



METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY

Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission
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METRO HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSION SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES March 21, 2012

Present were Commissioners: Ann Nielson, Vice Chair; Menié Bell; Richard Fletcher; Ron Gobbell; and Judy Turner

Zoning Staff: Robin Zeigler (Historic Zoning Administrator), Sean Alexander, Melissa Baldock, Fred Zahn, Jon Michael (City Attorney)

Applicants: David Baird, Brett Diaz (representing Mitch Hodge), Bill Howell, John Root

Public: Ran Batson, Kim Hatcher, Julie Kaalberg, Rebecca Ratz, Mary Vavra

Vice Chair Nielson called the meeting to order at 2:04p.m. and read aloud the process for appealing the decisions of the Metro Historic Zoning Commission.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Nielson asked the Commissioners if there were any comments or questions on the minutes, and there were none.

Motion:

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Bell seconded the motion, and it was approved without objection.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Staff member Melissa Baldock presented the cases that staff determined to be eligible to be heard together as a consent item:

118 Pembroke Avenue
New construction—addition, accessory structure and setback reduction

2701 Oakland Avenue
New construction—addition, demolition, accessory structure and setback reduction

807 Boscobel Street
New construction—addition and setback reduction

1804 Boscobel Street
New construction—addition and partial demolition

1807 Ashwood Avenue
New construction—addition and partial demolition

Ms. Baldock noted that all of the items on the consent agenda, with their respective conditions, meet the design guidelines for their districts and that staff recommended approval of the consent agenda.

Commissioner Bell moved to approve the consent agenda, and Commissioner Fletcher seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously.

II. NEW BUSINESS

Historic Zoning Administrator Robin Zeigler noted that 3720 Whitland Avenue was removed from the agenda and approved administratively. 1114 Forrest Avenue and 1902 Beechwood Avenue were also removed from the agenda at the applicants' requests.

1419 Holly Street Application: Infill and Demolition

Ms. Zeigler presented an application for the corner of 15th Street and Holly Street for the demolition of a non-contributing structure at the rear of the property and the construction of a new one-and-a-half story duplex structure on the site. She reminded the Commissioners that they had received public comment on this project via email. She stated that the demolition of the rear structure meets the guidelines for demolition, but that demolition should not be approved until a design for a new structure on the site is approved. Ms. Zeigler noted that new duplexes should follow one of two historic patterns – one, where there is one larger structure on the lot that is internally divided into two separate living spaces or two, where there is a primary building on the front of the lot and a smaller, subordinate structure at the rear of the lot. Ms. Zeigler explained that staff recommends disapproval of the proposed project because it does not meet the guidelines in several respects. On the north side, there is a wall dormer and a bay combined, and staff believes this features accentuates the height of the structure and is atypical for the district. In addition, the porch is too shallow, the orientation of the entrance is off to the side and not in a typical historic location, and there is an attached garage in the middle of the site, with vehicular access off the middle of 15th Street.

The architect for the project, John Root, then addressed the Commission and argued that the project does meet the design guidelines for Lockeland Springs. He distributed some materials to the Commission. He stated that he thought that a large, one-structure duplex is not appropriate on a corner lot like this one, and that two separate structures, with a connector, is more appropriate. He expressed concern that staff did not consider the thirty-foot tall home on 15th Street nor the topographical conditions of Holly Street when considering the appropriateness of the scale of the proposed structure. He also disagreed with staff's contention that the rear structure is not subordinate enough to the primary structure.

Several members of the public then spoke in opposition to the project. Rebecca Ratz expressed concern about the project, particularly the garage and garage door that face the side street. She stated that she would like to see the vehicular access be from the alley, as was seen historically. She also expressed concern about the scale of the project, and she agreed with the staff that the rear structure should be subordinate to the structure on the front of

the lot. Mary Vavra, a resident and a representative of the Lockeland Springs neighborhood association, stated that she agreed with the staff's recommendation for disapproval. The association would like to see the garage be accessed from the alley, and she asked the architect to present to the association at their next meeting. Kim Hatcher then expressed concern about the mass of the structure, which she believes is out of context with the neighborhood, and the garage that faces 15th Street. Finally, Julie Kaalberg, stated that she would like to see something with a style and scale more appropriate to the neighborhood built on the site and that she has concerns about the garage. She also asked if the magnolia trees on the site could be saved, if possible.

