

**VILLAGE OF LAKE BLUFF
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 11, 2015**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

A Regular Meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) of the Village of Lake Bluff was called to order on November 11, 2015 at 7:02 p.m. in the Village Hall Board Room.

The following members were present:

Present: Mary Francoeur
 Robert Hunter
 Janie Jerch
 Randolph Liebelt
 Cheri Richardson
 Janet Nelson, Chair

Absent: Paul Bergmann

Also Present: Brandon Stanick, Asst. to the Village Administrator (A to VA)

2. Consideration of the Minutes from the October 14, 2015 HPC Meeting

Member Richardson moved to approve the October 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes. Member Hunter seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

3. Non-Agenda Items and Visitors

Chair Nelson noted there was no one present for this item.

Following a brief discussion, Member Francoeur moved to take agenda item five and then return to the regular order of the meeting. Member Richardson second the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

5. Consideration of a Significant Demolition Application for the Complete Demolition of 605 Moffett Road

Chair Nelson introduced the item and asked for comments from the applicant.

Mr. Peter Wolff, owner of 605 Moffett Road, reviewed his actions and process used to market and sale the house.

Chair Nelson thanked him for providing the following answers to the questions asked by the HPC:

1) Please explain the reason(s) you are proposing to demolish the structure.

I am seeking the authority to demolish the house in order to maximize my options to sell it. I have lived in Lake Bluff for 28 years, raised my family here and reached a point in my life

where I have decided to move. I have marketed the property aggressively since July. In preparation and throughout the marketing process, I have made numerous improvements including painting the interior and exterior, professionally landscaping the yard, and correcting seepage issues with a professional waterproofing company. I removed clutter and purged personal items, had the home professionally cleaned, and had a professional interior designer stage the furniture. I have reduced the price twice in collaboration with my realtors and in the context of comparable properties, all with the idea of attracting someone to purchase the house to live in the existing structure. I have received no offers to purchase the home to live in or to remodel.

2) What is the Property Owner's short-term and long-term plans for the Property?

As owner and as described above, my intent is to sell the home. I am seeking the ability to sell to someone who would demolish or remodel and improve the property in order to avoid on going carrying costs and minimize my financial risk, which is increasing overtime.

3) Please provide a written description of any historical information with supporting documentation.

The home was built in 1957. There is no historical significance.

4) Please explain why the structure may not qualify for landmark designation status.

The house is a raised ranch with a partially finished basement. It was surveyed in 1997 as part of the Village of Lake Bluff Illinois Urban Architectural and Historical Survey. It was rated noncontributing with regard to local significance, not a good candidate for individual listing on the National Register and noncontributing to a National Register District.

5) Please identify the approximate costs to rehabilitate the structure compared to the costs to demolish and build new.

I have no specific cost proposals to rehabilitate or demolish and build new. Here are some of the observations and comments of potential buyers who viewed the house. They noted the house has an odd floor plan. Kitchen cabinets, floor and appliances need updating. There is no master bathroom. The main bathroom floors, vanity and plumbing fixtures need updating. They couldn't envision improving the basement in a manner they deemed desirable due to the utilities being located between the downstairs bathroom and rooms they would improve or finish. Some noted a musty/mold smell. Some deemed lack of central air and existing air ducts (the home has baseboard hot water heat) as a negative. A general consensus between realtors and contractors suggests a minimal outlay of \$40,000 to improve the kitchen and bath, with no guarantee of enhanced design appeal to a prospective buyer, so I have been advised to market the house as is and concede the depreciated value.

In response to a question from the HPC, A to VA Stanick reviewed the demolition permit process.

Member Hunter moved to terminate the demolition review of 605 Moffett Road. Member Francoeur seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (6) Francoeur, Hunter, Jerch, Liebelt, Richardson and Chair Nelson
Nays: (0)
Absent: (1) Bergmann

4. Consideration of a Significant Demolition Application for the Complete Demolition of 466 Sunrise Avenue

Chair Nelson introduced the item and asked for comments from the applicant.

Mr. David Poulton, architect with the Poulton Group and representing the owners, Marshall and Amy Reavis, stated he provided the following answers to the questions asked by the HPC:

1) Please explain the reason(s) you are proposing to demolish the structure.

The existing residence, originally built about 1900, was a 29' x 37' rectangular two story residence, built on a brick foundation. When originally built, this building would have been considered a modest, lower cost, almost utilitarian housing, especially when evaluated in terms of its spectacular location. It is a building that has no special relation to its site and it has no redeemable architectural style or features; it is a typical home that could have been built anywhere. Since originally built, it has been substantially altered. Some of the more notable changes being the addition of a brick chimney and glassed-in porch on the north side, the removal of a dormer and porch on the east side, a one story addition to the southwest corner adding a kitchen wing, and the addition of a wrought iron supported covered entry at the east facade. The building remains today a very basic home without any significant architecture design or features. There are no features on the exterior or interior that warrant spending significant amounts of time and money to re-furbish and save. Since the building is not architecturally significant and since it is built upon a brick foundation that has served its lifespan, the new owners have purchased the property with the intent to replace the building with one that is designed to be much more sensitive to its site and its neighborhood and therefore wish to demolish the building.

