

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2007, AT 7:00 P.M.  
EDINA CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM  
4801 WEST 50<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Bob Kojetin, Marie Thorpe, Chris Rofidal, Arlene Forrest, Laura Benson, Karen Ferrara, Nancy Scherer, Lou Blemaster,

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Laura Benson

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Robert Vogel, Preservation Consultant  
Dan & Cheryl Dulas, 4609 Bruce Ave.  
JoAnn Farley, 4615 Bruce Ave.  
Kitty O’Dea, 4610 Bruce Ave.

**I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: December 7<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

Member Forrest questioned whether it was appropriate to conduct additional business, including approval of minutes, at the special meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Member Rofidal then moved approval of the Minutes from the December 7, 2006 and December 12, 2006 meetings. Member Blemaster seconded the motion. All voted aye, with the exception of Member Thorpe who abstained because she did not attend either meeting. The motion carried.

**II. APPEAL OF COA (H-06-8) 4608 BRUCE AVENUE: Heard by City Council January 2, 2007**

Planner Repya explained that on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, the City Council heard an appeal of the Heritage Preservation Board’s December 12<sup>th</sup> decision regarding the Certificate of Appropriateness for changes to the original building plans for 4608 Bruce Avenue. Several neighbors were appealing the changes approved for the South elevation. They did not have an issue with the window placement, however, after researching the manufactured stone product to be used, opined that it was an inferior product to natural stone. The additional width of the stone when compared to the cedar shakes was also cited as a problem due to the protrusion into the 12 foot driveway abutting the south property line.

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Ms. Kitty O’Dea, owner of 4610 Bruce Avenue, the southerly abutting property owner stated that she did not want the stone on the south elevation because she thought the cedar shakes would have a softer look.

The City Council voted 3 to 2 to deny the neighborhood appeal for changes to the Certificate of Appropriateness approved on December 7, 2006, with the exception of the following elements on the Southerly elevation – 1. Stone replacing the cedar shakes, and 2. The railing under the easterly windows on the first floor, both of which the Council agreed were not appropriate due in part to the additional protrusion into the 12 foot driveway width.

Member Rofidal stated that he attended the Council meeting and was still somewhat confused as to how the Board should proceed in the future. It had been his understanding that with the new home at 4608 Bruce Avenue, the difficulty in providing the minimum 12 foot driveway width was a zoning and building issue, not a heritage preservation issue. However, Council member Swenson stated that the reason she moved to not allow the stone and railing on the south wall was because it would protrude into the required 12 foot driveway.

Discussion ensued regarding the differences when addressing historic homes versus the construction of new homes in historic districts. Consultant Vogel observed nationally, new construction has been a chronic problem for heritage preservation. He added that the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards require that new construction shall be differentiated from old, and it shall not destroy the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Vogel recalled that when the Plan of Treatment was adopted in 2002, there was a great deal of discussion regarding identifying those houses that did not reflect the historic character of the district. The Board entertained only allowing the more contemporary homes to be torn down, however, at that time, the Council agreed that they wanted to treat all properties the same. Consequently, as long as a home would not qualify for heritage landmark status in its own right, the home could be torn, if the owner proved to the Heritage Preservation Board that the replacement home met the criteria of the Plan of Treatment.

Member Scherer observed that Edina is in the midst of huge residential redevelopment, and the problems which have arisen in the Country Club District are seen in neighborhoods throughout the City – The difference, however, is that in the Country Club District, these issues of height, massing and driveway widths may also have an adverse impact on the historic integrity of this landmark district.

Board members agreed that the original brochure focused on what one saw from the front street. Furthermore, there is no information available regarding garages, driveways, or retaining walls. Consultant Vogel pointed out that the 1980 survey of the district provides a photograph, the year built, and the architectural style of each home. Moving forward, if decisions regarding such things as grading and

driveway width are required, the Board will need to gather that baseline information. Fortunately, the re-survey of the district scheduled in the upcoming work plan will address some of these issues for the first time.

Member Forrest stated that she was glad the appeal came before the Council because it brings these important issues to the forefront. She added that she had not been aware of the appeal and asked that in the future, if a decision of the Board is appealed to the City Council, that the HPB is notified.

Chairman Kojetin asked if the neighbors present had any comments. The following people spoke:

JoAnn Farley – 4615 Bruce Avenue

- Ms. Farley appreciated the discussion of the Board.
- She pointed out that the Country Club District was developed in two sections, the east side with small lots and small homes, and the west side with larger lots and larger, more expensive homes. Today, developers are coming into the district, buying the smaller homes on the east side because they are more affordable, tearing these homes down and replacing them with homes that are no longer fitting with the east side of the district, but perhaps more like what one might see on the west side of the neighborhood.
- She added that she feels passionate about what is happening in her neighborhood, stating that it is not the new construction she objects to, however she is concerned that the new construction thus far does not fit with the surrounding homes.

