

MINUTES
Regular Meeting of the
Edina Heritage Preservation Board
Edina City Hall – Community Room
Monday, August 13, 2012
7:00 p.m.

I. **CALL TO ORDER** 7:00 P.M.

II. **ROLL CALL**

Answering roll call was Vice Chair Moore, and Members Stegner, Davis, Curran, Anger, Christiaansen, and Mellom. Absent were Chair Carr and Member Sussman. Staff present was Planner Joyce Repya.

III. **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

Member Curran moved to approve the meeting agenda. Member Davis seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

IV. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** Regular meeting of July 9, 2012

Member Anger moved approval of the minutes from the July 9, 2012, meeting of the board. Member Curran seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

V. **COMMUNITY COMMENT** None

VI. **REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. Country Club District - Plan of Treatment

I. Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) 4524 Bruce Avenue Appeal Decision

Planner Repya advised the Board that the City Council heard the appeal of the HPB's Certificate of Appropriateness decision which had approved a new home at 4524 Bruce Avenue, and agreed with the appellants, rescinding the approval of the proposed home, and ordering that the COA request should return to the HPB with a revised plan. The applicant, JMS Custom Homes was encouraged to revise the plans for the home by deleting the use of Hardi-board stucco panels, removing the front porch, and reducing the size of the third story window on the front elevation. Ms. Repya pointed out that in order for the COA request to return to the HPB, the applicant must submit a letter to the City waiving the 60 day action requirement – the letter is forthcoming. JMS has also been encouraged to meet with the neighbors to discuss a revised plan.

Board Members discussed the Council's decision, some wondering whether the HPB should re-evaluate the COA evaluation process for new homes. Member Anger commented that while he thought the proposed home lacked the restraint and austerity found in the surrounding homes, the COA process is working just fine as evidenced by the new home proposed at 4624 Bruce Avenue which was well received by the Board. Mr. Anger added that he believed the home proposed by JMS was an anomaly, and should not trigger the revamp of a process that has been working.

Member Davis commented that the District's Plan of Treatment provides direction; however should still provide for creativity. He added that it is the responsibility of the Board to provide thorough feedback to the applicant during the preliminary review, and not raise additional concerns at the final review.

Member Curran agreed with Member Davis and noted that the home proposed by JMS was replacing a Contemporary style home, and the direction provided in the Plan of Treatment is to ensure that the new home is compatible with the surrounding homes, not that it replicate the historic homes. The HPB is required to ensure that projects brought before them uphold the District's Plan of Treatment – the design review process is not a “beauty contest”. Ms. Curran added that she would encourage anyone designing a new home in the Country Club District to engage the closest neighbors in the process.

2. Compatibility & Use of Synthetic Materials

Planner Repya observed that a large part of the dissatisfaction with the home JMS proposed for 4524 Bruce Avenue centered on the use of Hardi-board stucco panels in lieu of traditional stucco. The Plan of Treatment addresses that issue by stating that “The use of non-traditional materials (such as Hardi-Plank siding and steel roofing) should be considered on a case-by-case basis; imitative wood or masonry finishes should duplicate the size, shape, color, and texture of materials historically used in the District. Aluminum and vinyl siding are not appropriate for street facades.” Addressing this section of the Plan of Treatment, the question that was raised regarding the use of the Hardi-board stucco was whether in this case the application was in character with its surroundings in the district – The HPB determined it was, and the City Council deemed that it was not.

Member Christiaansen commented that she did not have issue with the use of the synthetic Hardi-board stucco panels, however felt that the roof design was too articulated, and the architecture of the home was not complimentary to its surroundings.

Planner Repya provided the HPB with copies of a Preservation Brief from the National Park Service entitled “Architectural Character Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character”. Ms. Repya predicated recommending this brief by pointing out that the information is written to assist in the evaluation of historic structures, not in-fill construction. However a very helpful checklist for evaluating the architectural character of a structure is provided that could be re-crafted to address new homes built in the district. Elements recommended in the checklist include:

- Shape
- Roof & Roof Features
- Openings (Windows/Doors)
- Projections (Porches/Cornices/Bay Windows/Balconies/Chimneys, etc.)
- Trim & Secondary Features
- Materials
- Setting

The Board agreed the brief would be a good addition to their “preservation tool kit”, and something that could be shared with COA applicants. No formal action was taken.

3. Accessory Mechanical Equipment

Planner Repya shared with the Board an inquiry received from Rebecca Lundberg, owner of Powerfully Green regarding the potential for installing solar panels on the south elevation of the roof of a home at 4515 Casco Avenue. In a letter to the Board, Ms. Lundberg stated that a similar solar energy system was installed on the south-facing roof of a detached garage at 4212 W. 44th Street. Photos of similar solar panel installations, and 4515 Casco Avenue were also provided. Ms. Lundberg indicated that her company has worked with the City of St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission on several projects, however understands that each preservation commission has their own criteria, thus she wanted to know the opinion of the potential roof-top solar application in Edina.

Ms. Repya also had provided the Board with articles addressing solar panels in historic districts, as well as the section of the Country Club District's Plan of Treatment regarding accessory mechanical equipment which states that "Mechanical equipment, solar panels, air conditioners, satellite dishes, and antennae should be concealed whenever possible or placed in an inconspicuous location so as not to intrude or detract from historic facades and streetscapes."

The Board discussed the concept of incorporating modern, energy efficient features in a historic district. Member Davis commented that, as stated in the Plan of Treatment, the applicability of installing solar panels should be predicated upon them not hampering the historic façade or streetscape. Member Christiaansen pointed out that solar panels are not designed as part of the building – they are added on and are limited in their application. She continued that ideally, the panels should be flush with the roof to be the least intrusive; however that is not always possible, since some must be angled to attract the best sunlight.

Following a brief discussion, the Board agreed that the Plan of Treatment provides guidance for the installation of solar panels; however a Certificate of Appropriateness would not be required. It was agreed that homeowners considering adding solar panels to their homes should share their plans with their immediate neighbors. No formal action was taken.

B. 32nd Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference – September 13-14, Fergus Falls, MN.

Planner Repya reported that the Annual State Preservation Conference will take place this year in Fergus Falls, September 13-14. Because Edina is a CLG (Certified Local Government) city, we qualify for scholarship funding up to \$1,200 for members attending both days of the conference. The scholarship will cover mileage, lodging and the conference registration.

Board members observed that because Fergus Falls is so far away, one would need to stay overnight and attend both days of the conference. Ms. Repya added she would be attending the conference, and Chair Carr has expressed an interest in attending. The scholarship is available on a first come – first served basis, thus Board Members were encouraged to let Ms. Repya know if they were interested in attending as soon as possible.

Edina Heritage Preservation Board

Minutes

August 13, 2012

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS - None

VIII. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Member Stegner observed that there was a very good article in the Sunday, August 12th Home section of the *Star Tribune* on Mid-Century homes in the Twin Cities, which he encouraged his fellow Board Members to read.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS None

X. NEXT MEETING DATE September 11, 2012

XI. ADJOURNMENT 8:15 p.m.

Member Davis moved the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 p.m. Member Curran seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Repya**