

**VILLAGE OF DOWNERS GROVE
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18, 2017 MEETING**

Chairman Davenport called the October 18, 2017 meeting of the Architectural Design Review Board to order at 7:03 PM and requested a roll call:

PRESENT: Ms. Acks, Ms. Chalberg, Ms. Hollweck, Mr. Larson,
Mr. Lerner, Mr. Riemer, Ch. Davenport

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Sr. Planner Rebecca Leitschuh
Village Planner Scott Williams

VISITORS: Kathy Nybo, FOEH, 5253 Blodgett
Amy and David Gassen, 5320 Benton Ave.
Rich Kulovany, 6825 Camden Rd.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2017 MINUTES

Mr. Lerner commented that on page 9 in the remarks of Mr. Kulovany, the number should be 61 homes rather than 41 homes.

**Mr. Lerner moved, seconded by Mr. Larson, to accept the minutes of the September 20, 2017 meeting as amended.
All in favor. The Motion passed unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Chairman Davenport called upon anyone who intended to testify on any of the items on the Agenda to rise and be sworn in.

FILE 17-ADR-0009: a petition seeking a historic landmark designation for the property commonly known as 735 Maple Avenue, Downers Grove, IL (PIN 09-08-402-005, -006). The property is located on the south side of Maple Avenue, approximately 70 feet southwest of the intersection of Fairmount Avenue and Maple Avenue. Nora Black, petitioner and owner.

Mr. Scott Williams, Planner for the Village of Downers Grove, reviewed the petition for the property located at 735 Maple Avenue. He said that there are several Queen Anne homes located along Maple Avenue as indicated by the village's Historic Survey. Photographs from 1955 show the structure of the building, which was constructed between 1892-1895. The home is in

excellent condition. When bricks were removed from Maple Avenue for repaving, the applicant decided to use some of those bricks for their pathway. Mr. Williams then highlighted the classic Queen Anne characteristics of the home including the multi-gabled roofs, original wood clapboard walls, wood shingles, wood bandboards and trim. He pointed out the two-story bay windows. Many of the windows are original and double-hung. There is the original stained glass windows in the front and back of the home. The upper peak areas have wood shingles, original gingerbread and spindle ornamentation, creating half-circle and triangular designs. The house features many different textures.

Mr. Williams then described the carriage house, which is in excellent condition and mimics the main structure in design and style.

Staff recommends approval for the landmarking and believes the structure was constructed between 1892-1895, and that it represents distinguishing characteristics of the Queen Anne architectural style. He said that the owner and applicant are present to answer any questions.

Christine Martin of 701 Maple Avenue said she worked with Mrs. Black to present this application to the Board. Ms. Martin read the letter of application that was presented to the Board for the property at 735 Maple Avenue.

Mr. Larson thanked Ms. Martin for assisting Mrs. Black in applying for landmark designation. He also thanked her for her comments about the support provided by the Village Staff. He asked whether the carriage house is part of the landmarking process as it is mentioned as a feature of the property.

Ms. Rebecca Leitschuh said that the Board can landmark it, but was also unsure. She asked Ms. Martin whether the petitioner would like to have the carriage house included in the designation. Ms. Martin said that Mrs. Black did want it included in the landmark designation.

Ch. Davenport asked for any public comment on this particular petition.

David Gassen of 5320 Benton Avenue said that he strongly supports this landmark application.

Rich Kulovany of 6825 Camden Road supports this application and thanked Mrs. Black for her willingness to obtain the landmark designation. The fact that this home will be here 96 years from now is intriguing, fascinating and a wonderful thing for Downers Grove.

Amy Gassen of 5320 Benton Avenue also expressed her support for this application and thanked Mrs. Black for bringing it forward. It is a great example of a Queen Anne structure.

There being no further comments, Ch. Davenport closed the public portion of the hearing.

Ms. Chalberg asked about including the out-building as part of the landmark process. If they move forward with this, what would happen if a future petitioner came in and wanted to build a different type of garage? Someone asked if there is a car in the garage now.