Dan Dulas – 4609 Bruce Avenue

- Mr. Dulas commented that he believes that the neighborhood needs to educate themselves regarding the issues of redevelopment in the district.
- He stated that he agreed with Council Member Swenson's comment that the Heritage Preservation Board needs to look at the big picture when addressing new construction to include driveways and retaining walls.
- He pointed out that builders should be encouraged to build homes that fit within the surrounding homes; adding that he does not want to see the speculation activity because the speculative developers are not vested in the neighborhood, rather they are focused on investing in the neighborhood.

Kitty O'Dea – 4610 Bruce Avenue

- Ms. O'Dea stated that she has learned a lot through this process and would like to use what she's learned to advocate for the neighborhood.

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- The piecemeal issues which appear to be the responsibilities of different departments within the city need to be addressed together.
- In addition to the total tear down of a home, the HPB should also regulate quasi-teardowns and reconstructions where the historic facades of homes are being changed.
- The materials proposed need to be scrutinized more closely with regard to the amount of primary materials versus accent materials. Through her observations of homes in the neighborhood, she has determined that stone is used predominately as an accent material, not as a primary material.
- She stated her appreciation for the work of the HPB, acknowledging that the best interest of the historic landmark district is a common goal.

Cheryl Dulas – 4609 Bruce Avenue

- Ms. Dulas expressed her appreciation to the HPB and stated that the appeal of the decision was in no way meant as a slam to the Board. However, the issues with JMS and the subject home had reached a point where she and those who submitted the appeal felt as though that was their only recourse.

Chairman Kojetin thanked the neighbors for their comments and ensured them that the Heritage Preservation Board is committed to work with the neighborhood toward the common goal of maintaining the historic integrity of the district. A brief discussion ensued. No formal action was taken.

**III. NATIONAL TRUST CONFERENCE – OCTOBER 1-6, 2007  
PLANNING A FIELD SESSION HIGHLIGHTING EDINA:**

Consultant Vogel reminded the Board that at the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the HPB and Edina Historical Society agreed to host a field session for attendees of the National Trust Conference that will be held in the Twin Cities from October 1 – 6 2007.

Mr. Vogel presented the Board with the proposal for the “Heritage Preservation in a First-Ring Suburb” session which is due to the selection committee at the end of the week.

The proposed session would be a full-day, guided bus tour with stops at selected heritage preservation sites that will focus in-depth on the following local preservation issues:

- Design review in an early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential district
- Rural heritage preserved in the suburban landscape
- Interpretation at suburban historic sites

- Comprehensive planning for heritage preservation
- Preservation values of shopping malls

City staff and members of the Heritage Preservation Board are proposed to serve as tour guides and presenters, assisted by volunteers from the Edina Historical Society.

Following a brief discussion, the Board agreed that providing a field session for the National Trust Conference would be an honor with the added benefit of having an excellent historic tour that could be used in the future. Member Scherer then moved to authorize that the Heritage Preservation Board submit the proposal for a field session for the National Preservation Conference as proposed by Consultant Vogel. Member Blemaster seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

#### **IV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's):**

Consultant Vogel presented the Board with the list of 17 FAQ's which they had finalized at the August 2006 meeting. Board members reviewed the list and made suggestions for clarifications to some of the points. Mr. Vogel recorded the corrections/clarifications and agreed to provide an updated list at their next meeting.

Chairman Kojetin commented that the FAQ's should be a tool the Board continually reviews and updates as questions might arise - observing that the interaction that has taken place with the Bruce Avenue house has brought to light questions and misconceptions that the Board had not previously considered.

Mr. Vogel promised to have the updated FAQ list for their review at the February meeting. The Board thanked Mr. Vogel for his work and agreed that once they have reviewed the additions, they would like the FAQ list posed on the web site and available in a paper format as well. No formal action was taken.

#### **V. RE-SURVEY OF THE COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT:**

Consultant Vogel explained that the proposed re-survey of the historic Country Club District will identify and gather information on the architectural and landscape resources located within the district boundaries. It will include field survey as well as planning and background research, organization and presentation of survey data, and the development of a revised inventory of heritage resources worthy of preservation.

