

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD  
TUESDAY, March 14, 2006, AT 7:00 P.M.  
EDINA CITY HALL – MAYOR’S CONFERENCE ROOM  
4801 WEST 50<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Marie Thorpe, Chris Rofidal, Karen Ferrara, Lou Blemaster, Arlene Forrest, Laura Benson and Ian Yue

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Bob Kojetin

**STAFF PRESENT:** Joyce Repya, Associate Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Robert Vogel, Heritage Preservation Consultant  
Scott Busyn, Great Neighborhood Homes  
Leo & Marilyn Pertl, 4525 Casco Avenue  
James & Amy Vose, 4529 Casco Avenue  
Andy Porter, JMS Custom Homes  
James Schoenwetter, JMS Custom Homes  
William Mize, 4606 Bruce Avenue  
Kitty O’Dea, 4610 Bruce Avenue

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Planner Repya introduced Laura Benson, the newest member of the Heritage Preservation Board.

**I. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Member Rofidal moved to nominate Bob Kojetin to the office of Chairman of the HPB. Planner Repya explained that although Member Kojetin was absent from the meeting, he had indicated to her that if he were to be nominated for an office, he would be willing to serve. Member Blemaster seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Member Blemaster moved to nominate Marie Thorpe to the office of Vice Chairman of the HPB. Member Rofidal seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

Member Yue moved for approval of the minutes from the February 14, 2006 meeting. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

### **III. CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS: Country Club District**

#### **1. H-06-1 4527 Casco Avenue**

#### **Request: Convert attached garage to living space and build a detached Garage in the southeast corner of the rear yard**

Planner Repya explained that the subject property is located on the east side of the 4500 block of Casco Avenue. The existing home is a 1935 English Cottage style. A 2-car attached garage is located in the northeast corner of the house, accessed by a driveway running along the south property line.

The subject request involves demolishing the existing attached garage to make room for remodeled living space and building a new detached garage in the southeast corner of the rear yard. A new curb cut is not required since the existing driveway will provide access to the proposed garage.

The new detached garage is proposed to compliment the English Cottage architectural style of the home. Hardie shingle siding is proposed for the garage which will match the new siding planned to replace the existing stucco on the home. A Timberline asphalt shingled roof is proposed to match the house, and a roof pitch of 12/12 is provided. The height of the garage is shown to be 22 feet at the highest peak, 16 feet to the mid-point of the gable, and 10 feet to the eave line. The closest adjacent structure is the tandem attached garage on the home to the south, 4529 Casco Avenue which maintains a five-foot setback from the shared side property line. The proposed garage is shown to be setback three feet from the side and rear property line, the minimum allowed by code.

Ms. Repya pointed out that the Heritage Preservation Board has reviewed plans for 12 similar two stall, detached garages in the Country Club District. Interestingly, 8 of the 12 were for homes of English Cottage Architectural style. All of the plans reviewed thus far, to include the subject proposal have done a good job of incorporating building materials and to compliment the principle structures. The subject plan provides attention to detail on all four elevations, with the use of windows, window boxes, and brackets to break up the long wall areas. Although, the height of the garage at the peak - 22' and 12/12 pitch provides for one of the taller garages, the plans presented have been reduced from a 26' height and 12/17 pitch that were originally submitted, and are now much closer to the averages of the new detached garages previously reviewed.

Consultant Vogel has recognized that the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties provides that new construction is an appropriate undertaking in an historic district when the new construction is compatible in size, scale, materials, color and texture with other buildings in the neighborhood. He

further observed that the subject plans do a good job of fitting in with the architecture of adjacent properties.

Planner Repya concluded that staff finds that detached garages are consistent with the historic pattern of residential development in the Country Club District. Furthermore, the proposed plan appears to meet the requirements of the Country Club District Plan of Treatment and will compliment the principle structure, thus approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness is recommended subject to the plans presented.

Mr. Scott Busyn, applicant for the Certificate of Appropriateness explained that the intent of the garage design is to both compliment the home and maintain the character of the neighborhood. Scale was considered, and at Staff's recommendation, the height of the proposed structure was lowered by 4 feet to be consistent with the garages previously reviewed by the Board.

