

**MINUTES OF A RESCHEDULED MEETING**

**URBANA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**DATE:** January 8, 2020

**APPROVED**

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** City Council Chambers, Urbana City Building, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

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**MEMBERS PRESENT** David Hays, Alice Novak, Gina Pagliuso, Renee Pollock, David Seyler, Kim Smith

**MEMBERS EXCUSED** Trent Shepard

**STAFF PRESENT** Kevin Garcia, Planner II; Marcus Ricci, Planner II

**OTHERS PRESENT** Andrew Fell, Stephanie Henry, Eric Jakobsson, Naomi Jakobsson, Bill Reimer, Susan Reimer, Henry Strehlow, Joe Williams, Phyllis Williams

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**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Chair Novak called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present. She welcomed Renee Pollock as the newest member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

**2. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

There were none.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the May 22, 2019 special meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission was presented for approval. Mr. Hays noted a correction on Page 4, last sentence should read as such, *“Mr. Hays felt it would be important not to delaminate the two lines but important enough to mark them so that bicyclists and pedestrians would know ~~understand~~ how to circulate there.”* Ms. Smith moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Pollock seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved as corrected by unanimous voice vote.

**4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

- Email from Judith Barracks regarding Case No. HP-2019-COA-02
- Property Listing for 6 Buena Vista Court submitted by Andrew Fell regarding Case No. HP-2019-COA-01

- Photos of the Interior of 2 Buena Vista Court submitted by Andrew Fell regarding Case No. HP-2019-COA-01

## 5. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

## 6. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

## 7. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

## 8. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

**HP-2019-COA-01 – A request by Andrew Fell for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows, repair exterior walls, replace the porch, add a deck and add a door overhang at 2 Buena Vista Court.**

Chair Novak opened the public hearing for Case No. HP-2019-COA-01. Marcus Ricci, Planner II, presented the staff report for the case. He noted that the applicant, Andrew Fell, was available to answer questions after the staff presentation. He described the repairs that would be allowed with approval of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness and the minor work repairs that would be allowed with administrative approval. Referring to Exhibit C, he showed photos of the current condition of the home. He reviewed the Site Plans, Exhibit B of the application and showed renderings of how the existing house would look after the improvements were completed. He summarized City staff's analysis of the requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness according to Section XII-6.C of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. He presented City staff's recommendation for approval with the following conditions:

1. *That construction be in general conformance with the attached Site Plan and Elevations, with the following exceptions:*
  - a. *That the original windows be repaired,*
  - b. *That the porch columns be repaired or replaced in kind and stuccoed;*
2. *That additional Certificates of Appropriateness be obtained prior to undertaking any minor or major works not contained in the attached Site Plan and Elevations; and*
3. *That any modifications needed to the Site Plan and Elevations regarding the major works approved in this Certificate of Appropriateness due to conditions discovered during construction activities may be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission Chair and the Zoning Administrator, prior to their commencement, and reflected by amending the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Chair Novak pointed out that the subject property is also on the National Register of Historic Properties. It was added as part of a historic district on June 15, 2000, under the name, West Elm Street Court. The National Register is a high threshold for integrity issues and importance in significance. The local historic district designation followed after.

She asked if the Historic Preservation Commission members had any questions for City staff.

Ms. Pagliuso noted a correction in that the application indicates the air conditioning unit would be located on the south; however, the Site Plan shows it to be on the north. Mr. Ricci said that is correct, and it was a typographical error on the application.

Chair Novak asked if the house was condemned as written on the application. Mr. Ricci said no, it is not condemned.

Ms. Pagliuso questioned whether the roof repair should be considered a major work. Mr. Ricci replied that because the applicant is proposing to change the existing Ethylene propylene diene monomer (EPDM) roof with the same type of roof, it was considered to be a minor work. Ms. Pagliuso asked about the replacement of the roof over the porch. Mr. Ricci said that would be considered a major work and is on the list of repairs that the Historic Preservation Commission would consider.

With there being no further questions for City staff, Chair Novak opened this item for public input.

