

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EDINA HERITAGE PRESERVATION BOARD
TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2007, AT 7:00 P.M.
EDINA CITY HALL – COMMUNITY ROOM
4801 WEST 50TH STREET**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bob Kojetin, Chris Rofidal, Karen Ferrara,
Nancy Scherer, Lou Blemaster, Connie Fukuda, Jean
Rehkamp Larson, and Sara Rubin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Laura Benson

STAFF PRESENT: Joyce Repya, Associate Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: Robert Vogel, Preservation Consultant
Tom Mason, 4622 Casco Avenue
Gail Simons, 4620 Casco Avenue
Don McCormick, 4523 Casco Avenue

I. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: May 8, 2007

Member Ferrara moved approval of the Minutes from the May 8, 2007 meeting.
Member Rofidal seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

II. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS:

**1. H-07-5 4622 Casco Avenue
New Detached Garage**

Planner Repya explained that the subject property is located on the west side of the 4600 block of Casco Avenue. The existing home is identified as an American Colonial Revival with Georgian Revival influence, constructed in 1941. A 2-car attached garage is located in the rear of the home on the south side, accessed by a driveway running along the north property line.

The subject request involves converting the existing 2 stall attached garage into living space which will be reduced in size somewhat to meet lot coverage requirements, and building a new detached garage in the northwest corner of the rear yard.

Ms. Repya explained that the new detached garage is proposed to measure 20' x 20', or 400 square feet in area. The garage has been designed to compliment the Colonial architectural style of the home, with asphalt shingles and stucco

siding to match. Windows with planter boxes are proposed on the north, west and south elevations. A service door is also proposed for the south elevations. The front or east elevation will have external wall lanterns on either side of a double overhead carriage door. The height of the garage is shown to be 16 feet at the highest peak, 12.5 feet to the mid-point of the gable, and 8.5 feet to the eave line. The setback of the proposed garage is shown to be 3 feet from the side and rear lot lines. With the introduction of the 400 square foot garage on the property, the lot coverage for the property will be maximized at 30%.

Information was provided regarding the heights of the surrounding garages; the properties to the north and south have attached garages. The three properties to the west on Drexel Avenue all have detached garages that are taller than the proposed garage.

Ms. Repya concluded that the data provided with the application indicates the proposed garage is consistent with the surrounding structures, and appears to be within the range of new garages previously approved by the Board. Staff finds that the plans provided with subject request clearly illustrate the scale and scope of the project relative to the principle home as well as the adjacent properties. The plans also demonstrate an attention to detail on all elevations. Furthermore, the information provided supporting the subject Certificate of Appropriateness meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the Country Club Plan of Treatment, thus approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new garage is recommended subject to the plans presented.

Board Member Comments:

Member Blemaster stated that she was pleased to see architectural details on all elevations and found the garage door to be interesting.

Member Fukuda said she thought the planter boxes under the windows added a nice detail.

Board members agreed that the application package was very complete and did a good job of representing the proposed project.

Homeowner Comments:

Tom Mason thanked the Board for their support and added that he found the suggestions from City Staff to be very helpful as he was designing the garage.

Decision:

Member Blemaster moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to build a new detached garage in the northwest corner of the rear yard subject to the

plans presented. Member Ferrara seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

**2. H-07-6 4523 Casco Avenue
New Detached Garage**

Planner Repya explained that the subject property is located on the east side of the 4500 block of Casco Avenue. The existing home is identified as an English Cottage style constructed in 1927. A 2-car detached garage is located in the rear yard, 13 feet from the side (north) lot line and 20 feet from the rear (east lot line), accessed by a driveway running along the north property line.

The subject request involves demolishing the existing 407 square foot detached garage and building a new, 528 square foot detached garage. The plan illustrates the new structure will maintain a 4 foot side yard setback from the north and a 3 foot rear yard setback from the east; a minimum 3 foot setback is required. A new curb cut is not required since the existing driveway will provide access to the proposed garage.

The new 2 stall detached garage is proposed to be 22'x 24' or 528 square feet in area. The design of the structure is proposed to compliment the architectural style of the home which recently underwent an addition to the rear. Hardi panel stucco siding is proposed for the walls and GAF Timberline 30 shingles to match the house are proposed for the roof. The height of the proposed garage is shown to be 18 feet at the highest peak, 13.4 feet at the mid-point of the gable, and 9 feet at the eave line. The lot coverage for the property with the proposed garage will be 2,028 square feet in area or 29.2%; the maximum allowed by code is 30% or 2,083 square feet.

Information was provided regarding characteristics of garages adjacent to the subject property. The data indicates that the proposed garage is taller than the surrounding structures, however, appears to be within the range of new garages previously approved by the Board.

