

Historic Preservation Commission  
Proceedings of the June 28, 2023 Meeting

A meeting of the Lake Forest Historic Preservation Commission was held on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. at the City of Lake Forest City Hall, 220 E. Deerpath, Lake Forest, Illinois.

Historic Preservation Commissioners present: Acting Chairman Lloyd Culbertson, and Commissioners Elizabeth Dalieri, Geoffrey Hanson, Robin Petit and Leif Soderberg.

Commissioners absent: Chairman Maureen Grinnell and Commissioner Tina Dann-Fenwick

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

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

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

**2. Consideration of the minutes of the May 24, 2023 meeting of the Commission.**

Consideration of the minutes of the May 24, 2023 meeting was postponed.

**3. Continued consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for new stucco walls, metal fencing and metal entry gates at the property addressed as 930 Lake Road. Landscape lighting, hardscape modifications, and new landscaping are also proposed.**

**Property Owner: Chicago Land Trust #8002370703**

**Applicant: Judy DeAngelis as power of attorney**

**Project Representatives: Matthew Torchalski and Colleen Barkley, Mariani**

**Landscape**

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

Mr. Torchalski presented a revised site plan and noted the changes made since the last meeting. He stated that the goal of the petitioner is privacy and simplicity. He stated that proposed perimeter walls are set back further from the property line than in the earlier plan and are lower, at six feet tall. He stated that the wall at the driveway entrance was modified to add more variation along the Lake Road streetscape. He stated that landscaping was added along the street facing sides of

the wall and fence. He stated that the entrance gate on Westminster was shifted into the property, away from the street an additional two feet. He stated that the existing stockade fencing along the north property line will remain. He presented images of the modified wall and entrance gate proposed on the Lake Road frontage. He stated that the design of the entrance gates has not changed since the last meeting. He noted that a mailbox is still proposed in the pillar at the entrance along Westminster. He stated that exposed aggregate concrete is proposed for the driveway and motor court. He stated that no changes were made to the lighting plan since the last meeting and presented an image of the proposed exterior lights. He noted that an outdoor kitchen is proposed in the rear yard and will not be visible from off of the property. He reviewed the proposed landscape plan noting that the client prefers a simple landscape palette. He stated that boxwood hedges are proposed to soften views of the wall along Lake Road along with four shade trees which will be planted between the wall and the sidewalk. He stated that shrubs are proposed on the outside of the fence along Westminster along with arborvitae which will be planted inside the fence for privacy. He presented renderings noting that the wall is designed to complement the house. He pointed out the expanded open space between the wall and Lake Road in response to the Commission's previous comments.

Ms. Baehr stated that the Commission reviewed the petition last month and offered comments, raised questions, and provided direction. She noted that the changes made since the last meeting are summarized in the staff report. She noted the previously offered suggestions by the Commission noting that in staff's opinion, many of the Commission's previous concerns appear to be addressed. She noted that although the height and location of the wall were in compliance with the Code as originally presented, the height of the wall was reduced and the wall itself was shifted into the property to provide more open space along the streetscape. She confirmed that landscaping was added to soften the wall as viewed from the streetscape. She stated that findings in support of the petition are detailed in the staff report.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited Commission questions.

Commissioner Soderberg noted that perimeter walls along the streetscape are more common on the east side of Lake Road than on the west. He noted that if more walls are built along Lake Road, the character of the streetscape will change. He commended the petitioner for lowering the height of the wall and shifting the wall away from the sidewalk.

In response to questions from Commissioner Soderberg, Mr. Torchalski stated that alternatives were considered in an effort to balance the petitioner's desire for security and privacy, and the concerns raised about the mass of the wall and the appearance from the streetscape. He stated that the client's goals are best achieved with a solid wall along Lake Road.

In response to questions from Commission Petit, Mr. Torchalski stated that the proposed wall is between 30 to 40 feet closer to Lake Road than the existing wall around the motor court. He stated that the wall as now proposed is setback 20 feet from the sidewalk as opposed to 10 feet as previously proposed.

In response to questions Commissioner Hanson, Mr. Torchalski confirmed that the plantings satisfy the screening requirement for solid walls as stated in the Code.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Mr. Torchalski reviewed the materials and color palette.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited public testimony.

Laura Luce, 111 Ridge Lane, spoke on behalf of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. She read the statement that was submitted by the Foundation and distributed to the Commission prior to the meeting.