Andrew Fell, applicant, approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak on behalf of his application. Mr. Fell began by stating that they have removed everything on the interior of the house. They removed the plaster on the walls, the ceiling, insulation, the electrical, the plumbing and the ductwork. He explained how the house was originally built and the major issues they have encountered since beginning renovations. He mentioned the listing price for 6 Buena Vista Court and stated that the house is a mirror image of the floorplan in 2 Buena Vista Court. This helped them to gauge what the investment could be in the subject property, and have it still be economically viable.

Mr. Fell talked about the replacement of the windows. His reasons for replacing the windows are 1) safety; 2) energy conservation; 3) practicality of living in the house. He discussed each of these in more detail and their options for replacing them (vinyl, fiberglass or clad wood). He pointed out the cost for replacing all of the windows in the house ranged from \$5,200 for vinyl windows up to \$10,000 for wood clad windows. The cost for repairing the original windows would be \$26,000 and would take up a quarter of the budget for renovations. In addition, they would be without windows for several months, which is not an option. Safety is his main concern, and he would not want someone to die in the house because they do not have proper egress windows.

Mr. Fell explained how the porch was originally constructed. He mentioned that the beam supporting the porch was completely rotted away and missing. The design for the proposed new porch would not be out of character because most of the porches in Buena Vista Court have been rebuilt because of their original construction. He is proposing to build the porch differently so that it would last longer.

Chair Novak asked if the header bricks and the trim were painted. Mr. Fell said yes.

Ms. Smith inquired about reroofing the house. Mr. Fell explained that they have not reroofed the house as of yet. The parapet is fairly tall with stucco on the back of it. There are many holes in the roof, so they planned to strip it down to the sheeting and replace the roof.

Ms. Pagliuso questioned if Mr. Fell had gotten any quotes for repairing the original windows other than from Restoration Works in Kankakee. Mr. Fell said no. Ms. Pagliuso stated that she had gotten a quote from the same company for windows in her home, and the quote was astronomical. She found someone else who repaired her windows for a reasonable price.

Ms. Pagliuso asked if a future tenant could hang rods and have draperies/curtains that hang down. This way they could move the draperies/curtains out of their way to open the windows. Mr. Fell stated that when the tenant would open the window all of the way, they would not be able to close the drapery/curtain over it because the window would be in the opening.

Ms. Pagliuso asked how many windows are in the house. Mr. Fell stated that there are 13 windows on the main floor and 5 windows in the basement. The quote of \$26,000 was for the 13 windows on the main floor.

Chair Novak inquired if it was possible for him to get windows with true divided lites. Mr. Fell responded that Pella probably makes them; however, he did not get a quote for them. He explained the way the wood clad windows are constructed to appear to have true divided lites.

Chair Novak asked how he decided on a deck rather than a concrete terrace. Mr. Fell replied that the west wall of the porch leans about three or four inches out of plumb, so it has to be demolished. They wanted a little more space. The reason for the height of the deck is to avoid the need for handrails. It is impractical to pour concrete for the height, so they chose to construct a deck.

Chair Novak asked if he planned to replace the original door with another wood door. Mr. Fell said that they intend to get a door that matches as closely to the original as they can for the front door and an insulated metal door with no windows for the back door.

Ms. Pagliuso wondered why they chose a standing-seam metal roof versus any other material. Mr. Fell stated that he believed it would look better. He wants to increase the slope of the roof a little to allow it to drain better and to allow them to reattach the porch to the house. Ms. Pagliuso commented that a standing-seam metal roof would not reflect the Spanish Revival style of the house.

Ms. Smith asked if the standing-seam roof would be turquoise. Mr. Fell said yes.

Chair Novak noted that the replacement materials for the posts on the porch appear narrower than the current rail wall. She inquired if it is possible to have the new beams to have the same width so that it maintains the current historic look. Mr. Fell stated that it could be pretty close to its current size.

Susan Reimer approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. She and her husband live in 3 Buena Vista Court. She stated that she is surprised that the bungalow is standing considering its current condition. About five years ago, she and her husband had thought about constructing a similar deck as to the one that Mr. Fell is proposing to build. The wooden posts are much more relevant to the Spanish Revival style. She pointed out that there are at least two other bungalows that have wood columns supporting porches.