Planner Repya concluded that the plans provided with subject request demonstrate an attention to detail on all elevations, and clearly illustrate the scale and scope of the project relative to the principle home. Furthermore, the information provided meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the Country Club Plan of Treatment, thus approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the new garage is recommended subject to the plans presented.

Board Member Comments:

Members Scherer, Rehkamp Larson, Ferrara and Kojetin questioned the use of hardi panel stucco on the exterior rather than traditional stucco.

Ms. Rehkamp Larson observed that the joints created by the panels need to be caulked and would create a very flat texture compared to that of the home. She further opined that the application of stucco panels would not compliment the traditional stucco of the home.

Consultant Vogel explained that hardi panel stucco is a product usually found on commercial structures, which has a flatter texture when compared to traditional stucco. He added that the panels could be considered adequate on an accessory structure in the back of the lot, pointing out that the accessory structure should compliment the house, not necessarily match.

Member Rofidal stated that he was concerned about the height of the structure – at 18 feet to the peak; the proposed garage will be 6 feet taller than the garage to the north and 2 feet taller than the garage to the south.

Member Rehkamp Larson commented that the proposed 18 foot height with an 8/12 pitch is not an unusually tall garage. The city codes would allow the structure to be 4.5 feet taller. She added that she did not believe that the proposed garage should be penalized because the adjacent garages have a lower profile.

Member Blemaster observed that the southerly garage is exceptionally low with a 12 foot hipped roof. She further opined that the garage as proposed with the 18 foot height will compliment the home better than a structure with a lower roofline.

Member Rehkamp Larson also pointed out that the window proposed above the overhead garage door on the west elevation was tucked high into the peak of the gable end – she suggested lowering the window somewhat to be more centered.

Homeowner Comment:

Don McCormick explained that the choice to use hardi panel stucco was not for cost saving, rather, his wife's company does business with the manufacturer of the product. He added that if the Board would prefer traditional stucco, he would be happy to comply. He also agreed to Ms. Rehkamp Larson's suggestion to lower the window on the west elevation.

Addressing the height of the garage, Mr. McCormick stated that they would like additional storage space that would be afforded by the 18 foot height. He added that he did share the plans with the neighbors; however the issue of height was not specifically discussed.

Decision:

Member Scherer moved approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness to build a new detached garage in the northeast corner of the rear yard subject to the plans presented and the following conditions:

1. The hardi panel stucco proposed shall be replaced with traditional stucco
2. The window proposed on the west gable end shall be lowered somewhat to become more centered.

Member Rehkamp Larson seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

III. COUNTRY CLUB DISTRICT - Survey Progress Report – May:

Analysis of Deed Restrictions

Consultant Vogel reported that one of the re-survey tasks is fine-tuning the Plan of Treatment and to this end he has examined a number of the original Country Club covenants. Assuming that preservation goals would need to be compatible with the original Thorpe Bros. plan for the district, the applicable deed restrictions are as follows:

- Houses were required to face the street; a house on a corner lot had to face the same street as the “inside” house next door
- Setbacks: 30 feet from the front lot line to the front foundation wall (excluding porches); 3 feet to the side lot line, 7 feet from the side of a corner house to the street
- No house, including any attached garage and porches, could exceed 60% of lot coverage, nor could it have a width greater than 80% of the distance between the side lot lines
- Front porches, balconies, etc. could not project more than 12 feet from the front of the house; on houses occupying corner lots, side porches could not extend farther than 10 feet
- No bay window, dormer, stairway landing, cornice, or other projecting feature could project more than 18 inches from the front and sides of a house
- All outbuildings were required to “correspond in style and architecture to the residence to which such buildings are appurtenant” and for houses on corner lots, detached garages had to be located within 30 feet of the side of the house farthest from the adjoining side street
- Detached garages and outbuildings could not occupy more than 60% of the width of the rear lot line

- Exterior fuel storage tanks, signs greater than 480 square inches, and “objectionable” trees and shrubs were prohibited
- Concrete ramps or ribbons from the street to the sidewalk were required for all driveways
- Maximum height for fences was 4 feet 6 inches from grade, with no walls over 3 feet above grade on front yards
- House foundation walls could not exceed 3 feet 6 inches (measured from the elevation of the curb at the front lot line) unless the “natural grade” of the lot was greater (in which case the natural grade could be the finish grade)
- No walls, steps, or other construction (excluding sidewalks) could encroach on the boulevard

Mr. Vogel observed that the Heritage Preservation Board may want to incorporate some (perhaps all) of the 1920s-1940s restrictions in the revised plan of treatment document.