Mr. Root responded that he believes that street-facing garages can be appropriate, particularly when a site is constrained by limited size and the setbacks required for a corner lot. He stated there is not enough room to accommodate parking accessed from the rear. Commissioner Fletcher asked if the applicant would consider a deferral so as to give the neighbors more time to review the project and address some of the issues brought up at the hearing. Mr. Root was amenable to a deferral, but asked the Commissioners to comment on the scale of the project and the issue of the garage. Vice-chair Nielson clarified that any comments the Commissioners have at this time would merely be advisory and would not necessarily indicate a vote one way or another at a following hearing. Commissioner Bell asked about the proposed garage and noted that most garages in the historic context are accessed from the alley. Mr. Root responded that to put the garage at the rear would likely result in needing a setback reduction. Commissioner Gobbell noted that the applicant is trying to put a lot of new construction on a small lot, that he is troubled by the garage, and that he agreed with the staff that the rear structure needs to be more subordinate to the front structure.

Mr. Root requested to defer the project until a future meeting. As a result, the Commissioners did not vote on a motion.

1701 Sweetbriar Avenue

Application: Partial demolition and alteration

Staff member Sean Alexander presented an application for alteration to and partial demolition of the roof, which is constructed of 2 X 4 rafters and is showing some signs of sagging. The proposal involves removing the roof framing and decking, reframing the roof with 2 X 10 rafters, inserting insulation above the sheathing, and reconstructing the roof so that it is straighter and raised 6 to 8 inches. The changes to the main roof will affect the appearance of the dormer and also involve altering the porch roof. Staff finds that the proposed alteration does not meet the design guidelines and recommends disapproval of the project. In response to a question from Commissioner Bell, Mr. Alexander suggested that an alternative would be to restructure the roof from the interior. He noted that the space under the roof is finished space in the house.

Bill Howell, owner and applicant, then addressed the Commission and explained that existing roof is structurally compromised. He noted that adding insulation to the current roof structure was not practical because it could further compromise the roof's structure and would diminish the second floor space. He stated that he has made efforts to ensure that the impact of the extra 6 to 8 inches is minimized, and he asked for the Commission's approval.

Commissioners asked questions about how the panels will work and be installed and alternative solutions. Commissioner Gobbell expressed concern about the panels being able to work as planned. Mr. Howell stated that he had not consulted a structural engineer. Mr. Gobbell suggested interior work that would meet the design guidelines and not be as expensive as the panels.

Vice Chair Nielson closed the public hearing.

Commissioners discussed options and solutions. Commissioner Gobbell asked Mr. Howell if he would be willing to investigate further and hire a structural engineer to explain the need of this one solution. He stated that his greatest concern was adding the pocket in front of the dormer. Mr. Howell requested a vote and declined the request to defer.

Mr. Howell's contractor, Ran Batons, expressed a desire to speak and the Vice Chair informed him that the public hearing was closed. Commissioner Turner requested that the public hearing be reopened so that the contractor could be heard. Commissioner Gobbell seconded the motion. Ran Batson with Ran Batson Construction Company, explained how the proposal could be flashed to prevent leaking. Vice Chair Nielson closed the public hearing.

Motion

Commissioner Bell made a motion to disapprove the application to raise the roof height. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gobbell and passed unanimously.

405 Chapel Avenue

Application: Infill and Demolition

Staff presented a proposal for demolition of a non-contributing structure at 405 Chapel Avenue and construction of a new single family residence. Ms. Zeigler explained that the existing building was non-contributing and met the guidelines for demolition because it was constructed outside of the period of significance.

She then described the plan for new construction and made the recommendation for approval with the conditions that the upper level be redesigned to match the context in terms of form; the driveway be a strip driveway at least to the front wall of the house; staff provide final approval of materials; and that a window be added to the ground floor on the right side.

Brett Diaz, residing at 214 Chapel Avenue, spoke for the applicant who was out of town. He presented an alternate solution that was passed among the Commissioners. Mr. Diaz expressed the applicant's willingness to abide by all conditions with the exception of the front elevation and asked that the Commission consider the plan as presented. Mr. Diaz said that they were willing to work with staff too, if that was the desire of the Commission.

Chairperson Nielson explained that they could not vote on the new drawing as they and Staff had not had the time to evaluate it.

Commissioner Gobbell asked if the applicant was willing to add a window. Mr. Diaz responded by saying that they would need to study the floor plan to be sure but they were willing to add a real or faux window.

Mr. Gobbell stated that he would like to see the wall dormers be less of a statement.

Motion

Commissioner Gobbell made a motion to approve the application with the conditions the driveway be a strip driveway at least to the front wall of the house; staff provide final approval of materials; that a

window be added to the ground floor on the right side and that the applicant work with Staff to finalize the design of the front, second story. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and approved unanimously.

