

MINUTES

**TOWN OF NORMAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
INSPECTIONS CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL
100 EAST PHOENIX AVENUE
NORMAL, ILLINOIS**

**REGULAR MEETING
September 11, 2012
12:30 p.m.**

Members Present

Kristen Allen, Nancy Armstrong, Kathy Burgess, Anne Matter, and Bruce Warloe

Members Absent

Matt Felumlee and Bob Ward

Others Present

Mercy Davison, Town Planner; Amy Endicott (716 Normal), Amanda and Doug Black (303 Gregory), Pamela and Matthew Etcheson (4 Clinton Place)

Call to Order

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

Minutes

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve the July 10, 2012 regular meeting minutes as submitted. Ms. Allen seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Matter asked that the first item on the agenda, which pertained to her property at 5 Broadway Place, be moved to the end.

CA-12-09-14: Porch Restoration, 716 Normal Avenue

Amy Endicott, owner of 716 Normal Avenue, summarized her proposal to reconstruct her front porch. The current porch is a concrete pad covered in non-historic tile. The tile is popping off, and the concrete is cracking to the extent that it cannot be fixed. Ms. Endicott proposes to have the concrete removed and re-poured in the same location. She presented two options. One option is to re-build it as-is, and one option is to add a seating wall across the front of the space as shown in the drawings. In the latter case, the seating wall would leave an opening on the west side to provide access to the front door and an opening on the south side to provide access from the driveway.

Ms. Endicott also proposed two designs for the seating wall. The first option is to have the wall built flush with the existing stucco column by the front door. The second option is to bring the wall out to where the existing steps currently end. (Thus, the porch would occupy the same footprint.) In either

case, the floor of the porch would be even inside the wall. The only steps will be at the access points onto the porch.

The seating wall would be very simple in design to match the straight lines of the home. The wall will have no cap. It will be stucco to match the house.

Ms. Burgess noted that the commission can't know for sure what the original porch looked like, but that the proposed seating wall would give it a more porch-like appearance.

Ms. Matter asked if the current concrete could be repaired. Ms. Endicott said no. It is in very bad condition.

Ms. Matter stated that the porch clearly needs to be repaired.

Ms. Armstrong asked if Ms. Endicott would add tile to the whole concrete surface. Ms. Endicott said that the harsh winters in central Illinois make it inevitable that tile on the walking surface of the patio would pop off after a few years. (Spanish-style homes are typically in warmer climates where this is not an issue.) Thus, she proposes to put tile only on the face of the steps. She may paint the concrete walking surface.

Mr. Warloe stated that the existing tile was likely installed to cover up the cracked concrete. He recommended that Ms. Endicott coordinate the height of the steps with the tile that she wants to use (within the code-permitted step heights). He also pointed out the need to add a few drainage holes so that water can run off the patio toward the yard.

Mr. Warloe asked if the built-in seat would be all concrete. Ms. Endicott said it would either be solid concrete or concrete block covered with stucco. Whichever it is, it will match the stucco wall. Mr. Warloe said that amount of weight may require additional footing strength and to check with the inspector.

Ms. Burgess asked what will be located on the outside of the new wall, facing the street. Ms. Endicott said it will be landscaped.

Ms. Armstrong moved to approve the replacement of the patio with new concrete to occupy the same footprint as the existing patio, the construction of a wall with stucco to match the house, tile on the face of the steps (and on the walking surface if desired). The wall will have drainage holes. Ms. Burgess seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

BG-12-09-03: Porch Restoration, 716 Normal Avenue

Ms. Matter stated that she supports the Bone Grant for the replacement of the patio because that is restoration; however, she does not support grant funds for the wall, as it is not an original element.

Ms. Endicott showed the two estimates. The estimate from Conklo Concrete was for \$5,987.00, of which \$5,436.00 pertains to the replacement of the original patio. The estimate from C&G Landscaping was for \$10,320.00, which included pavers.

