. He noted that the required zoning setbacks and tree preservation area present further limitations. He noted that the final driveway configuration, as it relates to the parkway trees, will be worked out with City staff. He reviewed the revised elevations. He noted that the floorplans did not change. He stated that to address concerns about light spillover, the cupola and glass ridge above the kitchen were removed, the transom windows on the gable ends were removed and the tall bay windows on the rear elevation were removed. He stated that three dormers were added to the front elevation, above the front porch. He stated that the proposed color palette has not changed since the last meeting. He noted that the proposed lime washed brick will allow the color of the brick to come through. He noted that shutters were introduced on the windows on the three main gables. He added that the areas of copper roofing were reduced as a result of the modifications to the front porch.

Ms. Baehr explained that this petition was presented to the Commission at the last meeting and at that time, the Commission indicated support for the overall site plan and landscape plan. She added that there were some aspects of the design of the proposed residence that were of concern and in a split vote, the Commission voted to continue the project to allow the petitioner to refine the plans in response to the Commission's comments. She stated that a summary of the Commission's comments is provided in the staff report and the petitioner's statement of intent addresses the comments and is included in the Commission's packet. She reviewed key modifications that were made including removal of the cupola and glass ridge above the kitchen, and removal of the tall bay windows and stacked windows on the front and rear elevations. She noted that these changes help to reduce the potential for light spillover which was a concern raised at the last meeting. She noted that these changes present a more regular rhythm of solids to voids across all elevations of

the home. She added that the gable roof form above the front porch was removed to simplify the overall roof form and allow a continuous roof line on the main mass of the home. She stated that dormers and shutters were added to the front elevation to add depth and interest. She stated that overall, the changes appear to directly respond to the Commission's comments and as a result, the project now more fully satisfies the applicable standards. She noted that updated findings in support of the revised plans are detailed in the staff report.

Commissioner Gayle commended the petitioner for considering and addressing the Commission's comments.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Deegan explained that the low roof form on the master bedroom allows the larger gable form at the south end of the house to be more prominent. He explained that the windows in the master closet are small and recessed from the projecting masses on the front and rear elevations and were requested by the owners. He explained that the walls at the front of the house step down as they get closer to the entry point of the motor court. He noted that the walls have traditional detailing and proportions. He stated that the brick corbeling at the eaves provides a functional transition from the fascia board to the roof and adds an aesthetic detail.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Deegan confirmed that the gutters and downspouts will be copper. He confirmed that the ridge of the roof form above the office meets the ridge line of the main mass of the home. He stated that all of the gable roof forms are identical in proportion but not in height relative to the adjacent grade.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Mr. Deegan stated that the brick is a subtle red. He noted that the intent is to use reclaimed Chicago common brick for the exterior. He stated that the roof will have perfection cedar shingles applied in straight rows. He stated that the brick wall at the front of the motor court is 42 inches at its tallest point and 24 inches at the lowest point.

Commissioner Petit commended the petitioners for their responsiveness to the Commission's comments.

Commissioner Levitsky expressed support for the changes made to the home.

In response to questions from Commissioner Lamontagne, Mr. Deegan stated that the intent is to diminish the appearance of the chimney. He stated that consideration will be given to adding clay chimney pots.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited public testimony. Hearing none, he invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Sperry stated that as now proposed, the home presents more of a

balance between the solids and voids than the previous design. She stated support for the petition as now presented.

Commissioner Gayle commended the petitioner on the tremendous effort made to respond to the comments offered at the previous meeting. She stated support for the low-profile massing of the house and the integration of the home with the landscaping.

Commissioner Levitsky commended the petitioners for responding positively to the Commission's concerns.

Commissioner Gibson stated that the modifications enhance the appearance of the home. She stated that given the prominence of this area, it is important that the residence be compatible with the surrounding properties. She expressed support for the exterior materials and the color palette.

Commissioner Petit stated support for the petition.

Chairman Grieve commended the petitioner on the revisions that were made to the design of the home. He explained that it is not the Commission's goal to dictate what changes should be made, but instead, to provide direction on how the design might be refined to more fully conform to the applicable standards. He commented that with the refinements, the style of the home is clearly defined as English Country. He encouraged the petitioners to consider incorporating further detailing consistent with the English Country style as the plans are finalized. Hearing no further comments, he invited a motion.