**1805 Forrest Avenue
Application: Infill**

Ms. Baldock presented the case for new construction at 1805 Forrest Avenue. She explained how the project meets the design guidelines for height, scale, massing, setback and rhythm of spacing, materials, roof shape, orientation, window proportions and rhythm of openings, garages and appurtenances with the exception of a proposed second-story wall dormer. Ms. Baldock explained that the dormer rests on the porch roof, and even seems to continue below the porch roof. Staff did not believe that this feature meets the design guidelines, as wall dormers are not a historic feature typically found in the Lockeland Springs-East End historic overlay. In the past, the Commission has required that dormers be roof dormers that are set back from the wall by a minimum of two feet (2'). In addition, the wall dormer accentuates the height of the structure, and makes it appear out-of-scale with the historic context. Staff asks that a condition of approval be that the applicant re-design this feature so that it has a typical dormer configuration where the wall of the dormer sits back from the wall below.

Staff recommended approval of the infill with the following conditions:

1. The applicant redesign the front wall dormer so that it is more typical of historic dormers and so that the wall of the dormer is set back from the wall below.
2. The siding have a maximum reveal of five inches (5").
3. Staff review and approve all window and door specifications, the color of the asphalt shingle and metal roof, and the porch floor material prior to purchase and installation.
4. Any utilities be located in the rear of the house or on a side façade beyond the midpoint of the house.
5. The driveway be concrete strips until at least start of the wall of the house behind the porch
6. Staff review and approve any new appurtenances, including, but not limited to, additional pathways, paving, lighting fixtures, and fences, prior to the purchase and installation of these materials.

David Baird, architect for the project, asked the Commission to approve the wall dormer as it was small, the only one on the project, and the difference in height between the wall dormer and roof was slight. He stated that the wall dormer was necessary to provide some relief in the wall to make it more interesting.

Commissioner Fletcher asked if the roof material for the dormer and roof were different. Mr. Baird responded that the main roof would be asphalt shingle and the dormer would have a standing seam metal roof but both would have a dark color.

Commissioner Gobbell asked if he knew of any historic examples of wall dormers and Mr. Baird said he did not.

Motion

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to approve the proposal with the conditions that the siding have a maximum reveal of five inches (5"); Staff review and approve all window and door specifications, the color of the asphalt shingle and metal roof, and the porch floor material prior to purchase and installation; any utilities be located in the rear of the house or on a side façade beyond the midpoint of the house; the driveway be concrete strips until at least start of the wall of the house behind the porch; and Staff review and approve any new appurtenances, including, but not limited to, additional pathways, paving, lighting fixtures, and fences, prior to the purchase and installation of these materials; and that the wall dormer have roofing material to match the roofing material of the main house. Commissioner Turner seconded the motion. The vote was three in favor of the motion and one opposed. The motion failed with a lack of four concurring votes.

The Commission continued discussion. Commissioner Gobbell explained that wall dormers have been successful as long as they are not a strong statement overall. They have worked in some cases and not in others, it just depends on how refined they are and set in. He stated that he could support the use of the dormer if the applicant was willing to work with staff to bring down the scale.

Staff explained that the concern was more with setting a precedent of approving wall dormers in the future, which tend to accentuate height, as much as this one project. She told the Commission that the applicant had already brought the scale of the dormer down from the initial submission and she appreciated them working with staff. Commissioner Gobbell stated that he did not think they could get to the point of never approving wall dormers and that wall dormers of small scale could meet the historic context.

Motion

Commissioner Turner made a motion to approve the proposal with the conditions that the siding have a maximum reveal of five inches (5"); Staff review and approve all window and door specifications, the color of the asphalt shingle and metal roof, and the porch floor material prior to purchase and installation; any utilities be located in the rear of the house or on a side façade beyond the midpoint of the house; the driveway be concrete strips until at least start of the wall of the house behind the porch; and Staff review and approve any new appurtenances, including, but not limited to, additional pathways, paving, lighting fixtures, and fences, prior to the purchase and installation of these materials; and that the wall dormer be more typical of historic wall dormers. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gobbell and approved unanimously.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Adopt revised Rules & Procedures

Mrs. Zeigler asked the commission to consider revising the Rules & Procedures to include a process for an applicant returning to the Commission with the same application. The language is almost a direct copy of what the Planning Commission has in their Rules & Procedures.

Motion

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to approve. Commissioner Gobbell seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Fletcher made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Gobbell seconded the motion. The Commissioners unanimously approved the motion.

RATIFIED BY COMMISSION 4-18-2012