Mr. James Vose the neighbor at 4529 Casco Avenue, abutting subject garage to the south asked the Board if they had visited the site. He pointed out that the subject property has a retaining wall running along the south property line creating a grade difference of 3 ½ to 4 feet between their properties. That being the case, the 22 foot high garage is actually 26 feet high from his property. He then asked if the garage should be further reduced to accommodate the grade change.

Member Rofidal asked Mr. Vose if he was concerned about the architectural design of the garage. Mr. Vose responded that he was not concerned about the design or construction. His concern was how the garage would appear from his property. He added that he believed too often very large structures are being built on the small lots in the Country Club District neighborhood.

Member Blemaster appreciated Mr. Vose's concerns, pointing out that the livability of his rear yard should be a consideration.

Responding to the question of whether the height of the garage could be lowered, Mr. Busyn observed that to reduce the 22 foot height by 4 feet to accommodate the grade change would create an 18 foot high structure, and the pitch of the roof would be too wide.

Mr. Busyn further explained that he has been working with Mr. Vose in designing the garage and did not realize the grade difference between the two properties was a concern. He added that to alleviate drainage problems they will provide footings for the garage as well as a drain tile system.

Member Benson asked Mr. Vose how tall he felt the garage should be. Mr. Vose answered that he didn't know and wasn't sure it needed to be lowered. His concern was whether the new garage is appropriate, and if the HPB felt it was appropriate

after taking the grade difference into consideration, then he would be satisfied. However, he questioned whether a decision could be made without visiting the site.

Discussion ensued regarding the differences between the two properties, after which, Consultant Vogel pointed out that the subject garage meets the standards and guidelines determined for the district. When the homes were originally built, garages were smaller and more utilitarian – rarely did they architecturally match the house, and more often they were not visible from the front street. However, the garages desired for today’s lifestyles are larger to accommodate that second car, bicycles, lawnmowers, etc. and more closely match the architectural style of the home – this is not a bad thing.

Mr. Vogel further pointed out that the charge of the HPB is to protect the character of the subject property as well as the neighboring properties. He added that the topography of the district is undulating, and it is not uncommon to find variances in grade between abutting properties.

Mrs. Marilyn Pertl, 4525 Casco Avenue explained that she lives in the home abutting the subject property to the north, in the home built by her parents. She remembered when her home was built garages needed to be recessed from the street. The district is becoming so built out that some yards are no larger than postage stamps.

Member Forrest agreed with Mrs. Pertl expressing her concern for the loss of permeable surfaces. She added that due to the grade difference, she would want assurance that the new garage was well engineered so problems don’t occur down the road.

Mr. Vose stated that he was comfortable with the plans for the garage.

Mrs. Forrest further stated that she felt the proposed garage was extremely attractive. Although the garage will be visible from the street, the original design of the district did not take into consideration current lifestyles and compromises must be considered.

Member Blemaster observed that she did not believe that reducing the pitch of the garage would address Mr. Vose’s concerns. Board members agreed, pointing out that perhaps buffering the south property line with landscaping or a fence would soften the impact of the structure on Mr. Vose’s property.

Member Thorpe stated that she felt the plan was fabulous; the garage meets the guidelines for the district, however, the grade difference between the properties was a concern. Mrs. Thorpe then moved to hold this item over, allowing the Board an opportunity to visit the site.

Members Ferrara and Forrest opined that while the difference in grade should be taken into consideration, the request should not be put on hold and action should be taken now. Member Thorpe’s motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Vose agreed that the garage will be a handsome structure and indicated that he would be open to work with Mr. Busyn on a plan to mitigate the impact of the garage on his property. Mr. Busyn and Mr. Vose agreed to come up with a landscape/screening plan that would address Mr. Vose's concerns regarding the impact of the garage on his property.

Member Ferrara moved to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness to build a new detached garage in the southeast corner of the property subject to the plans presented and the condition that the Mr. Busyn and Mr. Vose agree upon a landscape/screening plan for the south property line. Member Forrest seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

## **2. H-06-2 4608 Bruce Avenue**

### **Request: Demolish existing house and build a new house**

Planner Repya explained that the subject property is located on the west side of the 4600 block of Bruce Avenue. The existing home, constructed in 1974 is a Contemporary style with a 2 car garage attached garage front loading off of Bruce Avenue. The existing home is unique in the district for several reasons, not only is it one of the few Contemporary style homes, all of which were built in the 1970's, but the home is also a rear walk-out which created some challenges when designing the proposed home.