Brian Bryzinski, 941 E. Westminster, noted that while some positive modifications were made since the last meeting, the extent of the wall along Lake Road and the fence along Westminster is inappropriate for the Historic District. He noted that Standards 9, 10, 14 and 17 are not met. He pointed out that deciduous plantings are proposed along the fence on Westminster leaving the fence exposed for long portions of the year. He asked the Commission to consider the suggestions offered by the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation and deny the petition to preserve the integrity of Historic District.

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

In response to questions from Commissioner Dalieri, Mr. Torchalski stated that the shrubs proposed along the outside of the fence along Westminster are deciduous, but dense, and will provide some coverage year round. He added that arborvitae will be planted along the inside of the fence which will make the fence almost visually disappear.

In response to questions from Chairman Culbertson, Mr. Torchalski stated that planting evergreens along both the inside and outside of the fence will make replanting more noticeable if some of the plantings fail to thrive over time. He stated that the deciduous plantings on the outside of the fence will soften the lower half of the fence and will grow to be approximately three feet, half the height of the fence. He noted that the deciduous plantings will allow some light through to the evergreens on the inside of the fence. He explained that the wall along Lake Forest is not symmetrical because the house is not centered on the property. He reiterated that a wall is desired by the property owner for privacy and security.

Commissioner Soderberg observed that the fence along the south side of the property, along Westminster, is largely open. He questioned why the solid wall proposed on the Lake Road frontage is proposed to wrap about the corner extend partially along the Westminster frontage. He suggested that the privacy desired by the homeowner may be able to be achieved in some other way at the southeast corner of the property.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Barkley reiterated that the client's goal is privacy. She stated that the proposed wall is designed to complement the home. She pointed out that there are currently stucco walls on the property.

Acting Chairman Culbertson suggested that consideration be given to aligning the proposed wall with the house, stopping short of the southeast corner. He suggested consideration of a landscape solution for privacy at the corner.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Barkley stated that the trees at the southeast corner of the property would shade evergreens planted in that area impacting the likelihood that the plantings would thrive. She noted that evergreens could compromise sightlines at the corner.

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

Commissioner Dalieri acknowledged the changes made to the plan since the last meeting in response to the Commission's comments, moving the fence and wall further back from the street and reducing the height of the wall. She noted that there are many fences and hedges in the surrounding neighborhood. She stated support for the petition with the changes made since the last meeting.

Commissioner Petit thanked the petitioner noting that the changes made since the last meeting were thoughtfully done. She expressed concern about the design of the gate and questioned whether it is compatible with the character of the area. She noted that in her opinion, the gate appears heavy. She stated that as presented, the petition does not appear to adequately satisfy Standards 9 and 14.

Commissioner Soderberg agreed with Commissioner Petit's comments and questioned whether the proposed wall is visually compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. He encouraged the petitioner to explore ways to achieve the privacy desired without wrapping the corner of the property with a wall.

Commissioner Hanson stated that in his opinion, the changes made to the project since the last meeting are highly responsive to the Commission's previous comments noting in particular the changes to the height and location of the wall. He agreed that finding a way to avoid wrapping the wall around the corner would further address the concerns raised. He noted that the sample of the gate provided by the

petitioner appears more transparent than the image in the packet. He stated overall support for the petition subject to exploration of a different solution for the southeast corner of the property.

Acting Chairman Culbertson thanked the petitioner for being very responsive to the Commission's previous comments. He noted that specific concerns about the wall extending to and wrapping around the southeast corner of the property were not raised at the last meeting but asked that alternate solutions be studied for that area that will achieve the owner's desire for privacy. He agreed with Commissioner Hanson that the sample of the gate provided is more appropriate than the image included in the Commission's packet.

Commissioner Dalieri stated support for the continuity of the stucco wall along the length of the Lake Road frontage. She stated that in her opinion, the transition between the wall and fence should be at the corner of the property rather than along Lake Road.

Commissioner Hanson suggested further study to determine whether the transition between the fence and the wall should be on Lake Road or on Westminster.

Commissioner Soderberg suggested consideration of stepping the stucco wall down to a half-wall with fencing on top. He reiterated support for a solution that eliminates the wall turning the corner on to Westminster. He expressed concern about the possibility that a solid stucco wall could one day extend along the entire frontage along Lake Road. He stated that ideally, there wall in this case would be symmetrical but he acknowledged that the house is not sited symmetrically on the lot.

