

MINUTES

**TOWN OF NORMAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
UPTOWN STATION, 3rd FLOOR (Union Pacific Room)
11 UPTOWN CIRCLE
NORMAL, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR MEETING
May 13, 2014
12:30 p.m.**

Members Present

Nancy Armstrong, Kathy Burgess, Laurie Christensen, and Anne Matter

Members Absent

Kristen Allen, Bob Ward, and Bruce Warloe

Others Present

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Nathan Ambuehl, 301 W. Virginia; Jim Kalmbach, 714 Normal

Call to Order

Ms. Matter called the meeting to order at 12:35 p.m. noting that there was a quorum.

Minutes

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2014 meeting. Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

CA-14-05-12: Fence Addition, 301 W. Virginia

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve the fence as proposed in the Certificate of Appropriateness, which included the addition of a 4-foot scalloped wooden privacy fence to match the existing sections of privacy fence. Ms. Christensen seconded. Discussion followed.

Mr. Ambuehl summarized the project, noting that he and his wife will close on the property on June 2. The original concept was to maintain the existing sections of 6-foot, scalloped privacy fence along the property's east edge and to add a matching 4-foot fence up to and then connected to the front edge of the house, as shown on the illustration. This concept also included the addition of a 4-foot wood fence to connect the west edge of the house to the neighbor's fence. This section of fence would match the neighbor's design, which is shown in the photographs attached to the application.

Mr. Ambuehl then said that he and his wife had considered new options since submitting the Certificate of Appropriateness, both of which would involve removing all existing fence and building all new. The first option would be a 4-foot wood fence to match the style of the neighbor's

fence to the west. The second option would be a 4-foot wood fence in an arts & crafts style shown on a photograph brought to the meeting.

Mr. Ambuehl asked if the commission could approve more than one potential design in order to preserve some flexibility, as he is not sure of the cost of each type of fence. The commissioners said yes, that is possible.

Ms. Burgess asked for clarification that all options are wood. Mr. Ambuehl said yes.

Ms. Burgess asked Ms. Davison to clarify any code issues with fence heights. Ms. Davison said 6 feet is the maximum behind the face of the house, and 4 feet is the maximum in front of the house.

Ms. Burgess asked if the Ambuehls were abandoning the original proposal in favor of one of the two new options. Mr. Ambuehl said yes.

Ms. Armstrong amended her motion to approve either of the proposed fences. Ms. Christensen seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Ambuehl then asked about the following items:

1. The existing detached garage facing the alley has two garage doors rather than one wide door. There is very little space to maneuver between the alley and the garage given the structure's orientation and width of the alley. He asked if the commission would likely approve a change from the two doors to one door, as that would make maneuvering easier. The doors are currently steel.

Ms. Matter said she would not be opposed. The commissioners noted that the garage sits back from the street and the doors are less visible than street-facing doors, although Ms. Armstrong said the view of the doors from Virginia is still pretty good given the presence of the alley.

Ms. Burgess said the commission would be interested in reviewing the style of the new door, but given the existing doors are steel, the commission would permit a new steel door. Vinyl would not be permitted.

2. Mr. Ambuehl asked if the commission needs to approve a small arbor that he plans to install in the rear yard. The commissioners said no, as the structure is not permanent and is more like a part of the landscaping. No Certificate of Appropriateness would be required.
3. Mr. Ambuehl said there is currently a concrete pad just south of the existing garage in the rear yard. He asked if the approved fence could have a gate at that location to provide access to that pad. It could require the removal or relocation of a tree. The commissioners said the gate would be fine, and they do not control trees. They recommended he make sure the tree is not on Town property.

BG-13-10-06: Front Porch Restoration, 714 Normal Ave.

Owner Jim Kalmbach provided a summary of his previously approved project to re-open his front porch and install a new wood door. The commission awarded Mr. Kalmbach a Bone Grant of \$856 to support the project in 2013. In the midst of the work, the contractor discovered more work that needed to be done. As a result, the cost of the project increased by approximately \$1,000. Thus, Mr. Kalmbach requested that his Bone Grant be re-approved in the amount of \$1,375, which is half of the new total amount of \$2,751.

Mr. Kalmbach also noted that he was grateful that the commission required him to install a new, architecturally appropriate wood door, as it looks fantastic.

The commissioners noted that the project is a great improvement to the house. Ms. Matter said it is just the kind of project the Bone Grant is intended to support.

Ms. Burgess moved to approve an increase in the Bone Grant to \$1,375. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

Other Business

1. Ms. Burgess mentioned that she has seen more examples of standing seam metal roofs on Glenn. (The issue of metal roofs had been discussed at a previous meeting.) Ms. Davison mentioned that the metal shingle roof on the detached garage at Washington and Vale looks nice but is not exactly the same as the adjacent tile roof, as had been stated by a property owner at a previous meeting. The issue is the geometry and depth of the metal “shingles,” which are too shallow to cast the same amount of shadow as the “real” tiles on the house. Ms. Burgess said that is a common issue with modern replacements for historic materials, particularly with window mullions placed between the glass. The flat appearance of such mullions has an inappropriate appearance on a historic house.
2. Ms. Davison reminded the commissioners that they can attend the McLean County Museum of History’s gala in June courtesy of the Town.
3. Ms. Davison noted that the owner of 622 Normal had installed his solid wood garage door and will be requesting a grant without the cost of the garage door opener or painting included in the price. This had been approved at the April meeting.
4. Ms. Davison intends to follow up with Stan Apperson about his house at 602 N. School. He has yet to return to the commission with an appropriate wood door to replace the one installed by the previous owner without commission permission.

5. Ms. Davison also noted that the owners of 305 W. Virginia will likely come to the June meeting to present options to replace the modern windows that they had previously installed without commission permission. They may also request a grant.

6. Ms. Burgess said she heard that the Town is going to tear down the Administration building at One Normal Plaza, which is currently owned by Nic Africano. Ms. Davison said she is not aware of demolition being imminent but that it is being discussed. She further explained that the Town has made an effort to find someone to restore/renovation the building and the Town established a TIF district in order to provide financial incentives, but no one has come forward. The building has many challenges, including the presence of asbestos and the location of chases within most of the walls, which would make the removal of walls very costly. The rooms in the building are quite small right now, and any renovation would likely require wall removal. Ms. Burgess said she does not believe that people know the building is for sale or otherwise available. Ms. Davison said she will follow up with Town Administration.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mercy Davison
Town Planner