Commissioner Lamontagne made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new single family home at 740 Washington Road based on the findings presented in the staff report and subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Consideration should be given to the following as part of final design development:
 - a. Use of a clay chimney pot on the chimney
 - b. Incorporation of additional detailing or design elements consistent with the English Country architectural style.
2. Provide a mockup of brick on the site treated as proposed. The mock up will be subject to City review and verification that the treated brick appears soft rather than stark.
3. The driveway configuration shall be adjusted to minimize impacts on the Red Oak tree located on the north side of the driveway.
4. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as approved by the Commission. Any modifications made to the plans as a result of refinements

made in response to the Commission's direction and discussion or changes due to final design development must be clearly detailed and called out on the plans submitted for permit. The revised plans as submitted to the Commission for review on September 14th must also be submitted for comparison purposes, areas of change or refinement should be highlighted. The plans submitted for permit 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.

5. At the time of submittal for a building permit, detailed drainage and grading plans must be submitted. The plans shall clearly reflect all existing trees and identify those proposed for removal. Grading and filling shall be limited to the minimum necessary to meet accepted engineering standards in the interest of minimizing stress on the trees intended to remain and in order to preserve the overall topography of the property. The plans shall be subject to review and approval by the City Engineer in consultation with the City's Certified Arborist.
6. Tree Protection Plan – Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect any trees identified for preservation during construction must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist. Chain link fencing shall be required to protect trees intended for preservation. Pre and post construction treatment or trees and maintenance must be completed in a timely manner as required by the City's Certified Arborist.
7. 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. For the removal of tree #304, the plan shall provide for the 9 required replacement inches on site to the extent possible using good forestry practices. If during construction, additional trees on the site are compromised in the opinion of the City's Certified Arborist, additional replacement inches or payment in lieu of on site planting may be required. If all replacement tree inches cannot be accommodated on the site, the number of remaining inches for which a payment in lieu of planting will be required must be noted on the plan. The full payment in lieu of on site plantings is required prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
8. Details of all exterior lighting shall be reflected on the plans submitted for permit. No landscape lighting is proposed based on the current plans. If landscape lighting is proposed, City review and approval will be required. For all exterior lights on the residence, garage or elsewhere on the site, permits must be obtained. Cut sheets of all light fixtures shall be provided. All fixtures shall solely direct light downward and the source of the light shall be shielded from view from off the property by the fixtures.
9. 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. The existing topography and trees and vegetation shall be protected from impact. Due to the curving road and the likelihood of various concurrent construction projects in the immediate area, no parking of construction or contractor vehicles is permitted on the street. Off-site parking at the public parking lots located nearby may be required to accommodate contractor's vehicles and to minimize impacts on the neighborhood.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and approved by a vote of 7 to 0.

5. Consideration of a request for approval request for approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing residence at 259 Mayflower Road. No replacement structure is proposed.

Property Owner: Desmond LaPlace

Representative: Jim Opsitnik

Susan Benjamin and Jeanne Sylvester, Benjamin Historic Certifications

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

Ms. Benjamin explained that the existing residence on the property was built in 1936 as a garage for the estate at 261 Mayflower Road which is located east of the subject property. She stated that the structure proposed for demolition was designed by architect Ambrose Cramer. She explained that the garage structure was converted into a single family residence in 1940 when an addition was built on the west side of the structure. She stated that the west portion of the original structure is attractive and well-proportioned however, the east half of the original garage structure has undergone some unfortunate alterations.

Ms. Sylvester reviewed the history of the estate to which the structure was a part today addressed as 261 Mayflower Road. She reiterated that the west side of residence at 259 Mayflower, is essentially unaltered from its original form as designed by architect Ambrose Cramer. She noted however that numerous alterations have been made to the east side of the structure over the years. She stated that an additional small structure, the "tool shed", was also designed by Ambrose Cramer and is located in the northeast corner of the property. She explained that the tool shed presents a classical design that relates to the original estate house to the east. She suggested that the tool shed be preserved and if necessary, relocated. She provided background information on architect Ambrose Cramer, noting that he was a draftsman for David Adler. She presented images of other designs by Ambrose Cramer. She gave an overview of the interior layout and interior features of the residence at 259 Mayflower Road.

Mr. Opsitnik stated that originally, a larger land area was associated with the residence at 259 Mayflower Road. He explained that due to various subdivisions that occurred through the years, the property today is an irregular shape and the house is awkwardly positioned between access driveways to neighboring homes. He explained that the residence most recently was unoccupied for an extended period of time and before that, was a rental. He noted that due to the awkward relationship between properties in the area, there has been tension among the neighbors for some time which has had a negative impact on Mr. LaPlace, the longtime resident at 261 Mayflower Road. He stated that to access his home, Mr. LaPlace must drive past the home at 259 Mayflower Road which has fallen into disrepair over the course of the last two ownerships. He explained that to address the issues, Mr. LaPlace bought the property when it went on the market since he is the most impacted by the condition and use of the property. He stated that Mr. LaPlace's intention is to demolish the home and clean up the property to improve the entrance to his property essentially restoring to some extent the larger estate property on which his house is located. He stated that Mr. LaPlace does not plan to build a replacement structure on the property although a future owner could choose to do so. He stated that the basement of the residence has water damage and the exterior of the home is in disrepair. He explained that some elements of the property will be donated including the tree house which will go to Lake Forest Open Lands. He added that some of the interior elements of the home are being repurposed.