Commissioner Dalieri cautioned the Commission against attempting to redesign the wall noting that suggestions for consideration should be left with the petitioner to explore.

In response to a question from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Baehr stated that given the differing views from the Commissioners about the treatment of the corner, the Commission could consider appointing a subcommittee of the Commission to resolve the final details of the wall and how it transitions to the fence near the corner.

Acting Chairman Culbertson stated that a subcommittee may be a good option in this case to keep the petition moving forward.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson and Commissioner Dalieri, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that the Commission is able to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness with the condition that the final details are subject to approval by a subcommittee of the Commission. She stated that if the subcommittee is not able to agree on the final details, the petition could be directed back to the full Commission for review.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited a motion.

Commissioner Petit made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for a stucco wall, pillars, entrance gates, fencing, and hardscape at 930 Lake Road subject to the following conditions.

1. The final design of the wall and fencing at the corner of Lake Road and Westminster shall be subject to approval by a subcommittee of the Commission.
2. Proper permits must be obtained for all work completed to date without the required permits, and inspections completed before plans are submitted for permit for the wall and fence.
3. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as approved by 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 must be included in the submission for permit *along with* the plans as approved by the Commission at the June 28, 2023 meeting. If changes are made, the plans will be subject to review by staff, in consultation with the subcommittee as appropriate, to verify that the plans are consistent with the intent of the approvals granted by the Commission and the subcommittee.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a detailed, landscape plan shall be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist. The landscape plan shall reflect the following.
  - a. Plantings that will provide consistent, year-round coverage of at least 30 percent of the wall area along the street facing side of Lake Road.
  - b. Plantings along the street side of the metal fence along Westminster.
  - c. The required replacement inches for the trees removed as part of the project.

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.

5. Details of exterior lighting shall be included with the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights.

6. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect trees and vegetation during construction must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
7. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials' staging, and construction vehicle parking plan must be submitted to the City for review and will be subject to City approval in an effort to minimize and manage impacts on the neighborhood, neighboring properties and existing trees and landscaping during construction. The adjacent streets must be kept open and passable at all times. Off site contractor parking may be required.

The motion was seconded by Commission Dalieri.

Commissioner Hanson clarified that the Commission supports the petition overall noting that it is his understanding that a subcommittee of the Commission will only be considering the final design details of the transition between the wall and fence at or near the southeast corner. He stated that no new objections or ideas for significant changes to the project will be raised at the subcommittee level.

Commissioner Petit reiterated that the remaining issue of concern is the design of the southeast corner and the transition between the wall and fence.

The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**4. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow removal of the existing detached garage and approve a three-car detached garage at the property located at 401 E. Westminster. New terraces, an inground pool, and fencing are also proposed.**

**Property Owners: Jeff and Laura Torosian**

**Project Representative: Laura Torosian**

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

Ms. Torosian stated that after many years of working to restore the house, a final phase of work is proposed. She stated that there is currently a small, two-car, detached garage on the property that was built in the 1960's. She stated that the garage will be demolished and replaced with a new, larger garage in a slightly different location. She stated that a new three-car detached garage is proposed behind the house and will not be visible from the street unlike the existing garage. She stated that the garage is designed to be compatible with the house. She reviewed the existing and proposed site plans. She stated that the garage doors face east and noted that the driveway will be extended to the south to provide access to the garage. She noted that a pool with hardscape is proposed in the rear yard. She stated that the yard will be fenced in for safety as required by the Code. She stated that the existing asphalt motor court in the front courtyard will be replaced with

gravel in the same configuration and a decorative fence is proposed on top of the stone wall adjacent to the front of the motor court. She presented an image of the fence and gate noting that the design takes inspiration from Jerome Cerny designs. She stated that one goal of the project is to increase privacy given the uncertainty of what will be constructed on the property to the west. She stated that arborvitae are proposed along the south and west property lines and the front courtyard will be enhanced with four shade trees. She presented elevations of the garage noting that evergreens will be planted along the east side of the driveway to screen views of the garage doors from the neighbor to the east. She stated that the new garage is intended to look like a Colonial ancillary building, a quiet back drop to the house and pool. She stated that an outdoor fireplace is proposed on the new patio. She presented images of the existing house and stated that the property will benefit from the proposed hardscape and landscape improvements.

