

MINUTES
TOWN OF NORMAL
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Uptown Station, 3rd Floor (Illinois Terminal Room)
Normal, IL

July 13, 2021

12:30 p.m.

Members Present

Nancy Armstrong, Kathy Burgess, Todd Bugg, Anne Matter, Chris Niebur

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Jason Querciagrossa, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Anne and Curt Broughton, 626 Normal Ave.; Isaac Gaff, 513 N. School

Call to Order

Ms. Matter called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. noting that there was a quorum of the commission present.

Minutes

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021, regular meeting. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

CA-21-07-11: Storm Door Replacement, 21 Broadway Place

Ms. Davison summarized the applicant's proposal to replace the existing non-historic, metal storm door with a new storm door. The proposed new door would be metal as well. The applicant provided three door styles. The commission decided the door with the most class (model 397) was the most unobtrusive. The applicant had noted in the application that if model 397 were selected, the applicant would repaint the existing steps, which are visible right inside the glass door.

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the application for the storm door replacement at 21 Broadway Place. Mr. Niebur seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

CA-21-07-12: Front Porch Addition Replacement, 626 Normal Ave.

Ms. Davison explained that the applicants built the current wood porch onto the south side of the original porch prior to the historic district designation. The porch is more of a deck style with treated lumber, widely

spaced spindles, and no distinguishing features on the corner posts or railing. The applicants would like to replace it with a new wood structure (unpainted) designed to be a bit more in keeping with a historic style. To that end, the new design would have closer spindle spacing, more prominent posts at the corners and at the bottom of the steps, and nosing on the steps. The skirting around the base of the porch and the sides of the steps would match the current skirting.

The commission asked for clarification on the spindles, noting that they can't be affixed to the outside of the railings as would be the case on a modern deck. The applicants said the spindles would have a historic style and would be placed in the center of the top and bottom rail with a second vertical piece of wood at the top of the spindles under the top rail, as shown on the illustration.

The commissioners agreed that the applicants are entitled to replace the existing porch like-with-like, and that the chosen design is an improvement over what they are entitled to do.

Mr. Bugg moved to approve the porch replacement as proposed. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Other Business

Ms. Davison explained that Isaac Gaff was in attendance due to an emergency repair situation at his house at 513 N. School. Late the prior week, Mr. Gaff noticed that one of the main columns on his front porch was buckling and in danger of collapse. He stabilized it with a house jack, and he approached Town staff for direction. Ms. Davison explained that emergency situations can proceed through an expedited review process with chair approval rather than the approval of the entire commission. However, as the commission was meeting shortly after the emergency happened, they could generally weigh in with opinions.

Mr. Gaff further explained the project. The porch itself has been radically remodeled over the years and has no original historic features remaining. When he investigated the buckling column, he realized that neither of the columns have a structural feature – they are hollow. He also found significant structural problems around the foundation of the porch. Together, these factors require the replacement of everything below the porch roof.

The proposed replacement will involve the following key design features:

1. The existing tapered columns and masonry support columns will be replaced with square columns with no masonry.
2. The entire porch will be wood and painted.
3. The steps will have nosing of at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.
4. The railing will be a simple design but will be historically appropriate, with spindles not affixed to the exterior of the rails and the vertical piece at the top of the spindles directly under the top rail. Ms. Davison confirmed that the rail height can be appropriate for the height of the windowsills. The rail height does not have to meet code minimums on historic homes based on a prior decision by the Town's Building Board of Appeals.

5. The skirting will go around the entire base of the porch and adjacent to the steps.
6. Although not shown on the illustration, there will be handrails down both sides of the steps.

Following discussion with the commission, Ms. Matter signed off on the expedited review form. In general, the project is a like-for-like with the exception of a new column design, which is appropriate for the style of the home.

The commission also discussed the need for 2 additional commission members.

The commission also suggested that the new Associate Planner send out HPC introductory letters to new property owners as had been done by the previous Associate Planner.

Adjournment

Mr. Bugg moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:15 p.m. Ms. Burgess seconded. The commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mercy Davison". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mercy Davison
Town Planner