

ALGONQUIN HISTORIC COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
June 8, 2016
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER - ESTABLISH QUORUM

Present: Chairman Jolitz and Members Koeppel, Purn, Thompson, and Zange.

Absent: None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 11, 2016 AND
WORKSHOP MINUTES OF MAY 21 AND 28, 2016**

Moved: Member Zange; Seconded: Member Purn.

Voice Vote: All Ayes. Minutes Approved.

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MAJOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE
OLD TOWN DISTRICT—CASE NO. PC16-02, 102 CENTER ST.**

VILLAGE STAFF PRESENTATION:

Ben Mason presented the case on behalf of the Village Staff. Mr. Mason explained that the property owners seek to remove two windows on the home, following the previous COA approval they received in December 2015 to remove 2 windows on the rear of the garage, 1 window near the front of the home, and 2 small bathroom windows on the side of the home. The current proposal now seeks to remove the 2 larger windows adjacent to the bathroom windows the removal of which was previously approved. Mr. Mason explained that Petitioners noted on their COA application that the proposal is to re-side over these larger window openings to match the wood siding on the rest of the house, because the large windows would otherwise be located in the bathrooms of the new floor plan of the house.

While the windows in question are located on the side of the home and have less visibility from the public right-of-way than the front of the house, this area of the home is still viewable from Center Street as well as S. Main Street. Mr. Mason explained Staff's view that removal of all windows from this (gable end) section of the home would therefore detract from the design of the house by creating a large blank wall that lacks architectural interest. Mr. Mason posed a potential alternative of shifting the existing bathroom windows to the center of the wall to serve as windows for the new bathroom units. Though not as preferable as keeping the current large windows, this would afford Petitioners greater privacy in the new bathroom units while still breaking up the exterior wall, and be more compatible with the original design of the home than having a blank wall. Staff thus recommended approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness, with the following conditions: (1) the large window openings be replaced with openings the size and style of the old bathroom windows that were located in the original bathroom units; and (2) wood siding be feathered in to fill in the remainder of the large window openings.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PETITIONERS:

Petitioner, Justin Coffman first advised they had no additional comments to supplement Mr. Mason's presentation. However, upon reflection he did want to advise that the idea of somewhat smaller windows in the bathrooms as suggested in the staff report, was unacceptable. He stated they wanted NO windows of any size in that section of the house for bathroom design requirements and flexibility in the shower placement.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Sharon (Shari) Himes, Petitioners' La Fox St neighbor, explained that she did her own renovation and was required to follow the Preservation Code's requirements regarding window retention, and that her home still looks like "part of the neighborhood" because of those requirements. Ms. Himes stated her opinion that others should be required to adhere to the same requirements to keep the neighborhood "historic."

Petitioners responded by explaining that the property in question was an "eyesore" prior to the work they have been doing on it, that it is moving in the right direction, and that it has been much improved from what the neighborhood has seen in the past.

Stuart Logan, a neighbor on the other side of the street, stated his opinion that, despite a desire to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood, renovations sometimes don't allow for retaining original features. For instance, he said, bathrooms that weren't original to the home don't always allow for windows, and retention of the windows won't make the home historic in itself, in any event.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Chairman Jolitz explained that many other home owners in the Historic District have been required to retain original windows when adding/converting space for use as bathrooms. Although bathrooms may not have been original to those homes, such retention of the original window sizes and locations was necessary as an important part in those instances, and in this instance, to preserve the original design of the home and its architectural elements as required and outlined in the Villages' Preservation Ordinance.

Member Zange asked the petitioner, why they had purchased a home for such an aggressive plan to flip or rehab a home, when they knew in advance of the purchase that the home was located in the Old Town District and covered by a Preservation Code, which others have followed. Petitioner said they liked Old Town area and wanted to rehab a house.

Member Thompson inquired about the "value" enhancement of having these windows or not in the home, and whether the petitioners felt the question of retention of the windows would have some impact on the resale value of the home? Petitioners responded that they have a concern about "condensation" that would be caused by steam from the shower collecting on window glass in the planned bathrooms. Chairman Jolitz questioned why windows that are properly sealed or made of other materials and/or including an exhaust fan in the bathrooms would not resolve any "condensation" issue from a shower as it has for others in the neighborhood. It was mentioned that there are dozens of homes in old town that have successfully been fitted with bathrooms, in what were formerly bedrooms, hallways, or second floor landings at the top of stairs, while retaining original window sizes and locations.

Petitioners questioned whether the Preservation Code limited their choice of color to paint the home, and Chairman Jolitz explained that the Code imposes no limitations in that regard. Petitioners said they were happy to have that information and then left the meeting before a vote was taken.