Ms. Baehr stated that the existing garage is not original to the property and noted that findings in support of the demolition are included in the staff report. She stated that the proposed garage is simple and follows the style and materials of the residence. She stated that the proposed garage will not be visible from the streetscape. She stated that the garage doors face the rear yard of the property to the east and noted that landscaping and fencing along the east property line will screen views of the garage and vehicles from the neighboring property. She noted that the City Engineer preliminarily reviewed the plans and noted that a curb should be installed along the east side of the driveway to mitigate stormwater runoff to the east. She stated that the staff report includes findings in support of the petition.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited questions from the Commission.

In response to questions from Commissioner Hanson, Ms. Baehr confirmed that the impervious surface calculation takes into account the replacement of the asphalt in the front motor court with gravel.

In response to questions from Commissioner Hanson, Ms. Torosian stated that many different options were considered for the new garage. She acknowledged that the garage is far from the house but noted that loading and unloading can occur near the house before vehicles pull into the garage. She stated that a front facing garage, with the doors facing north, was explored and found to require as much or more impervious surface than the current proposal. She stated that the current proposal maximizes the amount of lawn area in the rear yard.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Baehr noted that no trees are proposed for removal adding that a final landscape plan will be required later in the process.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Torosian explained that the proposed fence and finials are inspired by some of the historical elements of



the house as depicted on the original drawings. She noted where the finials were previously found on the home.

In response to questions from Commissioner Petit, Ms. Torosian reviewed the location of the pool fencing and gate. She confirmed that the fence must be at least four feet tall to meet the requirements for a pool fence. She stated that lattice fencing will be installed on top of the curb along the east side of the driveway.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Torosian stated that the fence in front of the motor court on Westminster is designed in the Federal style. She stated that the style of the pool fence is not yet confirmed but noted that lattice fencing is being considered.

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

Laura Luce, 111 Ridge Road, spoke on behalf of the Lake Forest Preservation Foundation. She read the letter from the Foundation that was previously distributed to the Commission.

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

Commissioner Soderberg complimented the petitioner for the restoration work completed to date on the house. He stated support for the project as proposed.

Commissioners Daliere and Hanson stated support for the petition.

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

Commissioner Daliere made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness approving demolition of the existing detached garage and approving a replacement three-car detached garage, terraces, an inground pool, and fencing. She stated that the motion includes the Commission's adoption of the findings as detailed in the staff report and is subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission. If any modifications are made as a result of design development, plans clearly detailing the areas of change must be included in the application for building permits, along with the plans originally presented to the Commission. All revisions 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.

2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect trees and vegetation identified for preservation during construction must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
3. Details of all exterior lighting shall be included with the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights.
4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials' staging, and construction vehicle parking plan must be submitted to the City for review and will be subject to City approval in an effort to minimize and manage impacts on the neighborhood, neighboring properties, and existing trees and landscaping during construction.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Petit and was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**5. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow construction of an enclosed breezeway to connect the garage to the residence, a screen porch addition, and exterior alterations to enclose an existing open porch on the west side of the home at the property located at 747 E. Deerpath. A building scale variance is also requested.**

**Property Owners: Michael and Tara Martin**

**Project Representative: Ron McCormack, architect**

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

Mr. McCormack stated that the petitioners recently purchased the home and desire to connect the detached garage to the house for convenience. He presented photos of the house noting that it was constructed in 1916 and is a Georgian style red brick structure with primarily flat roofs. He noted that when the garage was built in 1990, the flat roof on the home was replicated on the garage. He reviewed the site plan noting the ravine that extends across the rear of the property. He noted the location of the existing garden wall and motor court on the west side of the house. He described the proposed enclosed connection from the open porch at the west end of the house to the garage. He pointed out that a screen porch is proposed at the south end of the connecting element. He presented the proposed floor plan noting that the existing open porch on the west side of the house will be enclosed with windows and a door and become conditioned space. He noted that the connection between the house and garage is detailed with French doors to allow for a pass through between the motor court and the rear yard. He noted that the screen porch is a rectangular, simple structure with a fireplace. He reviewed existing and proposed elevations. He noted that the garage is located at an awkward angle to the house and will remain

unchanged. He reviewed the materials and design elements of the enclosed porch and the proposed connection. He stated that the connecting element has a flat roof to minimize its appearance and to allow it to fit under the eave of the existing porch. He noted a brick wing wall south of the porch that will be removed. He noted that decorative overhead doors will be added to the garage to replace the existing doors. He presented a roof plan reflecting the proposed connection and the screen porch. He presented color renderings. He reviewed a conceptual landscape plan for the rear yard. He stated that a Crabapple tree will be relocated to accommodate the screen porch. He stated Landmarks Illinois holds a Façade Easement on the house and he confirmed that the project was reviewed and approved by that organization.