Mr. Vogel pointed out that the underlying reason for undertaking a re-survey at this time is to gather the information needed for making wise design review decisions in relation to applications for Certificate of Appropriateness. The Country Club District was originally surveyed in 1979 and the data was used to assemble the documentation that resulted in the district's listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. The same information was used to support the rezoning as an Edina Heritage Landmark District in 2003. Now, the existing inventory is 25 years old and somewhat out-of-date with existing conditions. One of the chief goals of the re-survey is to compare what exists today with the resources that were recorded in 1979. Another critical planning objective is to identify and evaluate the preservation value of garages, driveways, streets, vegetation, and other features that were not included in the 1979 survey or the National Register registration documents.

Mr. Vogel elaborated on several specific research tasks that will need to be carried out by the Heritage Preservation Board and its consultant, assisted by city staff and volunteers.

Member Blemaster asked how volunteers would be involved in the project. Consultant Vogel explained that community volunteers could participate in the survey by:

1. Gathering information about homes, garages, and other features in the district from property tax assessment records, back issues of community newspapers, and other sources;
2. Helping record field data on individual properties (photography, measurements, and interviews with owners); and
3. Organizing the hard survey data (old survey records, field survey forms, photographs, maps, etc.) in a set of inventory files (organized by location) that will make it accessible and usable.

Mr. Vogel added that the HPB members' participation and all volunteer work will be supervised by the consultant and city staff.

Chairman Kojetin asked how long the survey should take. Vogel explained that to adequately survey the entire district which makes up 550 properties could take several years, however, if the project begins in May, by mid-summer there should be good results using samplings by blocks and sections. The actual leg work will begin in April or May when the weather is more conducive. However, in the meantime, a checklist and timeline will be created.

Kojetin added that it would be wise to send a notice to the district residents advising them of the survey that will be taking place. The Board agreed, pointing out the importance of keeping the neighborhood informed.

Following a brief discussion, Board members agreed that they looked forward to the new survey which will provide the necessary baseline information to more effectively address the heritage preservation needs in the district. No formal action was taken.

**VI. COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT – Neighborhood Survey Results:**

Planner Repya reminded the Board that a group of neighborhood residents in the Country Club District have been working on a survey to gather opinions on the “City of Edina’s current guidelines for construction and major reconstruction in the Edina Heritage Landmark District.” The survey was completed in December and the results provided to the Board for their review.

The Board expressed their appreciation to the neighborhood group for their hard work. All agreed the survey was very thorough and contained useful information.

Discussion ensued regarding how the Board should use the information in the survey. Members stated while the survey is a valid tool that should be taken into consideration, the Board should be cautious about making any changes predicated solely on the information provided in the survey.

Member Blemaster pointed out that the people want to be heard, and it is important that the Board take into consideration the survey when evaluating procedures and guidelines. The Board agreed with Blemaster.

Consultant Vogel observed that the politics of the process is reflected in the survey. He added that the Heritage Preservation Board has traditionally been responsive to concerns as they arise and not locked into rules. It was agreed when establishing the landmark designation for the district that due to limited resources, the City would not be able to regulate everything; thus the plan of treatment as it currently exists was an attempt to strike a balance between protecting the historic district while providing for individual property rights.

Mr. Vogel suggested that the Board look at the survey with the Plan of Treatment in mind.

Cheryl Dulas, 4609 Bruce Avenue opined that the Board needs to clearly define their goals to the neighborhood. The brochure alludes to the goals, but it is not specific and leaves one with many questions.

Following a brief discussion, Planner Repya offered to send Jane Lonquist, the chairman of the neighborhood group a letter of thanks for the hard work on the survey. All agreed that would be an excellent idea. No formal action was taken.

**VII. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. League of Women Voters Study:**

Member Forrest, President of the Edina League of Women Voters thanked the board for participating in the League's survey of boards and commissions. She reported that once the study results were compiled, the League drafted the following position statement: (adopted May 2006)

League of Women Voters – Edina supports:

- \*Codified, uniform term limits for all appointed advisory boards and commissions;
- \*Appointment to advisory boards and commissions that reflect the demographics of the City of Edina;
- \*Accurate, consistent, accessible and timely publication of:
  - \* the purpose of advisory boards and commissions, openings on boards and commissions, and application/appointment process;
  - \* advisory board and commission members names, term dates and contact information;
  - \* city staff liaison names and contact information;
  - \* advisory board and commission meeting notices, agendas and minutes.

**B. Board Members Identified on the Web Site:**

Continuing the conversation from the League of Women Voter's survey, board members discussed the importance of identifying the members of the board on the City's web site. All agreed that would be a good idea. Discussion ensued regarding whether to include phone numbers and/or addresses. Member Scherer moved that the identity of the board members be listed on the City's web site. Member Forrest seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried. Planner Repya indicated that she would ensure that the information posted for the board was consistent with that of other boards and commissions.

**VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE:** February 13, 2007

**Respectfully submitted,**  
*Joyce Repya*

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