The subject request is to demolish the existing home and construct a new home on the site. The plans for the new home illustrate a 2-story English Cottage style structure with an attached 2 car garage on the rear, walk-out portion of the house. The garage will be accessed by a new driveway proposed on the south side of the lot. The exterior finishes for the home are shown to be wood shake like siding (Hardiboard composite) with stone accents. The roof is proposed to offer varying sized gables (from a 12/15 pitch to a 12/10) and will be covered with a composite shingle material.

Ms. Repya pointed out that an important element when reviewing a new home in the Country Club District, in addition to the architectural style, is to determine how the home will compare in size and massing to the adjacent homes. The comparative illustration provided by JMS Homes demonstrates an overall building height of 27.5 feet to the highest point of the ridge for the proposed home. The home to the north, 4606 Bruce Avenue is shown to have an overall height of 24 feet, 4.9 feet shorter and the home to the south measures 21.66 feet at the highest point of the ridge, totaling 5.9 feet shorter than the proposed home. The survey for the subject property illustrates the ridge elevations of the houses on the east side of Bruce Avenue, directly across the street which range from .7 to 4.6 feet shorter than what is being proposed.

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The proponent has indicated that every attempt has been made to lessen the difference in building heights – 9 foot ceilings are provided on the first floor, but only 8 foot ceiling heights are proposed on the second story to lessen the overall building height.

The subject proposal requires no variances from the Zoning Ordinance as it meets the criteria established for building height, lot coverage and setback requirements.

Planner Repya observed that the preservation goals in the Country Club District focus on maintaining the historic integrity of the neighborhood. While the plan of treatment does not prevent the demolition of original structures, the charge of the Heritage Preservation Board is to ensure that the new structures not only meet the identified guidelines, but also blend in well with surrounding structures and add to the district's historic character.

The Country Club District plan of treatment stipulates that the facade walls for new construction should be two stories in height. Given the challenges of the subject lot, the proposed home, while somewhat taller than the adjacent homes, appears not to be out of place with the neighborhood.

Consultant, Robert Vogel has reviewed the proposed plan and determined that the tear down and proposed new construction meets the objectives of the plan of treatment and is consistent with the guidelines for new home construction in the Country Club District. Furthermore, the proposed structure appears to be visually compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Vogel suggested that a plaque be displayed on the new home with the year of construction – “2006” to differentiate it from the original homes in the district.

Ms. Repya concluded that she agreed with Mr. Vogel, and would recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness request subject to the plans presented, the requirement that a year built plaque be displayed on the structure, and approval of the plan by the Building, Planning, and Engineering Departments.

Andy Porter with JMS Homes stated that he had a correction to the information provided with the application. The height of the home to the south was presented at 21 feet 8 inches, however it actually stands 25 feet high. The difference between the proposed home and the southerly home remains at 5.9 feet as reported.

Kitty O'Dea the owner of the southerly home, 4610 Bruce Avenue stated that she has reviewed the plans and finds the proposal to be lovely, however she expressed concern regarding the elevation of the subject property as it relates to the neighboring properties. Mrs. O'Dea observed that the subject lot sits higher than the adjacent properties to accommodate the existing walkout home on the site. She wondered if it wouldn't be possible to reduce the grade of the subject lot.

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Mr. Porter explained that the home was designed to taking the differences of grade into consideration. The first floor ceiling height is proposed to be 9 feet with an 8 foot height on the second floor; typically, 10 foot ceiling heights are seen in new homes.

Mr. Porter added that currently the drainage on the subject lot and surrounding properties works. To reduce the grade of the subject property could potentially cause drainage problems for the neighboring homes.

Consultant Vogel explained that varying elevations and undulating streetscapes add to the charm of the Country Club neighborhood. He observed that the HPB should not control the grades.

Mrs. O’Dea explained that she was O.K. with a 6 foot difference in building height – It was the fear of a 10 foot difference that concerned her. She added that she liked the shake siding on the entire south elevation, pointing out that the existing home has cinderblock walls on the walkout level abutting her home.