Ms. Baehr reviewed the components of the project and stated that a building scale variance is requested to accommodate the proposed connecting element and the screen porch. She stated that the two elements are designed to be subordinate to the residence and are open in appearance. She stated that the proposed additions do not appear to negatively impact the integrity of the historic residence. She stated that the existing residence is slightly over the allowable square footage and explained that the proposed additional elements add 400 square feet to the property. She stated that neither of the elements proposed will be visible from the street. She stated that the criteria for a building scale variance appear to be satisfied as detailed in the staff report. She noted that square footage permitted outright on the property is reduced due to the non-table land on the property. She stated that the staff report includes findings in support of the petition.

In response to questions from Commissioner Soderberg, Ms. Baehr confirmed that the square footage overage results from the proposed enclosure of the open porch on the west façade and the proposed connecting element between the house and garage.

In response to questions from Commissioner Soderberg, Mr. McCormick stated that the connecting element is a narrow corridor intended for the sole purpose of attaching the garage to the house. He stated that the screen porch is intended to allow the owners to take advantage of the rear yard. He stated that the brick proposed on the additions will closely match the brick on the existing house.

In response to questions from Commissioner Petit, Mr. McCormack reviewed the details of the replacement garage doors noting that they are designed to appear as carriage doors but will operate as overhead doors. He stated that the doors will be painted white or black. He clarified that a patio is not proposed to the east of the connecting element. He stated that the French doors in the screen porch, on either side of the fireplace, are intended to allow access in and out even if window shades are pulled down and to avoid the need for roll up screens in the narrow spaces. He stated that the door to the south of the fireplace swings against the fireplace and the other door swings against the garage. He stated that the steps at the porch are workable without a landing but agreed to consider extending the stairs out to provide the opportunity for a landing.

In response to questions from Commissioner Daliere, Mr. McCormack stated that the original concept included a detached octagonal screen porch in the rear yard noting that concept was not pursued because it impacted views from the house. He stated that the proposed exterior materials are consistent with those on the house. He stated that the connecting element is intentionally lighter and more open than the house and acknowledged that there is little solid wall surface.

In response to questions from Commissioner Hanson, Mr. McCormick stated that the additions will have a natural clay tile roof.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Baehr confirmed that an additional building scale variance will need to be requested if the screen porch is proposed to be enclosed in the future.

Hearing no further questions from the Commission, Acting Chairman Culbertson invited public comment. Hearing none, he invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioners Hanson and Soderberg stated support for the petition as presented.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited a motion.

Commissioner Hanson made a motion to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for a connecting element between the residence and detached garage, a screen porch addition, exterior alterations to enclose the existing open porch on the west side of the home, and a building scale variance. He stated that the motion adopts the findings as detailed in the staff report and noted that the Commission's deliberations are incorporated as additional findings. He stated that the motion is subject to the following conditions of approval.

1. Plans submitted for permit must reflect the project as presented to the Commission. If any modifications are proposed as a result of design development, plans clearly detailing the areas of change must be included with the application for a building permit *along with* the plans originally presented to the Commission. The plans 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.
2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a plan to protect trees and vegetation identified for preservation during construction must be submitted and will be subject to review and approval by the City's Certified Arborist.
3. Details of exterior lighting shall be included with the plans submitted for permit. Cut sheets for all light fixtures shall be provided and all fixtures, except those illuminated by natural gas at low light levels, shall direct light down and the source of the light shall be fully shielded from view. All exterior lights shall be set

on automatic timers to go off no later than 11 p.m. except for security motion detector lights.