2) What is the Property Owner's short-term and long-term plans for the property?

The short term plans are to proceed through the process for demolition and concurrently design a significant building that contributes to beauty of the neighborhood and the ambiance of Lake Bluff. The intent is to not only create a home that has a very strong relation to its setting and a "timeless" aesthetic, but also to create a building that the owners can remain in and call home for many years to come.

3) Please provide a written description of any historical information with supporting documentation.

The only information we have been able to find is the date of 1900 for construction of the building and a photo, below, of what appears to be the original building.

4) Please explain why the structure may not qualify for landmark designation status.

It is a building that has no special relation to its site and it has no redeemable architectural style or features; it is a typical home that could have been built anywhere. It was not designed by any notable architect. There are no features on the exterior or interior that warrant spending significant amounts of time and money to re-furbish and save.

5) Please identify the approximate costs to rehabilitate the structure compared to the costs to demolish and build new.

Re-furbishing this building and investing a significant amount of money into it would warrant replacing the failing brick foundation with a new concrete foundation. This results in a financially unsound endeavor as it would require several hundred thousand dollars to renovate with the end result being the same product, a very basic structure. The costs to demolish and replace the building will be significantly more than re-furbishing the existing building, but the end result will be a home that the owner's desire with significant architectural design features and that will be an asset to the community.

6) Have you considered relocating the structure to an alternate location? If so, please provide details.

No

7) Please prepare a written statement describing how best to preserve the Village's historical and architectural character.

The historical and architectural character of the village can be preserved by identifying significant buildings that contribute to the character and ambiance of the neighborhood and encouraging, not mandating, owners to maintain and preserve those buildings. Buildings that have little or no architectural merit should be allowed to be replaced by more sensitively designed buildings that respect and harmonize with the unique and valuable character of Lake Bluff. The key is to engage architects that identify with and understand the unique character of this area and who possess the skills and knowledge to create buildings that contribute to this character. The rich history of Lake Bluff involves a great deal of change over time. Allowing a building that has reached the end of its lifespan and purpose to be replaced with a better building that respects the history of this neighborhood and contributes to it in a positive way is consistent with the history and evolution of Lake Bluff.

Chair Nelson thanked Mr. Poulton for answering the questions and then reviewed the HPC's options to terminate the delay, extend the delay an additional 30 days or take no action. She requested comments from the HPC.

Member Liebelt expressed his understanding the house has not been updated over time.

Member Richardson stated she is not aware of any significant historical information about the house.

Member Jerch noted the house is part of the Lake Bluff History Museum's house walk

In addition to the responses to the HPC's questions, Mr. Poulton provided the following documents which were distributed in the Commission's agenda packet: plat of survey, elevation pictures of existing house, and aerial map of neighborhood (include surrounding blocks).

Mr. Winek, a neighboring resident, commented he lives west of the property and expressed interest in understanding how the drainage will be addressed when the new house is built. A to VA Stanick advised the new house will be reviewed by the Village Engineer to ensure compliance with the Lake County Stormwater Management Ordinance.

Member Francoeur moved to terminate the demolition review of 466 Sunrise Avenue. Member Liebelt seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following roll call vote:

Ayes: (6) Francoeur, Hunter, Jerch, Liebelt, Richardson and Chair Nelson
Nays: (0)
Absent: (1) Bergmann

6. A Continued Discussion Regarding the History of Areas in Lake Bluff

Chair Nelson continued this item to the next HPC meeting.

7. Consideration of the 2016 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Schedule

Member Hunter moved to accept the 2016 meeting schedule (every second Wednesday of the month). Member Richardson seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

8. Chairperson's Report

Chair Nelson confirmed the next HPC meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2015.

9. Staff Report

A to VA Stanick reported that on October 26, 2015 the Village Board accepted the HPC's recommendation to not designate 306 E. Witchwood Lane.

In addition, he reported the Committee-of-the-Whole (COW) at its meeting on November 9, 2015, received a report from PCZBA Chair Steve Kraus, HPC Chair Janet Nelson and ABR Chair Bob Hunter regarding their advisory board's evaluation of the following: i) if the Village's historic preservation regulations are truly achieving the purpose of promoting historic and architectural preservation in the Village; ii) if the Village's bulk and massing regulations are effectively managing the massing of new single-family homes; iii) if the Village's subdivision regulations are protecting the character of Lake Bluff; and iv) if there is a desire to implement architectural review requirements for new single-family homes. A brief discussion followed and A to VA Stanick advised the COW continued the discussion to an upcoming meeting.

10. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Commission, Member Jerch moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Francoeur seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon Stanick
Asst. to the Village Administrator