Ms. Leitschuh said that Mrs. Black said she would like the carriage house to be part of the landmark. She noted that another home in the North High School area was landmarked with a retrofitted out building that was used as a garage. Ms. Martin said the existing carriage house can fit two cars and has an alley entrance. It was noted by a Board member that if the carriage house was landmarked, they only have to protect the street side of the carriage house. A new garage door could be added to the carriage house. In further response Mrs. Black said it is a standard-sized garage and they had two cars in it at one time.

Ch. Davenport said that it would then be possible for someone to perhaps build another accessory detached building on the property, as there is a 1,000 square foot limitation for accessory structures. He also asked Staff about the alleyway, which is a public right-of-way. Ms. Leitschuh said it is not a street, so they don't have to consider improvements to the alley. Part of the carriage house is visible from Fairmount. Ms. Leitschuh recommended that the Board state clearly that should the petitioner decide not to landmark the carriage house for whatever reason, between this meeting and Council approval, that the Board would still support the application, and the petitioner would have the ability to remove that accessory structure from consideration. There was some discussion as to whether or not the side of the structure that is visible from Fairmount is landmarked. If someone wanted to add to the east side of the accessory structure, it would have to come before the Board because it would change the designation.

Ch. Davenport said they may have found a necessary point of clarification in the Ordinance. Ms. Leitschuh said that this is new territory for Staff as well, but her interpretation is that in the Ordinance's description of designation procedures, it discusses a landmark structure being visible from a street. The definition of "façade primary" in the Ordinance is the "portion of the façade that abuts or is nearest to a street yard and is visible from a street." Ch. Davenport thinks that should be clarified further.

A Board member read the definition of “secondary façade” as “the portion of a façade that abuts or is nearest to a side yard, and abuts a primary façade.” The east and west facades of the accessory building would be considered as secondary facades.

Ch. Davenport noted that so much of what the Board is doing in these applications is new. He thinks that the minutes should reflect that it is this Board’s opinion that if the petitioner decides to remove the coach (carriage) house from the landmarking process, that the petitioner be allowed to make the change, which would not affect the Board’s opinion as to whether or not the property should be landmarked.

Mrs. Black explained that her son, Jim did a good amount of the work on the house, and the Board congratulated Jim on his work.

Ch. Davenport said he is glad to see this being landmarked as it is difficult to imagine Maple Avenue without this house on it. He thanked Mrs. Black for requesting the landmark designation.

Mr. Larson moved that the Board approve this petition to landmark the primary house and carriage house, and make a positive recommendation to the Village Council for approval. If the petitioner chooses, they may remove the carriage house from landmark consideration prior to approval by the Village Council. Mr. Riemer seconded the Motion.

All in favor. The Motion passed unanimously.

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FILE 17-ADR-0007: A petition seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness to renovate a local Historic Landmark for the property commonly known as 5325 Fairmount Avenue, Downers Grove, IL (PIN 09-08-408-017). The property is located at the northeast corner of Summit Street and Fairmount Avenue. Laurence and Gloria Gassen, Owner. David and Amy Gassen, Petitioners.

Ms. Rebecca Leitschuh, Senior Planner for the Village stated that this is the first Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) since the Ordinance was revised. The property was recently landmarked and is located at the corner of Fairmount and Summit. She displayed photographs of the property south façade and western façade that contain features that may be removed. This was the first bungalow to come before the Board. It was landmarked under the criteria of 50 years of age or older, as well as for its architectural design. The home was built in 1926 and is on a corner lot with frontage on two sides.

Ms. Leitschuh explained that the petitioner wants to remove the window awnings on both the south and western façades and replace it with trim to match the rest of the home. They also intend to remove the medallions that underline the portico entrance off the western façade. The medallions are not original and helped provide privacy. The petitioners would like more light and therefore have decided on removing the medallions, which were placed on the home about 30 years ago. Ms. Leitschuh showed the architectural rendering for the proposed revisions to the home.