4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, a materials' staging, and construction vehicle parking plan must be submitted to the City for review and will be subject to City approval in an effort to minimize and manage impacts on the neighborhood, neighboring properties, and on existing trees and landscaping during construction.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Soderberg and was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**6. Consideration of a request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow the existing cedar shingle roof to be replaced with a synthetic material on the residence located at 333 Woodland Road.**

**Property Owners: Mary Therese and Greg Williams**

**Project Representative: Mary Therese Williams**

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

Ms. Williams stated that the Commission's decision on this petition is important for her family and the community. She asked for confirmation that the Commission has reviewed the packet materials and correspondence. She stated that over the past six years, she has considered replacing the roof on her home. She noted that the market place for roof products has changed. She stated that cedar shingles for roofs have increased in cost and declined in quality. She stated that previously she replaced a small area of cedar shingle on the roof and the area attracted raccoons and bees. She stated that when she first researched roof products, she would never have considered a composite material because she was not happy with the appearance. She stated however that today, it is difficult to tell the difference between a natural cedar roof and a synthetic roof product. She stated that there are close to 200 homes in Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, and the surrounding communities with composite roofing. She stated that as owners of a property in the Historic District, she contributed by maintaining her home. She stated that replacing the roof with cedar shingle is an irresponsible option for her family. She stated that her home originally had an asphalt shingle roof and stated that if the Commission does not approve a synthetic roof product, she will replace the roof with asphalt shingles. She stated that she does not like the look of asphalt shingles but acknowledged that the product is prevalent in the Historic District. She presented images of composite products and presented photos of other homes in the community with composite roofing. She stated that the composite product that she is proposing is one of the leading products in the industry. She stated that the proposed composite roof product can match the width and thickness of natural cedar. She responded to a question raised in the staff report noting that the composite roof material will be installed to avoid a uniform look. She spoke to Standard 9 and noted that the product she is proposing is not a new product so there should be no uncertainties

about how the product ages. She stated that a cedar roof ages but the composite roof product is meant to look the same way for at least 30 years. She stated that at the Commission's recent workshop, none of the panelists could answer the questions that were raised about composite roofing. She stated that both natural and composite materials should be considered with respect to Standards 9 and 12. She stated that it is important that right facts are being communicated to the Commission.

Ms. Czerniak stated that this is a difficult and important decision for the Commission. She noted that the Commission held a workshop recently to discuss various types of synthetic exterior materials. She noted that a panel of architects was invited to offer input on various synthetic materials and the architects overall were not yet comfortable using the synthetic roof products that are currently available on structures located in historic districts. She stated that based on the research to date and the Commission's discussions, staff is not able to make positive findings in support of the present request. She noted that the synthetic products are visually different from natural, historic and traditional roofing materials. She noted for instance that the ridge and edge caps used with the synthetic product are very different from the appearance of the ridge and roof edges found on natural, historic, and traditional roof products. She stated that the Commission acknowledged at the workshop that exterior materials continue to evolve and warrant continuing review and consideration. She acknowledged that synthetic roof products have been installed on homes in the community located outside of the Historic District, but not in the historic districts. She stated that the Commission cannot specify a particular manufacturer for a product but could establish criteria or characteristics that synthetic products must meet in order to satisfy the Commission's 17 standards. She stated that with respect to synthetic roof products presented to date, the Commission has not yet found that the 17 standards are satisfied. She noted that the staff report recommends continuing the petition to allow for further research and due diligence around synthetic roof products and time for the products to evolve further. She noted that at the workshop the Commission discussed the possibility that some synthetic products may be appropriate for new structures in the historic districts, but not for historic structures.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited questions and comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Dalieri stated that based on her own research, the specific product that the petitioner is proposing to use was brought to market in June 2019.

In response to questions from Commissioner Dalieri, Ms. Williams stated that DaVinci, the manufacturer of the synthetic product, has been around for a long time. She stated a willingness to work with the Commission to select the specific type of synthetic shingle. She stated that the shingle presented was selected because it has been used on similar Colonial Revival homes elsewhere.

In response to questions from Commissioner Soderberg, Ms. Williams confirmed that the proposed roof product will have caps at the ridges and sides. She stated that the cap is used to improve the look of the shingle. She stated that there may be a way to make the caps look stronger and more historically relevant.

Commissioner Soderberg stated that he understands that there may be composite roof products on the market that do not require the end caps. He noted that there is no question that the end caps create a very different look than a traditional cedar roof.

In response to Commissioner Hanson, Commissioner Soderberg stated that it is his understanding that the composite shingles are not solid underneath which is why the end caps are needed.

In response to questions from Commissioner Soderberg, Ms. Czerniak clarified that the homes at the east end of Pembroke Drive are in the Green Bay Road Historic District but the rest of the homes on the street are not. She stated that staff can research the end and ridge caps used with synthetic roof products.