Ms. Reimer mentioned that the bungalow across the courtyard is for sale for \$125,000 (6 Buena Vista Court) and has vinyl windows, which were installed prior to becoming part of a historic district, and yet the house was still considered historic enough to be included in the historic district. So, she did not see why Mr. Fell could not replace the original windows on the subject property with affordable vinyl windows.

While it would be nice to keep everything the way it was originally built, the cost is unreasonable. No one can afford to construct arched supports on porches and repair original windows.

Ms. Pagliuso asked Ms. Reimer how she felt about having the air conditioner unit in her sight line. Ms. Reimer stated that it was a shame that the previous owner did not have air conditioning. She did not feel that the air conditioner unit would ruin her view.

Henry Strehlow approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. He has lived at 8 Buena Vista Court for five years and watched 2 Buena Vista Court fall apart. He felt that any improvement Mr. Fell proposes would be better than its current condition. It would be hard pressed to find someone else willing to invest into the subject property as Mr. Fell has already invested. He reiterated what Ms. Reimer said stating that every single bungalow in Buena Vista Court has something that is not original. He would like to refurbish his home; however, if there are too many restrictions, it makes him want to sell and leave instead. He stated that he supports Mr. Fell's proposed improvements.

Phyllis Winters-Williams approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in opposition of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. She stated that prior to their house becoming part of a historic district, she and her husband restored their windows, so it is possible for Mr. Fell to repair the windows of the subject property. If parts or pieces are missing, there are craftsmen around that can make them.

The rendering Mr. Fell proposes is cute but it is more of a Spanish style in California than in Illinois. Ms. Winters-Williams stated that any building would fall apart if you don't keep a roof on it. Her porch was not built right, but she paid to have someone reconstruct it the way it should have been built. She did not believe a wood deck is the answer. She expressed concern with the proposed overhangs. There are tax incentives that are available to a property owner in a historic landmark or district. Chair Novak added that there is the Illinois Property Tax Assessment Freeze if a property owner stays in their home long enough to benefit from it; however, it must be owner-occupied.

With no further input from the audience, Chair Novak closed the public input portion and opened it for discussion and/or motion(s) by the Commission.

Chair Novak began by stating that the elements Mr. Fell proposes for the porch would create a false sense of time, which goes against the Secretary of Interior's standards. It becomes a decoration that alters and diminishes the integrity of a Central Illinois Spanish Colonial bungalow. This includes the standing-seam metal roof.

Ms. Smith understood Chair Novak's point. However, without an overhang and with the way the roof is detailed, water runs off down the face of the columns and the face of the wall of the porch. A way to alleviate this would be to put an overhang on it, but this starts to diminish the look of the

porch. While she has a hard time substituting the materials, she felt the modification to the porch would not alter the space or the relationships of the space with the character of the property. She agreed that an overhang would be beneficial to the property. She commended Mr. Fell for purchasing the property and making a commitment to renovate it, because it is in really bad shape. She pointed out that the overhang over the back door could be removed in the future without disrupting the historic quality of the building.

Chair Novak added that the Historic Preservation Commission had previously expressed concern about this property and other bungalows in Buena Vista Court. The members are all aware of the current condition of the subject property.

Ms. Smith stated that while the windows were in the hallway prior to the start of the meeting, she stuck her fingernail in the top of the original window Mr. Fell had brought in, and her fingernail sunk in. When someone restores original windows, do they replace the wood rails? Ms. Pagliuso explained that you can apply hardener and a coat of epoxy.

Mr. Hays wondered about a middle ground regarding the porch. He understood that a 10-inch column could be fabricated. Is there a modification at the roofline that would be closer to the original look but would shed water runoff? Restoring the original porch with the same bad design that does not withstand weather well versus constructing a porch that is significantly different but withstands weather better: it seems that there would be a middle ground that would be cost effective and would also meet the standard mentioned by Ms. Novak.

In terms of the windows, Mr. Hays wondered if there were requirements in the Building Code that might present problems for the original windows to be used. The City of Urbana has some stringent requirements for rental properties. Kevin Garcia, Planner II, responded that the City would not require new windows to provide egress; however, he could check with the Building Safety Division staff to find out what requirements are for rental properties. Mr. Hays and Ms. Pollock expressed interest in finding out more. Mr. Fell approached the Historic Preservation Commission and stated that the original windows do not meet City code; however, he was not sure how being part of a historic district measured into requiring the windows to comply with City code. As a property owner planning to rent the house out, he does not feel comfortable risking his tenants' lives with windows that open into the house and storm windows that are locked in place.