Ms. Leitschuh said the petitioners contacted the State Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation office to determine whether their plan would meet the standards of the historical significance of the structure. They were told that their plan was acceptable.

Ms. Leitschuh explained that the Village has three levels of Certificates of Appropriateness. One level is very basic and does not require anything other than a permit, if necessary. The second level refers to minor work on the structure, while the third level refers to major renovations being made to a landmarked structure. She noted that landmarked properties are special and create a lot of community awareness. When people see changes being made to a façade, the Village wants to assure that any changes meet the requirements established.

There are two sections of the Ordinance, which have to be met: Sec. 12.504 and Sec. 12.505. To landmark a property a homeowner must meet one of these requirements. For a Certificate of Appropriateness it is more of a consideration and provides the Board with greater flexibility. Ms. Leitschuh then reviewed the 10 items under Sec. 12.504 as shown in Staff's report dated October 18, 2017, pages 3-4. Items H and J do not apply to this property, and all other items A-G, and I have been met.

Regarding Sec. 12.504, Ms. Leitschuh reviewed the eight items as shown in Staff's report dated October 18, 2017, page 4, noting that the criteria for points B and G have been met, while the remaining six items are not applicable to this petition.

The Board discussed potential changes that could be made to a landmark home, but that should be brought before the Board for approval. Items such as awnings or shutters could present problems in the future. This is the first petition of its type before the Board and they have to establish regulations for items removed from or replaced on a structure. Ms. Leitschuh said if a petitioner appears to be working toward removing features that are not original, such as window trim, that might be handled internally in the future. It was felt appropriate to bring a petition of this nature before the Board.

Ch. Davenport said he thinks he sees something like this being handled internally, since they are removing something that is not historically significant to the building.

Ms. Chalberg said with this being the first review, they do need to be cautious. She approves of this specific request; however, there may be future cases where elements are added to a home that are not original to the home. Over the years with multiple changes the visual aspects of the home might become integral to the public perception of the home. So she thinks Staff should have the right to say something of that nature should be brought before the Board.

Ch. Davenport called for comments from the public.

Ms. Christine Martin said she is thrilled that they are saving this house, and has no objection to their request.

Ch. Davenport closed the public portion of the hearing.

Ms. Chalberg moved that the Board approve the petitioner's request to remove the awnings and decorative elements under the entryway. Mr. Lerner seconded the Motion. All in favor. The Motion carried unanimously.

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Ms. Chalberg referred to a recent visit she made to The Rookery in Chicago, which was remodeled by Frank Lloyd Wright. To put the building back in its original state would require removing some of the points added by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Ch. Davenport said his point is that when something is clear-cut like this evening's petition, Staff would have the authority to make the decision. The matter is to give Staff guidance with regard to COAs in the future. It was suggested by a Board member that this type of situation be clarified further in the Ordinance.

Mr. Lerner suggested that when a landmark petition comes before the Board, items that could be changed could be specified at that time. Ch. Davenport said that the awnings on the petition before the Board now were never listed at the time of landmarking. He noted that the process is a good one, but everything isn't as easily specified. He suggested that moving forward the Board can be notified by Staff ahead of time. Ms. Leitschuh responded that if it is something that can fit into one of the definitions she would agree. However, if it is not as clear-cut she would have to run it by Legal first.

Ms. Gassen said that her in-laws wanted to remove the awnings before they landmarked the property. She said it is all about original items, or items that have gained historical significance on their own. She noted that she was in communication with the State, and their staff recognized that the awnings were not original.

Ch. Davenport asked if anyone disagrees that the item brought forth tonight could have been approved by Staff. Mr. Lerner was not sure he agreed with that statement. It was noted that the Board is a recommending Board and the ultimate decision rests with the Village Council. Ms. Leitschuh said she would be comfortable with this particular petition because the State agrees with it. It was clarified that with COAs, the Board is the deciding body. Ms. Leitschuh said if it is something that requires a building permit, a petitioner could go through the building permit process in tandem with this process.