Commissioner Soderberg suggested that the Commission provide a timeline within which answers to the questions will be researched to let the homeowners know what to expect. He explained that consideration of whether or not the use of synthetic shingles is appropriate in the Historic District is not based on the Commission's preference but rather, on the visual compatibility of the product with the historic structure and with the Historic District overall. He stated that the synthetic roof shingle has a very different look than cedar or asphalt shingles. He stated that there may be other products available that do not require the end caps and are more compatible with historic structures.

In response to questions from Commissioner Petit, Ms. Czerniak stated that the decisions made about the roofing material for the Amberley Courtyard Homes do not have any bearing on this request because the Amberley Woods development is not in the Historic District. She reviewed that there is an entire chapter in the Code pertaining to historic preservation which includes 17 specific Standards that the Commission is charged with using to evaluate petitions. She stated that those same standards do not apply to properties outside of historic districts.

Commissioner Petit stated that some of the architectural asphalt shingle products have considerable thickness and texture. She noted that asphalt shingles are commonly found on historic homes. She encouraged consideration of an architectural asphalt shingle and comparing that product to a synthetic roof shingle. She explained that moving away from the use of historic and traditional products is a big decision for the Commission. She noted that during the recent workshop during which six architects offered their opinions, there was general consensus that they were not in favor of the synthetic roofing product because it ineffectively attempts to imitate another material like cedar or slate.

Commissioner Dalieri stated that some cedar shingles are pressure treated and as a result, are more durable.

In response to Commissioner Dalieri, Ms. Williams stated that pressure treated cedar shingles are sourced from Canada and require the application of special treatments continuously over time. She acknowledged that thicker cedar shingles could help with deterioration issues.

In response to questions from Commissioner Hanson, Ms. Williams stated that 10 inch wide shingles are proposed consistent with the size of the existing shingles on the house. She stated however that shingles of varying widths could be used. She stated that the synthetic shingles can be layered so the roof is not flat.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Czerniak confirmed that a permit can be issued outright for replacement of the roof with architectural asphalt shingles because the house originally was roofed with asphalt shingles, and they are a traditional and historic material found throughout the Historic District. She noted that there are other homes nearby, in the Historic District, that are roofed with asphalt shingles.

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

Bob Moulton Ely, 420 Woodland Road, stated that he would never put a cedar roof on a house and would instead install asphalt shingle. He explained that he has experience restoring historic homes. He stated that he installed an asphalt shingle roof on an historic home in LaGrange, Missouri and the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He stated that if he had the option, he would have used a synthetic material instead.

Laura Luce, 111 Ridge Lane, speaking on behalf of the Preservation Foundation, read the letter from the Foundation that was distributed to the Commission. She stated that she attended the workshop on exterior materials and none of the panelists, which included architects that often work in Lake Forest, endorsed the use of synthetic roof shingles. She acknowledged that new growth wood is not ideal and that cedar roofs are costly to maintain but noted that green initiatives are important and noted that artificial/synthetic roofing is not as environmentally friendly as natural cedar with respect to production or disposal. She stated that in the Historic District it is crucial to use materials that stand the test of time. She explained that some alternative materials may be appropriate but noted that when someone purchases an historic home the expectations are that the home will be appropriately maintained. She stated that approval of the use of faux materials is a slippery slope. She stated that the Commission should not be encouraging the use of synthetic products at this time.



Hearing no further public testimony, Acting Chairman Culbertson invited additional questions from the Commission.

In response to questions from Acting Chairman Culbertson, Ms. Czerniak stated that if so directed by the Commission, staff will prepare a summary of comments and questions from the exterior materials workshop and the Commission's discussion to date around this petition and provide it to the Commission for review and approval. She stated that further research and a follow up work session could be scheduled within 30 to 90 days. She stated that the goal would be to allow the Commission to determine how to rule on this petition in the short term. She acknowledged that ongoing study of new materials will be important in the longer term. She stated that whether or not to allow wide spread use of synthetic exterior materials in the Historic Districts is an important decision and needs to be considered in the context of the Standards and the long term impact on the integrity of the City's Historic Districts.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Petit stated that it would be helpful for the Commission to see different types of roof materials like natural slate, clay tile, architectural asphalt shingle and cedar and consider the characteristics of those products in relation to composite and synthetic products.