There was discussion about how to proceed with the case. Mr. Garcia recommended that the Commission proceed as normal, reviewing the case to determine if it meets the criteria required for a Certificate of Appropriateness. They can craft a condition about the windows meeting Building Code if the Commission determines that the applicant must reuse the existing windows. Chair Novak suggested that the applicant get quotes from other companies in restoring the original windows. He may find a company that would restore them more economically than the company in Kankakee. Ms. Pagliuso added that applying for a Certificate of Economic Hardship would be the next step and should not play into their decision for the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Pagliuso stated that her main concern is with the roof on the porch, the windows, and the porch. The Commission called Mr. Fell up to speak about other materials that could be used for the roof on the porch. Mr. Fell stated that he was not able to get a warranty on shingle roofing, so the practical options are to install an extremely durable synthetic rubber (EPDM) roof or a standing-seam metal roof.

Chair Novak stated that she was concerned with the exposed rafter tails and the capitals at the top of the piers on the proposed porch. They are not part of the original element and make a different design statement than the original porches on the other bungalows. She also is concerned with the exposed rafter tails on the proposed rear door overhang. Part of what was significant in this being a National Register district was the way the design was expressed by the builder and how non-descript the porches are. Chair Novak acknowledged that there seemed to be no alternative to the metal roof, so she was willing to accept it. She mentioned that she was fine with the removal of the west wall on the porch to allow access to the proposed wood deck because the wall is not that visible from the front.

Mr. Hays stated that he is sensitive to energy efficiency and that there is nothing in the Commission's design guidelines to allow the Commission to make decisions based on it. Chair Novak noted that historic windows that are properly glazed and caulked with storm windows have the same R factor as replacement windows.

Chair Novak moved that the Historic Preservation Commission approve Case No. HP-2019-COA-01 with the following restrictions:

1. Eliminate the rafter tails and decorative column capitals on the porch;
2. The porch posts shall be larger to be compatible with the thickness of the porch wall;
3. The original windows must be repaired unless required to be replaced by the Building Safety Code.

Eric Jakobsson approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak. He stated the City's existing ordinances and codes may never have anticipated a conflict between a historic preservation decision and a safety need in rental properties. So, if there is a gap, then it is something that the City Attorney could present a resolution to the City Council.

There was discussion amongst the Commission and the applicant about the design of the porch. Mr. Fell stated that he would replace the porch in kind but he would need to have a larger overhang to allow for water runoff. Mr. Garcia recommended the following amendment to the condition on the porch, "*The porch columns be repaired or replaced in kind. The porch roof be replaced similar to the original but allowing for a greater roof overhang and standing-seam metal roofing.*"

There was further discussion about the windows. Mr. Garcia recommended the following amendment to the condition on the windows, "*The original windows, except the kitchen window, be repaired except those windows that may need to be replaced to meet Building Safety Code for rental properties. Acceptable replacements may be all wood or metal clad wood to match the existing 9 Lite windows.*"

Chair Novak withdrew her original motion. She moved that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness in Case No. HP-2019-COA-05 with the following conditions:

1. *That construction be in general conformance with the attached Site Plan and Elevations, with the following exceptions:*
  - a. *The original windows, except the kitchen window, be repaired except those windows that may need to be replaced to meet Building Safety Code for rental properties.*

- Acceptable replacements may be all wood or metal clad wood to match the existing 9 Lite windows,*
- b. The porch columns be repaired or replaced in kind. The porch roof be replaced similar to the original but allowing for a greater roof overhang and standing-seam metal roofing;*
- 2. That additional Certificates of Appropriateness be obtained prior to undertaking any minor or major works not contained in the attached Site Plan and Elevations; and*
  - 3. That any modifications needed to the Site Plan and Elevations regarding the major works approved in this Certificate of Appropriateness due to conditions discovered during construction activities may be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission Chair and the Zoning Administrator, prior to their commencement, and reflected by amending the Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Ms. Pagliuso seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Seyler	-	Yes	Ms. Smith	-	Yes
Mr. Hays	-	Yes	Ms. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Novak	-	Yes	Ms. Pagliuso	-	Yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**HP-2019-COA-02 – A request by Eric and Naomi Jakobsson, Trustees of The Jakobsson Family Trust, for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace an existing deck with an enclosed sunroom and a larger deck at 803 West Main Street.**