Architectural Classification

Regarding the architectural classification of the homes in the district, Mr. Vogel explained that he is recommending the Board reclassify the historic homes in the district with respect to architectural style, using the classifications developed by Virginia and Lee McAlester for their *A Field Guide to American Houses*. The new architectural classifications are:

- A. Colonial Revival (replaces “American Colonial Revival,” “American Georgian”, “Cape Cod Colonial”, “Dutch Colonial Revival”, “Federal Revival”, “New England Colonial Revival”, and “Southern Colonial Revival”)
- B. Tudor (replaces “English Cottage” and “English Tudor”)
- C. French Eclectic (replaces “Mediterranean”, “Norman” and “French Provincial”)
- D. Italian Renaissance (“replaces “Italian Renaissance Revival”)
- E. Prairie (replaces “Cubiform”)
- F. Craftsman (replaces “Bungalow”)
- G. Minimal Traditional (replaces “Contemporary” and “Rambler”)

A few of the houses defy architectural classification, including several hybrids and contractor-built homes. For example, the house at 4621 Wooddale Avenue, which is identified as “Pueblo” in the 1980 survey. Some of the “ramblers” are readily identifiable as examples of the Ranch style, while others are better classified as “Minimal Traditional” houses. A handful of homes have been “remuddled” beyond recognition by any classification system.

Windshield Survey

Vogel summarized the preliminary results of our windshield survey of the district as follows:

- The Country Club District is a unified entity that derives its primary heritage preservation value from being a planned neighborhood rather than a concentration of 500+ individually significant architectural landmarks
- Most of the homes built between 1924 and 1951 lack individual distinction as examples of period revival style domestic architecture but are united historically and aesthetically by the district's original plan of development
- The majority of the house facades visually add to the historic character of the district as a whole and therefore should be considered contributing properties
- An unknown number of houses may be historically important for their links to specific events or people – these links need to be much better documented (it is surprising how little we know about the people who lived in the district during the 1920s-1950s)
- Architecturally, some of the houses built after 1951 correspond to the styles of the “historic” homes in the district and probably should be re-evaluated as contributing properties; by the same token, several pre-1951 houses have had their facades “remuddled” beyond recognition and no longer contribute to the district's historic character
- The district as a whole has lost some historic integrity (i.e., the ability to visually convey its historical significance) because of inappropriate building additions and façade alterations; this erosion of historical authenticity is primarily due to incompatible design and the introduction of new landscape features that have disturbed the old relationships between homes and streetscapes—however, the district retains a high level of integrity in other critical areas, including location, setting, materials, feeling, and historical association
- Compared to other historic residential districts where the majority of properties date from the 1920s-1940s, inappropriately altered façades are not particularly abundant in Country Club and tend to be widely dispersed throughout the district—“remuddling” probably does not affect more than 10% of the historic houses in the district (intensive survey will provide us with “real” numbers)

Mr. Vogel added that as he was perusing the Country Club District files in the Planning Department, he discovered that in 1944, Thorpe Brothers gave up the review of new building plans to the neighborhood association. That being the case, he suggested considering 1944 as an accurate date for the ending of the period of significance for the district.

A general discussion ensued regarding some of the building activity currently taking place in the District. There was a general consensus among the Board that as the requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness are revised the Board should consider adding both changes to the front facade and roof lines as well as large additions. Chairman Kojetin suggested that Board members keep a list of questions and concerns which can be taken into consideration when revisiting the COA criteria. All agreed that was a good idea.

Concluding his report, Mr. Vogel explained that a more intensive survey begins in June and the HPB is expected to carry on with its work on the inventory files.

IV. **CONCERN OF RESIDENTS:** None

VI. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

* **Preservation Conference –**

Bob Kojetin reported that today he, Nancy Scherer and Connie Fukuda attended the annual State Preservation Conference in St. Paul. The main theme of the conference centered on the services the State Historical Society provides to the local communities. Member Fukuda added that she appreciated a better understanding of the Certified Local Government program and how local communities can benefit.

* **Preservation Tax Credit -** Member Blemaster reported that she had sent a letter to Representative Earhardt expressing her interest in the Preservation Tax Credit issue and encouraging Mr. Earhardt support the bill. Ms. Blemaster received a response from Earhardt thanking her for her interest and explaining that the Preservation Tax Credit bill did not proceed, however it does appear that The “This Old House” tax credit program may be reinstated. Member Rofidal stated that he too emailed Rep. Earhardt and received a similar response. Board members thanked Ms. Blemaster and Mr. Rofidal for taking the initiative to contact Rep. Earhardt.

VII. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

VIII. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** July 10, 2007 (with a 5:00 work session)

IX. **ADJOURNMENT** 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Repya

Minutes – June 12, 2007
Edina Heritage Preservation Board