Commissioner Soderberg agreed that the Commission should be considering the use of engineered materials on an ongoing basis. He stated however that the visual compatibility between traditional materials and composite or synthetic products will need to be carefully considered. He stated that specific criteria will be needed to objectively evaluate different materials. He stated that in his mind, there is still some question about whether composite or synthetic materials will last over time and how they will look after many years. He stated that the Commission will need to wrestle with how to specify what is and what is not acceptable with respect to synthetic materials. He stated that in his opinion, the Commission cannot approve materials on a one-off basis. He stated that the Commission needs to outline a process for developing a focused approach to reviewing proposals for the use of synthetic materials. He added that the Commission should be clear on what the timeline is for evaluating these products to set the right expectations for the residents that may be considering composite or synthetic materials in the Historic District.

Commissioner Dalieri stated that the Commission needs to have a set of criteria to evaluate different materials. She stated that it would be helpful to understand how the composite or synthetic products look after a number of years.

Commissioner Hanson stated that this is a difficult request. He acknowledged that the financial hardship of owning and maintaining aspects of an historic residence, like a cedar roof, is significant. He stated that he understands that the petitioner would like a solution sooner rather than later. He stated that he visited homes with synthetic roofing wanting to not be able to tell the difference between natural cedar shingle

and the synthetic product, but there is very clearly a difference. He stated that one could make the argument that synthetic roofing may look better than asphalt shingle but noted that asphalt shingle is a traditional and historic materials that has been around for a very long time. He stated that guidelines should be established so that the Commission can review these types of requests objectively. He stated support for continuing consideration of the petition to allow the Commission and staff to do some further due diligence around this issue.

Commissioner Dalieri stated that owning an historic home is expensive but noted that there is beauty in historic homes. She stated an interest in exploring at new materials.

Acting Chairman Culbertson stated that the Commission has offered many thoughtful comments and noted that it is obvious that the Commission is really grappling with this issue. He stated that it seems more research and the development of evaluation criteria are needed which will take some time. He agreed with Commissioner Petit's suggestion that the whole spectrum of materials should be reviewed, and with Commissioner Dalieri's and Commissioner Soderberg's suggestion of establishing a set of criteria to evaluate different materials objectively. He explained that this issue is very difficult because the Commission has to think about the original materials and the architectural integrity of the historic home and when, if ever, it is appropriate to replace a traditional building material with a synthetic or composite material. He stated that in his opinion, there is no question that there is a visual difference between natural cedar shingle and the synthetic material. He acknowledged that the appearance of composite and synthetic products have improved over the years, but they still do not look as good as the natural materials that they are intended to imitate. He noted that the industry is evolving, but the composite and synthetic products available are just not there yet with respect to appearance and compatibility in the Historic District. He stated that the Commission is not in a position at this point to make what will be a precedent setting decision on an issue that will have such dramatic implications for historic properties in the community. He asked that the petitioner consider pursuing other materials that are routinely approved for use in the Historic District.

Commissioner Petit stated that continuing consideration of this request is appropriate but stated that the Commission should not lead the petitioner on.

Acting Chairman Culbertson recognized the petitioner.

Ms. Williams stated that the Commission has considered other composite and synthetic products in the past. She stated that the Commission needs to put an end date on this discussion. She stated that the exterior materials workshop that was held focused mostly on siding materials and was a disservice to residents who are considering synthetic or composite roofs. She stated that she wants to preserve the historic character of her home and believes that she can do that with a new material. She stated that the Commission needs to involve roofing contractors in the discussion so that questions can be answered properly.

Acting Chairman Culbertson acknowledged Ms. Williams's comments. He invited final comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Hanson suggested that the Commission go out and see first hand different roofing materials in the field. He added that having the Commission's technical questions answered by roofing contractors would be helpful to understand the specifics of the material and installation.

Acting Chairman Culbertson invited a motion to continue the petition.

Commissioner Petit made a motion to continue the petition to allow the Commission and staff to do further due diligence around the topic of synthetic roof materials and the appropriateness, or lack thereof, of using them in the Historic Districts.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hanson and was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

#### **OTHER ITEMS**

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

Laura Luce, 111 Ridge Lane, called the Commission's attention to a fountain being constructed on the property located at 920 Deerpath.

##### **6. Additional information from staff.**

Ms. Baehr stated that staff will poll for a workshop to see various roof types in the field. She stated that the bus tour will be noticed as a public meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine J. Czerniak  
Director of Community Development