

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

**November 9, 2021**

**12:30 p.m.**

**Members Present**

Anne Matter, Kathy Burgess, Chris Niebur, Larry Schumacher

**Members Absent**

Todd Bugg, Nancy Armstrong

**Others Present**

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Caitlin Kelly, Associate Planner; Jason Querciagrossa, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Mike Dougherty, 712 N. School Street

**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. She introduced Caitlin Kelly and Larry Schumacher, new to the Commission, along with the other Commissioners.

**Minutes**

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2021, regular meeting. Mr. Schumacher seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

**CA-21-11-20: Bay Roof and Portico Roof Replacement, 712 N. School**

The applicant, Mike Dougherty, detailed the estimate and scope of work he had received from Messing Roofing & Construction. The contractor proposed to replace the roofing of the bay roofs and portico with copper sheeting, the primary change from the existing roofs being that the sheeting would extend to the molding of each roof. Chairperson Matter and Ms. Burgess spoke approvingly of the proposed scope of work. Mr. Dougherty mentioned that he had also found a carpenter to repair the wooden underneath the roofs.

Mr. Dougherty inquired about the possibility of receiving Bone Grant funding for the project retroactively, since funding is not available through this fiscal year. Staff and the Commission members agreed to look into whether this would be legally feasible and whether this would impact any cases that had been approved since the grant program's funding ended.

Staff emphasized that the only possible grant award in the current circumstance would be if a Bone Grant application were submitted, placed on an agenda, and voted upon by the commission with some indication that funds would be disbursed if and when the Town Council re-funded the Bone Grant program. This would be unprecedented. In no case could grant funds be awarded retroactively without the commission having voted to approve a Bone Grant. The earliest such a vote could happen would be the December meeting of the HPC.

Mr. Dougherty stated that he would proceed with the project regardless of grant funding and that time is of the essence given how difficult it has been to find contractors willing to do this work. However, he does hope grant funds will be available.

Mr. Niebur moved to approve the application for the roof replacements as proposed. Ms. Burgess seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

#### **CA-21-11-21: Masonry Repair/Replacement, 1301 S. Fell**

Ms. Matter noted that it is often the case that flatwork is not subject to HPC review; however, in this case the brick flooring is an integral part of the breezeway structure between the house and garage.

Ms. Kelly explained that the current breezeway flooring between the house and garage is cracking and heaving, leaving the surface somewhat uneven. As part of its maintenance agreement with the property owner, the Town's Facilities Department started to repair the flooring. The intent was to remove and relay the existing brick. However, as the brick pavers were removed, a high percentage were damaged to the extent that they could not be re-used. Facilities then halted the project to seek alternatives through the HPC.

As a stop-gap measure, Town staff asked the masonry contractor to fabricate concrete bricks to match the shape and size of the existing pavers. (The contractor was not able to find clay pavers to match the color and dimensions.) These new bricks were stained in an attempt to match the current paver brick color. As shown in the photographs, these new bricks are much redder than the existing bricks and do not blend in particularly well. The Town used these to replace all damaged pavers on the west end of the breezeway – this measure was taken to make the surface usable throughout the winter and is not intended to be the final solution unless approved by the HPC.

The breezeway flooring currently sits on a concrete base a couple of inches below grade. The current pavers are traditional bricks but are much shallower than the depth of street paver bricks.

Town staff then discussed options, noting that a decision is not required right now because the project will not proceed until spring.

Option 1. Replacing pavers with stained concrete bricks as needed with mortar between. The commissioners were not in favor of using concrete bricks, as the material is not historically appropriate. Mr. Schumacher noted that such concrete pavers may also not have a long life given the use of salt, etc. Ms. Matter asked

that Town staff further investigate the potential to use new clay paver bricks. If they can't find such bricks that match existing, perhaps the Town could use all new clay pavers.

Option 2. Relay the floor with new pavers and without mortar, as has been done on the path leading to the structure's east-facing entrance. The commissioners agreed that this strategy is not appropriate for this location given its adjacency to the mortared brick on the columns, garage, and house. Ms. Burgess also noted that the un-mortared brick on the front side of the house is too far away to justify that strategy in this location. She also noted the wide variety of hard surfaces at the property – asphalt and concrete on the driveway; concrete, flagstone, and un-mortared brick on the sidewalks; and red tile on the porch. Many of these locations are not original to the property.

Option 3. Remove the masonry and pour a concrete path in its place. Ms. Matter stated her general opposition to concrete, although if it were to be pursued, it would need to be more historic in appearance. Thus, rather than using new, highly reflective concrete, Facilities would need to use concrete with exposed aggregate, as the Town does for new sidewalks in the historic districts. Ms. Burgess stated that it may be appropriate to edge the new concrete with paver bricks.

Option 4. Install stamped and stained concrete to mimic the appearance of brick.

Ms. Kelly stated staff's general opposition to the last option, as it would present the greatest disruption to the historic character of the breezeway. The commissioners agreed.

The commission also raised a fifth possibility of removing all current pavers and the concrete base and re-laying the walkway with street pavers (which the Town has stockpiled at the Public Works yard).

Because none of the four options presented in the report were deemed appropriate, Ms. Burgess motioned to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as requested. Mr. Niebur seconded. The motion failed 0-4.

The commission looks forward to talking to Facilities staff further about the options.

### **Election of Vice Chairperson**

Chairperson Matter nominated Ms. Burgess as Vice Chairperson. Mr. Niebur seconded. All voted in favor.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Burgess requested that staff resume sending out welcome packets to people who've recently purchased property in Town historic districts. Ms. Kelly stated that she has sent some out but has had difficulty keeping track of recently sold properties. A discussion of how best to keep track of recently sold properties followed.

Ms. Matter suggested that Ms. Kelly reach out to the major realtors in town.

**Adjournment**

Ms. Burgess moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:18 p.m. Mr. Schumacher seconded. The commission voted 4-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Caitlin Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caitlin Kelly  
Associate Town Planner