Chair Novak opened the public hearing for Case No. HP-2019-COA-02. Marcus Ricci, Planner II, presented the staff report for the case. He noted the purpose for the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. He gave a brief history and showed photos (Exhibit C) of the proposed site. Referring to the Site Plan and renderings, he showed where the existing deck is located and what it would look like once the sunroom was constructed and the deck was expanded. He presented the staff recommendation for approval with the following conditions:

- 1. That construction be in general conformance with the Site Plan and Elevations;*
- 2. That additional Certificate of Appropriateness be obtained prior to:*
  - a. Undertaking any minor or major works not contained in the Site Plan and Elevations;*
  - b. Making substantial changes to minor or major works approved by this Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Mr. Ricci noted that the applicant and their architect are available to answer questions.

Chair Novak asked if the Historic Preservation Commission members had any questions for City staff. There were none. Chair Novak opened the hearing for public input. She invited the applicants to approach the Commission to speak.

Eric and Naomi Jakobsson approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak. Mr. Jakobsson stated that they had purchased the property from the family who built the existing home. He talked about the mature trees that provide a wooded character to the back yard. Projecting the house into this area seemed like a natural thing to do.



Ms. Pagliuso stated that from the Site Photos, it appears that the pitch of the roof over the back door is higher than the window on the second floor. The rendering shows that this roofline would be lower. Mr. Jakobsson replied that they believe it will be okay as they would now be able to look out the window.

Phyllis Winters-Williams approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. She felt that the Commission should approve the request as submitted because the back yard is very open and there would still be a generous amount of setback from the neighbors and it is in a wooded area.

Stephanie Henry, of Andrew Fell Architecture and Design, approached the Historic Preservation Commission to speak in favor of the proposed Certificate of Appropriateness. She responded to Ms. Pagliuso's comment about the window by clarifying that the angle of the photo makes it appear the hip of the roof covers the window on the second floor. The roof actually would come below the window where the cricket attaches.

Chair Novak closed the public input portion of the hearing. She, then, opened the hearing for discussion and/or motion(s) by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Hays moved that the Historic Preservation Commission approve the Certificate of Appropriateness in Case No. HP-2019-COA-02 with the following conditions:

1. *That construction be in general conformance with the Site Plan and Elevations;*
2. *That additional Certificate of Appropriateness be obtained prior to:*
  - a. *Undertaking any minor or major works not contained in the Site Plan and Elevations;*
  - b. *Making substantial changes to minor or major works approved by this Certificate of Appropriateness.*

Ms. Smith seconded the motion.

Ms. Pagliuso stated that the proposed plans look nice.

Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Mr. Hays	-	Yes	Ms. Pollock	-	Yes
Ms. Novak	-	Yes	Ms. Pagliuso	-	Yes
Mr. Seyler	-	Yes	Ms. Smith	-	Yes

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

**10. MONITORING OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

- Freeman House and Sutton House – Ms. Pagliuso stated that it appears pressure-treated wood hand railings were added to each house on the west sides. Mr. Garcia said that Planning staff would look into this.
- ZTA House – Ms. Smith inquired about the signs that were posted. Mr. Garcia said that Planning staff would look into this.
- Manager’s House at the Dairy Farm – Chair Novak mentioned that the grass is overgrown. Ms. Pagliuso added that there is a window missing. Chair Novak said she would write a letter to the University of Illinois to call attention to it.

**11. STAFF REPORT**

Mr. Ricci reported on the following:

- New Certified Local Government (CLG) Coordinator at Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Jeff Pressley. The Commission has until June 30, 2020 to meet the required number of meetings, so the Historic Preservation Commission will hold meetings to plan activities for Historic Preservation Month.

**12. STUDY SESSION**

There was none.

**13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Novak announced that the Downtown Historic District listed with the National Register on August 30, 2019.

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Pagliuso moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 p.m. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote.

Submitted,

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Marcus Ricci, AICP  
Historic Preservation Commission Recording Secretary