Ms. Baehr stated that the petitioner is requesting approval of the demolition of the residence and accessory structure on the property at 259 Mayflower Road. She stated that the petitioner does not plan to construct a replacement residence on the site. She explained that the property will be landscaped as part of the entrance to the petitioner's home which is located directly to the east. She stated that the residence is identified as a contributing structure to the Historic District due to its age and its association with the original estate house to the east. She explained that the structure proposed for demolition has been remodeled and expanded a number of times over the years and as a result, the historic integrity of the structure has been compromised. She noted that the structure had become disjointed in its appearance. She stated that although the existing structure which was originally an outbuilding for the estate reflects the work of architect Ambrose Cramer, in comparison to Cramer's other work in Lake Forest, the structure does not appear to be particularly unique or distinctive. She noted that findings in support of the demolition request are detailed in the staff report. She stated that based on the information provided in the Historic Resource Evaluation report and staff's evaluation of the existing residence, the criteria for demolition appear to be met. She added that the Historic Resource Evaluation report will be retained in the City's files as documentation of the history of the property and a copy of the report will be provided to the History Center.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that unless the interior of a home is designated as a local landmark, it is not under the purview of the Commission. She noted that the City Code provides the opportunity for a

property owner to submit a nomination for designation of interior spaces, but to date, no nominations for interior spaces have been submitted. She stated that because the interior of the structure proposed for demolition is not designated, it is not a determining factor in the Commission's decision on the petition. She acknowledged that some demolition activity has occurred on the site in advance of the Commission's consideration of the petition adding that City staff only became aware of the activity on the site in the last couple of days. She stated that when a petition is the subject of upcoming consideration by a Board or Commission, no activity should be occurring on the site pending action and the issuance of any required permits. She confirmed that failure to maintain a structure is not justification for demolition. She stated that the residence on the site remains intact however some interior elements were removed along with some of the landscape and hardscape. She stated that the petitioner likely proceeded with the work without understanding that no work on the property was authorized until after the Commission's review and action. She stated that the 259 Mayflower Road property will remain as a buildable parcel and could, in the future, be redeveloped with a new residence. She stated that the new residence would be subject to review and approval by the Commission. She acknowledged that the property owner could put the property into a conservation easement or consolidate the property with the lot to the east at his discretion. She stated that at the time of any future redevelopment, variances would likely be required because of the irregular configuration of the lot. She noted that the existing home on the property is not in compliance with required zoning setbacks because it was constructed prior to current regulations and because subsequent subdivision of the property occurred.

Mr. Opsitnik explained that the work completed to date on the property was done in an effort to streamline the process and to allow for recycling and reuse of as much material as possible.

Commissioner Levitsky acknowledged the significant architectural features of the interior and noted that the exterior of the home appears to need a lot of work to bring it back to an acceptable state. He stated that he is disappointed that the petitioner intends to demolish the house given its history. He noted however that there does not appear to be a viable alternative.

Commissioner Lamontagne stated that as you approach the house from the private drive it presents a charming appearance however, upon closer investigation it is clear that the exterior of the home is in a state of disrepair.

In response to questions from Commissioner Petit, Mr. Opsitnik stated that Mr. LaPlace does not wish to relocate and preserve the tool shed. He stated that the tool shed is in poor condition and is now clad in synthetic siding. He acknowledged that the tool shed features a unique curved metal roof above the entry.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Sylvester explained that Ambrose Cramer designed the garage structure in 1936 and it was converted to a residence in 1940 when an addition was built to the west of the garage structure.

Commissioner Sperry expressed disappointment with the current state of the property and the demolition activity that has occurred in advance of the Commission's review.

Commissioner Gibson stated that there are not many original coach houses remaining in the City and expressed concern that the demolition of this structure will result in the loss of yet another coach house. She stated that because it is more modest than most of Ambrose Cramer's other designs, the adapted residence, in her opinion, presents a unique example of Cramer's work. She stated that the existing residence reflects an excellent example of well-proportioned dormers.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Mr. Opsitnik explained that the property was for sale for over a year before Mr. LaPlace purchased the property. She stated that other potential buyers wanted to demolish the house and construct a replacement house which would have been disruptive to Mr. LaPlace for many months.