William Mize the owner of 4606 Bruce Avenue, the property abutting to the north stated that he had originally seen a plan with a shared driveway on the north side of the property and was curious to see the current proposal. He indicated that he liked the plan and had no objections.

Member Rofidal asked Planner Repya if there would be interim inspections of the project to ensure that the home was being built in compliance with the plans that would be approved. Ms. Repya responded that the interim inspections would occur.

The Board briefly discussed the proposed plan agreeing that they appreciated the attention to detail and the consideration taken for the differences in grade of the neighboring homes. Member Ferrara then moved for approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing home and build a new home. Member Blemaster seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

Member Forrest observed that JMS has gone through two Certificate of Appropriateness applications processes with the Board and asked if Mr. Porter and Mr. Schoenwetter would be willing to share their insights into the process, as well as what they find homebuyers are looking for in a new home.

Mr. Porter observed that in the Country Club District, character is very important. Old world charm in the architecture with today’s technology is a high priority. Families also desire large kitchen/family activity rooms, in addition to a formal dining room that can accommodate a crowd on the holidays.

Addressing the process, Mr. Porter stated that he has found it to be productive in meeting the goals of the established plan of treatment for the district and beneficial in creating a quality product.

Mr. Schoenwetter observed that when designing new homes in Edina that meet the desires of the current homeowner, he has found it very important to start with a new foundation. So many of the rebuilt lots that work with existing foundations create structures that loom over neighboring properties in order to accommodate the taller ceilings demanded. With the exception of the new home review in the Country Club District, in the rest of the City, the relationship of the new home to neighboring properties is not taken into consideration, creating situations where a new home may be taller than it would have to be if a new foundation were dug; going deeper can allow for the accommodation of the taller ceilings in the home with less impact on surrounding properties. Mr. Schoenwetter opined that it would serve the city well to require new foundations for rebuilt homes; the added expense he stated would be incremental to the advantages reaped.

Board members thanked Mr. Porter and Mr. Schoenwetter for their insights and wished them luck on their project.

#### **IV. BROWDALE BRIDGE REHABILITATION:**

Planner Repya explained that she sent them copies of the Staff Report the City Council received requesting a resolution to support a variance from MNDOT's requirements for bridge construction. Specifically the variance requested involves a reduced bridge width of 21'10" from the 24' requirement. The variance will be heard by MDOT on Thursday, March 16, 2006. Assuming the variance is approved, the City's Engineering Department working with the engineering firm TKDA & Associates will begin the final plans. Wayne Houle, City Engineer has advised that he will bring the Certificate of Appropriateness application for the rehabilitation to the HPB in May or June with projected construction to occur in the fall.

Ms. Repya pointed out she intended is to keep the Board advised on the progress of the project. No formal action was required.

Board members appreciated the update and looked forward to addressing the project later in the spring.

#### **V. INTERLACHEN BOULEVARD TRAIL SURVEY: Update**

Robert Vogel explained that his firm will begin survey work on the four identified historic properties abutting the proposed trail in April and May. Of the properties identified, he would like volunteers from the HPB to assist in the research on the Interlachen Country Club. He will have a work schedule developed by the April meeting at which time Board members will be able to sign up to participate in the research.

Board members expressed their interest in participating in the research. No formal action was taken.

**VI. MAY – PRESERVATION MONTH & ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARD:**

Planner Repya reminded the Board that May is Preservation Month. Traditionally, the Board has taken this opportunity to recognize the preservation efforts in the community by awarding the Edina Heritage Award. Advertisements for the acceptance of nominations will appear in the “Edina Sun Current” and “About Town” magazine. The deadline for nominations will be the middle of April with the award to be presented by the City Council at their May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Repya encouraged Board members to reflect on projects they have seen which they may choose to nominate for the award. She reminded them that members of the HPB are not eligible to receive the award.

A brief discussion ensued in which Board members discussed possible candidates. Member Forrest stated that she thought Heritage Award program was a great way to educate the public on the importance of heritage preservation in the community. No formal action was taken.

**VII. OTHER BUSINESS:** None

**VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE:** April 11, 2006

**IX . ADJOURNMENT:** 9:30 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Joyce Repya*

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