OLD BUSINESS

Historic Preservation Brochure #4 – Downtown Tour

Ms. Leitschuh said that copies are available of the Sears brochure. They are now in the last phase of finalizing Brochure #4. There is no formalized method of distribution at this time. Anyone whose home is featured will receive a copy. Almost all 500 copies of the Architectural Brochure have been distributed already. The Village would absorb reprinting costs. Brochures will be made available on line this winter.

Ms. Chalberg said that the Historical Society would make links available as well for the brochures.

Ms. Leitschuh commented that she wouldn't go through the entire draft before the Board, as it is over 88 pages long. She said if there are any comments to make them available to Staff in a Word format by Monday. Some of the photographs might not be included in the final publication depending upon the design layout. She said that Photoshopping could be done on the photos if needed.

Ms. Chalberg said she did not spend hours searching for an over-riding comment for the cover. She doesn't mind the source chosen, but thinks there should be something better than a quote from Ed McMahon. Ms. Leitschuh asked the Board's opinion about the quote. Ms. Chalberg said she didn't like thinking of the community as a suburb, rather than a village. No Board members were overly excited about using the McMahon quote. Ms. Leitschuh thanked the Historical Society again for all of the time they devoted to assisting with the data for the brochure. She is looking forward to the brochure.

Ch. Davenport asked if there is any specific guidance she needs from the Board other than choosing the photographs, and Ms. Leitschuh said there is no specific guidance other than the photos. The three photographs she included were of Main Street.

In response to a Board member, there is a potential that the brochure could become an app some day.

Mr. Lerner said he liked the idea that this Board would have a proactive role in trying to bring forth initiatives to promote historic preservation, and he would be supportive of that generally. They would have to discuss the idea of an incentive program among the Board members in the future. People who are landmarking today are doing it from a sense of pride. Aside from the two train stations, there are no commercial properties as yet that have come forward, and that might be something to consider. There are also other ways that the Board can be proactive, such as an awards program, sensitive remodeling, etc.

Ch. Davenport said he appreciated having the minutes from the 2015 meeting in the packet as well. Ms. Leitschuh went through a general history of what has been achieved by the Board over the past few years. Two goals determined were 1) to increase the number of properties or areas designated as historic landmarks or districts under the Village's Historic Preservation Ordinance, and 2) to decrease or avoid the loss of historically or architecturally significant buildings and places in the Village. Those goals began the process they now practice. Three strategies were 1) to amend the Ordinance, 2) come up with different public education awareness strategies, and 3) to come up with financial incentive strategies. The application has been simplified considerably since they began the landmarking process. Criteria for landmarking were also simplified. Ms. Leitschuh noted there is a website specifically dedicated to historic preservation. Events are posted on social media as well. Under financial incentives, everything is free. Homeowners are encouraged to bring their properties forward for consideration for landmarking. The fact that the Village is a CLG allows residents to participate in the property tax freeze program. She said that the Gassen family is the first family applying for the property tax freeze. She noted that a number of the 35 items shown in the Ad Hoc Report have been achieved. It has been a positive experience.

Board members thanked Ms. Leitschuh and Mr. Williams for their efforts to assist the Board in achieving its objectives.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Ms. Amy Gassen of 5320 Benton Avenue updated the Board on the American Four Square Initiative. She said that they would be conducting

another canvass to obtain email addresses and inform people of the interactive map sponsored by the Historical Society. She also summarized the property tax freeze program, saying they are going through the process right now with her in-laws' home. They have worked closely with the State office through the process. She also invited anyone interested to come see the home prior to the renovation work.

There being no further discussion, Ch. Davenport called for a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Acks moved, seconded by Mr. Riemer to adjourn the meeting. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Chairman Davenport adjourned the meeting at 8:51 PM.

/s/ Tonie Harrington