



KIRKWOOD LANDMARKS COMMISSION MINUTES

Wednesday, July 12, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.
Kirkwood City Hall, City Council Chambers

Present: Commissioners Judith Brauer, Ryan Molen, Andrew Raimist, Walter Smith, Jessica Worley, Council Liaison Maggie Duwe and Staff Liaison Amy Lowry

Guests: Fred and Mary Bruning of Bruning Homes; Mark and Diane Gorris of 305 N. Harrison Ave.; Darryl Labruyere of 340 E. Argonne Dr.; Sylvia Smith of 326 E. Jefferson Ave.; Judy Foster of 332 E. Jefferson Ave.; Athalia Howell of 306 E. Jefferson Ave.; June Pellarin of 110 Dickson St.; Hammett of 330 E. Adams Ave.; Emily and Matt Hoffman of 135 Peeke Ave.; Art McDonnell of 598 N. Taylor Ave.; and Ben Ellermann of Blaes Architecture

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Motion to approve the June 14, 2017 meeting minutes as submitted by Comr. Brauer, seconded by Comr. Worley and unanimously approved.
2. **Public Hearing**
 - a. **Case #17-06, 326 E Jefferson Avenue** (Jefferson-Argonne Historic District) – Demolition of home. Ms. Lowry presented a PowerPoint slideshow on the history of the home and findings of fact, including public notification. The property is contributing to both the local Jefferson-Argonne and National Register Districts. The 60-day automatic stay expires August 5 and the 270-day extension will expire March 3, 2017. Fred Bruning of Bruning Homes, representing the Tracys, presented the structural report and photos of the boiler which he maintains is unsafe. Comr. Molen questioned whether the applicant decided to tear down the house before or after the structural report. Mr. Bruning said that the applicant decided to tear down the home to build a new home. He believes it would be cost prohibitive to repair the structure given that there has been no maintenance for the last 50-60 years. Mr. Bruning also believes the boiler is unsafe. Comr. Raimist said that the boiler is clearly unsafe and there are many code violations in the house, but questions whether the house is structurally unsound and whether someone else might be able to rehabilitate the structure. Comr. Molen said it is the Landmarks Commission's duty to save historic structures to the extent possible.

Public Comment: Ms. Lowry read into the record the e-mailed comments of Greg Frick of 327 E. Argonne Dr. and Steve Ehrstein of 112 Mitchell Pl. Mr. Frick wrote that this home has reached the point that investing to preserve the home makes little sense. He requests that the Landmarks Commission waive the typical waiting period to demolish a home and allow the buyer to move forward. Mr. Ehrstein wrote that unless the home is

structurally failing, it has an undeniable role in the District. He believes we should save and preserve as much as possible if we want to maintain the attractiveness and established quality that attracts people to the community in the first place.

Judy Foster of 332 E. Jefferson Ave. commented that she lived next door and was concerned about the danger of the house as presented by Mr. Bruning. Comr. Molen assured her there is no imminent danger. Athalia Howell of 306 E. Jefferson Ave. commented that the house should be approved to come down because it is beyond repair. June Pellarin of 110 Dickson St. disputed Mr. Frick's comments of a life cycle of a home, said that it was sad to see so many houses go, and said she would love to see it stay. Sylvia Smith, who is the daughter of the late owners and still lives in the house, said she and her two siblings sold it "as is" with the knowledge that it would be torn down. The house was on the market for only a few days and received more than its asking price. She said that there was no insulation in the home and the kitchen was last updated in the early 1960s.

Mr. Bruning said that the engineer believes that the foundation has failed. Comr. Molen questioned whether the buyer looked into the economics of remodeling the house. Comr. Raimist said that he does not see the house as beyond salvageable and that the Landmarks Commission is charged with protecting the historic fabric of Kirkwood and working to repair or remodel the home. Comr. Raimist made a motion to extend the stay of demolition of the home sixty (60) days beyond the minimum 60-day stay to give the community a chance to find an interested purchaser to renovate the home. Comr. Brauer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. Certificates of Appropriateness