MOTION:

Motion by Member Thompson, seconded by Member Zange, that the Building Commissioner not issue the requested Certificate of Appropriateness for additional window removal at the building at 102 Center Street, due to the historic nature of the structure. Chairman Jolitz repeated the motion and asked if there was any further discussion, there being none he called for a vote. Roll call Vote: All Ayes.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF A MAJOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE OLD TOWN DISTRICT—CASE NO. PC16-03, 214 S. HUBBARD STREET

Mr. Mason again presented the case on behalf of the Village Staff, explaining that the Petitioner seeks a Certificate of Appropriateness for re-siding, window replacement, and deck reconstruction on the house located on the property in question. The existing vertical siding panels will be removed and the entire house will be re-sided with double 4-inch horizontal vinyl siding, to be more consistent with the general exterior appearance of nearby ranch homes in the surrounding neighborhood. The new vinyl siding will have a wood grain appearance, as depicted in the enclosed manufacturer spec sheet. Additionally, the petitioner will replace the old, deteriorating windows with replacement units of the same size and design. Lastly, Petitioner will rebuild the failing rear deck with a similar design as shown. Although more rectangular in shape than the current square configuration, this is due to a requirement that the new deck be setback from the property line to conform to current zoning standards

Since the home is a more modern ranch that was built in the 1970s and has limited historic or architectural significance, Mr. Mason explained Staff's view that the proposed new deck is reasonable and does not present any aesthetic concerns, and that the siding, window, and deck improvements will greatly enhance the curb appeal of the home and make the property more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Thus, Mr. Mason explained, because Staff believes the proposed re-siding, window replacement and deck reconstruction is compatible with the structure and consistent with the Preservation Code, Staff recommended approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM PETITIONER:

Petitioner had no additional comments to supplement Mr. Mason's presentation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Members of the public in attendance had no comments on the proposal.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

Chairman Jolitz inquired about the year the house was built, and the Petitioner responded that it was built in 1976. Chairman Jolitz stated that the project appeared to be very straightforward, and that the vinyl clapboards would fit in with the neighborhood. He then inquired if the windows would be "in kind," and the Petitioner said they would.

MOTION:

There being no other comments by the Commission Members, Member Thompson moved, and Member Purn Seconded, that the Building Commissioner issue the requested Certificate of Appropriateness for re-siding, window replacement, and deck reconstruction as requested for Case No PC16-03. Chairman Jolitz repeated the motion and open the floor. There being no further discussion or questions, a Roll call Vote was taken: All Ayes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION—PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. John Lewis of Division Street introduced himself and his appreciation for the historic neighborhood and the Preservation Code that helps to keep the areas "historic flavor".

OLD BUSINESS

Interview Project - Status Report: Chairman Jolitz explained that he is in the process of contacting Ellen Green, who is due to return to the area for the summer from out east soon, to be interviewed. There was also mention of a continuing effort to obtain an interview of Warren Dahn, and Sherry Himes mentioned that she may have some suggestions of additional people who lived in local historic homes. Finally, there was some discussion of possibly posting segments of interviews that have been conducted online.

Founders' Days 2016 Participation: Member Purn reported that the planned vintage auto "Cruise Night" may be held the afternoon of Sunday 7/31, from 3:00–7:00 p.m. (concluding before the fireworks) on South Main Street. The Commission discussed plans to have a table on South Main Street during this event featuring the Commission's Hill Climb books

APPROVAL OF BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Member Zange presented a bill for a UV filter and a memory card reader for the Commission's camera, purchased at Best Buy for \$32.29. Chairman Jolitz moved, and Member Thompson seconded, to reimburse Member Zange for this amount. Voice Vote: All Ayes

NEW BUSINESS

Volunteer Opportunities for "Work at Home" on Commission Projects or Needs: There was a general discussion of various projects on which Commission Members or volunteers could work at home, including scrap-booking, clipping articles, and transcriptions of letters, etc. One audience member who is a German teacher offered to translate any German documents, if the need ever arises.

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS OR OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Jolitz reported on various messages and inquiries received during the preceding month, including the following: (1) an inquiry from PastPerfect Software; (2) an inquiry from Eva Coco (a local real estate agent), which was forwarded to Ben Mason, interested in learnings about the Village's Preservation Code as it relates to the properties she represents; (3) an inquiry from Stephanie Baxter requesting a historic tour for her local Girl Scout troop; and (4) an two inquiries about the restored cars visible in the building located just off the bike path on South Main Street.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Zange moved, and Member Thompson seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. Voice Vote: All Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.


Secretary

7-13-16
Date Approved