Commissioner Sperry acknowledged that the home was tenant occupied until recently. She stated that the extent of work on the site completed by the current owner is surprising.

In response to comments from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Czerniak stated that the City does not condone the work that has been done without the benefit of City approvals or permits. She noted however that the property was impacted when the property to the north was developed a number of years ago. She stated that the subdivision of the properties surrounding 259 Mayflower Road made the house less desirable given its proximity to the property lines and neighboring driveways. She noted that the property has been the subject of complaints by neighbors for a number of years. She confirmed that if the demolition of the residence is approved, the property will remain a buildable lot and Commission approval will be required if a new residence is proposed on the site in the future. She noted that the building pad on the property is very limited and would likely only accommodate a small home. She stated that the driveway that runs through the property from west to east, to Mr. LaPlace's property, will remain.

In response to questions from Commissioner Gibson, Ms. Czerniak stated that the City approved subdivisions around this property creating the unusual conditions on the site. She stated that based on current Code requirements, the subdivision that created the 259 parcel would likely not be approved today.

Commissioner Gayle expressed uncertainty about how to move forward with the petition given the work that the current owner has done on the site in recent weeks.

She stated that in her opinion, the integrity of the original design of the home is lost because of the many changes and additions that have occurred.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Chairman Grieve invited public testimony. Hearing none he asked for final comments from the Commission.

In response to questions from Commissioner Sperry, Ms. Czerniak stated that the Commission's deliberations should be based on the five demolition criteria in the Code. She stated that the structure has been modified over time and the surrounding area has changed, impacting the structure and the property. She added that the property is encumbered by access easements for neighboring properties. She stated that although the residence was designed by an important architect and was charming in its original setting, much has changed over the years. She clarified that the City cannot compel an owner to place a conservation easement on a property.

Commissioner Gayle reiterated that she is conflicted on how to respond to the petition as currently presented and given the circumstances.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Ms. Czerniak offered that the Commission could continue the petition with direction to the petitioner and staff to provide additional information. She stated that in order to place a conservation easement on the property, the owner would need to find an entity willing to accept and hold the easement.

Chairman Grieve reminded the Commission to review the petition based on the demolition criteria in the Code and based on the current status of the residence.

Commissioner Gayle pointed out that the demolition criteria speak to the historical and cultural significance of the property to the community, not to whether or not the property was properly maintained.

Commissioner Gibson stated that the petition should be continued to allow for more information to be provided to the Commission.

Commissioner Lamontagne stated that based on the lack of historic integrity of the home, in his opinion, it is clear that the demolition criteria are met with the exception of standard five. He noted that standard five requires the Commission to consider a replacement residence concurrent with a demolition if redevelopment of the property is planned within five years. He stated that at this point, there is nothing that would prevent the property from being sold and a new owner from presenting a replacement house to the Commission for approval within six months.

Commissioner Levitsky explained that based on the Historic Resource Evaluation, it is evident that the home is in a state of significant disrepair and will need to come down. He stated that the demolition could happen more quickly with an approval

from the Commission, or the demolition could happen more slowly through further neglect until it becomes an eyesore. He expressed disappointment that the home cannot be preserved.

Commissioner Petit agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Levitsky. She suggested that the Commission direct the petitioner to explore options for the site including placing the property in a conservation easement.

Commissioner Sperry stated that in her opinion, postponing action on the petition will not adversely affect the petitioner and will allow clarification to be provided on the issues raised by the Commission.

In response to comments made by the Commissioners, Mr. Opsitnik offered that Mr. LaPlace may be willing to provide a guarantee that redevelopment of the site will not occur for a period of at least five years.

In response to questions from Chairman Grieve, Ms. Czerniak summarized that based on the Commission's discussion it appears that more information is needed to 1) explain the extent of work done since Mr. LaPlace purchased the property, 2) understand if Mr. LaPlace intends to put any restrictions on the property and 3) understand the buildable area on the property.

Commissioner Gibson requested that staff provide clarification on how demolition by neglect should be considered by the Commission when reviewing demolition requests.

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

Commissioner Lamontagne made a motion to continue consideration of the petition to allow the petitioner and staff to provide clarification and additional information as noted below.

1. Clarify the demolition work that has occurred since the time the current owner purchased the property.
2. Provide background on the history of the property including the past subdivisions that have occurred around the property.
3. Provide information on the buildable area and required setbacks on the property.
4. Explore the opportunity to establish a Conservation Easement on the property.
5. Provide information on how demolition by neglect and deferred maintenance are considered in the review of the request.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sperry and approved by a vote of 7 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 10:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Baehr
Assistant Planner