Ms. Allen moved to approve the grant in the amount of \$2,718, which is half of the lower estimate only as it pertains to restoring the original patio floor. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

CA-12-09-15: Slate Roof Replacement, 303 Gregory

The slate roof at 303 Gregory is leaking in multiple areas. The Neo-Tudor home has a very steep roof. The owners have inquired into the cost of repair, and one roof contractor said it would cost \$5,000 to stop the leaks. The contractor also said this repair would likely only be very temporary, as it is likely that the 80+-year-old roof needs overall rehabilitation (i.e. replacement of the underlayment, etc.). A more extensive repair would cost significantly more than a replacement of the roof with asphalt shingles.

The owners stated that they cannot afford to restore the roof. The leaks have been an issue for several years, but they want to fix the roof as soon as possible because some of the damage is in the bedrooms.

Ms. Allen moved to approve the roof replacement in order to start the discussion. Ms. Armstrong seconded.

Ms. Matter noted that it is important to get a contractor who's familiar with slate roof repair to assess how much repair is required. The owner said she had gotten estimates from two local roofers who claimed to have slate roof experience, and she has also contacted Renaissance in Rockford. (Renaissance has done a lot of slate roof repair in Normal.)

Ms. Matter urged the owners to get a Renaissance representative to look at the roof.

Ms. Armstrong suggested that the roof project could be done in phases in order to maximize Bone Grant support.

The owner said one contractor estimated restoration of the existing slates to be \$80,000 - \$100,000, whereas, installing a new slate roof would cost \$25,000-\$35,000. Ms. Davison noted that the estimated price should include whether or not the contractor plans to re-sell the slates salvaged from the project.

Ms. Burgess urged the owners to check with local slate roof expert Gary Calhoun. The owner has called him but has gotten no return call. Mr. Ward noted that Gary could be significantly cheaper than Renaissance.

Ms. Matter said only one slate roof has been removed since the establishment of the historic districts, and that was at least 15 years ago. This was done through the Economic Hardship process, which Ms. Davison explained.

Ms. Burgess moved to carry the item over to the October meeting. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

CA-12-09-13: Porch Column Replacement, 5 Broadway Place

The project pertains to Anne Matter's home at 5 Broadway Place. Ms. Matter recused herself from the discussion and vote.

Ms. Davison summarized the request. Several of the caps and bases of the porch columns are rotting, and restoration expert Ken Lewis proposes to replace all of the rotted bases with Azec, a synthetic material previously approved for the porch. (This material can be custom made and painted.)

Ms. Burgess moved to approve the project. Ms. Armstrong seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

Other Business

Pamela Etcheson introduced herself as the new owner of 4 Clinton Place. She and her husband Matt have many plans to restore the home both inside and out. She wanted to run some preliminary ideas by the commission to get feedback prior to digging into each project.

First, she said all of the basement windows are covered with plywood painted white. She hopes to remove the plywood and add bars for security over the original windows (which are still in place behind the plywood). The bars would have a Craftsman appearance. Ms. Matter said she has installed such bars over her basement windows. Commission approval will be required.

Second, she hopes to add a retaining wall to the street side of the property. This will require commission approval.

Third, she hopes to replace the asphalt shingle roof with slate.

Fourth, she hopes to remove/relocate the original, one-car garage. The garage is leaning. Ms. Etcheson and her husband would like to disassemble the garage and use the bricks in the construction of a new, 2-car garage on the north side of the large oak tree. This would give them more room for their three vehicles, and it would open up the sunnier, south side of the backyard for gardening. They would protect the oak tree throughout construction.

The commissioners expressed serious concern about the proposal, noting that the garage is very visible from the cross street and architecturally distinctive. They were also skeptical that a 2-car garage could fit onto the lot with the required setbacks. Ms. Etcheson and her husband will be back with formal proposals in the coming months.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mercy Davison
Town Planner