- a. **Case #17-07, 598 N. Taylor Avenue** (Landmark #25, Holmes-Mitchell House, North Taylor Historic District) – Art McDonnell presented his application for a stockade cedar fence to screen his pool equipment from view. The fence starts at an enclosed brick wall and only the neighbor to the east will see it. Comr. Brauer made a motion to approve Case No. 17-07 as submitted. Comr. Worley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- b. **Case #17-08, 632 E. Jefferson Avenue** (Jefferson-Argonne Historic District) – Demolition of home and new construction. Darryl Labruyere presented a color rendering of the new home. He said Mr. and Mrs. Keller bought the house with the intent to build a new home. The house is not currently occupied, although the Kellers are keeping up with maintenance and landscaping. The Landmarks Commission requested information on the structural condition of the house. The demolition will be set for public hearing at the Commission's August 9 meeting.
- c. **Case #17-09, 615 E. Monroe Avenue** (Landmark #20, Unsell-Cabell House, East Monroe National Register District) – Ben Ellermann presented plans for an addition, demolition of the detached garage and construction of a new detached garage. He said they would be removing the existing rear split level addition. The house has a faux cut ashlar stone appearance that it is in shiplap. They will be replicating that appearance, all trim work would be wood, the internal gutters would be repaired and the existing siding would be scraped and repainted. There is an older outbuilding in the back that the owners would

like to save, but they would also like to build a pool with a pool house and are only allowed 1500 square feet of outbuilding according to the Zoning Code. In response to Comr. Raimist's remark that the addition is substantially larger than the house, Mr. Ellermann said that only the garage would be visible from the street. The addition roof is slightly higher than the original house due to the width of the addition. Comr. Raimist made a motion in Case No. 17-09 to approve the addition plans, the demolition of the portion of the house, the demolition of the detached garage and the plans for a new freestanding garage as submitted. Comr. Brauer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- d. **Case #16-13 Amended, 434 North Harrison Avenue** (Landmark #19, Robinson-Kraft House) – Ben Ellermann presented the amendment to previously submitted addition to add one arch top window at the attic dormers in lieu of the triple arch top windows, and to add three sets of doors at the rear bay in lieu of a center French door flanked by pairs of double hung windows. Comr. Worley made a motion in Case No. 16-13 Amended, 434 N. Harrison Avenue, to approve the amendments to the previously submitted addition. Comr. Raimist seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- e. **Case #17-05 Amended, 305 N. Harrison Avenue** (Landmark #18, Swan Cottage) – Mr. Gorris presented an amendment to the previously submitted addition. The Board of Adjustment granted a two foot variance from the Adams Avenue front setback. Mr. Gorris discussed the 2'x12' cantilever in the master bedroom, the windows on the south elevation and French doors with a Juliette balcony, the new chimney with matching brick on the bottom to match the existing chimneys and with limestone on the top to match the foundation, the removal of the gazebo as it is now too close to the expanded addition, the addition of new trusses to level the roof, and the repair of existing chimneys. He said that they will save the chimneys if they can, but if not, they will rebuild with similar materials. The Commission agreed that a ridge vent would be appropriate for the roof. The Commission discussed altering the wood railing and the French doors on the south side. Comr. Raimist made a motion in Case No. 17-05 Amended, 305 N. Harrison Avenue to approve the design of the addition and updates to the existing home with the stone and brick chimney as submitted, and with a resolution of the French doors and removal of side lights on the Adams Avenue side to be resubmitted. Comr. Worley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. **New Business**

- a. **Citizens Comments/Seeking advice** to preserve their historic properties – none.
- b. **Downtown Master Plan and Parking Study** – Comr. Molen gave a review of the process to choose a consultant and the purposes of the study.

5. **Old Business**

- a. **Evaluation of Historic Kirkwood Landmarks Walking Tour** – The Commission gave suggested changes to Ms. Lowry. She will look into the process and cost for reprinting.
- b. **Ordinance Revision** – Ms. Lowry reported that Council Member Duwe suggested meeting with the City Attorney to update the ordinance. Ms. Lowry, Comr. Raimist and Comr. Andel will meet with Mr. Hessel in late August/early September.
- c. **Design Guidelines** – No report.

6. **Adjourn**– Motion to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. made by Comr. Brauer, seconded by Comr. Worley and unanimously approved.