

MINUTES
ARCHITECTURAL APPEARANCE COMMISSION MEETING
March 8, 2023

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Jacobson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and roll was called. In addition to the Chairperson, Commissioners Albrecht, Goranov, Mees, Rahn and Sallwasser were present. Commissioner Smith was absent.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the minutes of the December 14, 2022 passed by voice vote following a second by Commissioner Rahn of a motion by Commissioner Albrecht, who requested it be made known that façade options had been sent post-meeting to Architectural Appearance Commission (AAC) members to vote on. Senior Planner Fard said the action was reflected in the Village Board packet, and confirmed that the Petition was approved (with the stipulation).

Staff Report

Village Sr. Planner Fard related that the AAC liaison, Derek Rockwell, left the employ of the Village, so she is back to performing the role, but that, as of now, she has no projects for review at the next meeting.

Exterior Appearance Review: 411 N. Main Street

Staff Presentation

Village Planning Intern Brad Iwicki said the Petitioner, Brick and Mortar, a shared co-working office space represented by Adam Clabaugh and Andrew Nast, are accompanied this evening by project designer Sarah Gosling. The Petitioner, continued Mr. Iwicki, is requesting approval of the Exterior Appearance Review to accommodate the exterior façade remodel of the existing building. The subject property is in the South Historic District in the C5A Central Retail Core Subdistrict, he said. The Petitioner submitted a Special Use Permit (SUP) application and text amendment in March 2021, said the Intern, adding that the Plan Commission unanimously recommended approval, followed by the Village Board approving the request by a roll call vote of 5-1 in May 2021. The building permits were approved in May 2022, with the condition that no exterior façade work be allowed until the Exterior Appearance approval is granted, he said. On Sept. 9, 2022, continued Mr. Iwicki, Staff was notified that the first-floor façade was removed and boarded over, while the second-floor portion of the façade was remained untouched. The Village, he related, stopped all work on the site since the demolition went beyond the approved scope. The business owners, stated Mr. Iwicki, assured the Village that they would file for an Exterior Appearance Review application with the AAC. The Village, related Mr. Iwicki, allowed the remainder of the interior work to continue, and on Sept. 16, 2022, the Petitioner officially filed an application for the Exterior Appearance Review. The AAC, noted the Intern, reviewed this project on two occasions: Oct. 12, 2022 and Nov. 9, 2022.

On Oct. 12th, the original proposal was to remove all the façade on the building's frontage, replace all windows and doors, install new light fixtures, and resurface the south and east elevations, related Mr. Iwicki. The Petitioner, he said, intended to maintain the original Tudor style and install Hardie board with timber detailing on the façade and a painted cement coat on the south and east courtyard elevations, using the gray and black color scheme, with dark bronze window trims. Commissioners expressed concern with the choice of color and materials and noted the importance of preserving architectural features of the existing building, related Mr. Iwicki. The Commission motioned to defer making a recommendation to allow the Petitioner to illustrate modifications and submit a revised concept, he said. On Nov. 9, 2022, recalled Mr. Iwicki, the Petitioner proposed Lorraine White brick veneer to replace the ground floor façade, and provided two alternative designs for the second-floor façade, including a mix of light gray, dark gray and black; the south elevation was proposed to be painted gray to preserve the existing texture and match the building frontage. The Commission, related Iwicki, unanimously recommended approval under the conditions that Option 2 was selected, the slate roof shingles remained, and the original board-and-batten details are replicated. At the Village Board on Dec. 12, 2022, the Board considered the AAC's preferred alternative, Option 2, and expressed concerns regarding the impacts of the proposed design on the historic character and significance of the building. The Board tabled the request by a roll call vote of 5-1. At the Village Board meeting on Jan. 9, 2023 the Village Board discussed the project with the goal to make a motion to approve the request, require façade changes, or refer the request back to the AAC for a second review. A consensus ruled to refer it back to the AAC, he said.

On Feb. 23, 2023, continued Intern Iwicki, the Petitioner submitted revised renderings for the consideration of the AAC at tonight's meeting. Significant updates to the front façade include redesigned Tudor-style elements with additional detailing, partial first floor-windows, and the use of design, color palette and materials that would better reflect the original historic character of the building, he noted. This proposal, he reported, also includes two alternative designs: Option 1 represents Glen Garry olde London brick and Grant Beige trowel finished stucco throughout the façade with Classic Espresso finished wood Tudor details, and slate tile shingle roof. Option 2 would be similar to Option 1 in terms of design and materials with the difference being that a combination of Crimson-tone and Grant Beige stucco is proposed on the first and second floors, respectively. The crimson stucco intends to mimic the historic red shade that was originally used on the first floor of the façade. While the main vestibule will be centralized on the building's frontage, said the Intern, both options call for the main entry door to sit off-center. Per the Petitioner's narrative statement, related Mr. Iwicki, the front door at the proposed location would better accommodate the approved floor plan of the co-working office space given the location of the interior reception area and corridor as well as the mailboxes in the front vestibule. Following the Jan. 9th Village Board Meeting, continued Mr. Iwicki, a Trustee shared their concerns about replacing the windows, which are considered original historic elements of the building. The Petitioner was requested to provide an expert evaluation of whether the windows can be repaired or inquire about replica replacement windows of the same materials, explained the Intern. Staff, stated Mr. Iwicki, was informed that only one window restoration vendor can repair the windows but is unavailable through the summer. None of the referred historic vendors have accepted the job to replace the windows as of March 3, 2023, he said, adding that the Petitioners referenced façade elements in the Village such as an off-center entryway at 481 N. Main Street and the windows of the Glen Ellyn Art Theater.

Staff has reviewed the project for compliance with the Glen Ellyn Appearance Review Guidelines, stated Mr. Iwicki, who said that, overall, the proposed options align with the general design guidelines due to compatibility with the historic character of the building and the use of materials with natural earth-tone colors. However, he cautioned, it is essential to note that Section 1.6 of the Appearance Review Guidelines supports a readily identifiable entrance highlighted by the building structure, awnings, canopy, lighting, and/or architectural detailing. Staff believes the main entry door, with the same dark color as the window frames, is not simply identifiable in either of the proposed options, he stated, adding that the Commission may wish to inquire about a bold color to articulate the entrance similar to the original look of the façade. The design guidelines are met through well-placed light fixtures that highlight the building's entrance and signage appropriately, maintained Mr. Iwicki, who added that the project complies with the guidelines because it maintains the original roof, the same or similar building materials are being used, and the distinctive architectural features are replicated.

The documents provided, reported Mr. Iwicki, do not contain a revised design for the south and east courtyard elevations. To conform to the guidelines, he said, all sides of the building should relate to the principal elevation, creating an attractive secondary courtyard façade. In previous submissions, noted the Intern, the courtyard elevations were to be painted to match the building's façade. The Appearance Review Guidelines recommends that the architectural character of all sides of a building should relate to a principal elevation, even if there are some changes in materials, he explained. In addition, added Mr. Iwicki, the Guidelines suggest that paint should not be used to cover original wall surfaces of a building with historic or architectural character. If walls are to be painted, he noted, only one color should be used to establish the continuity of basic volume and mass of the building. For a building in the C5A District, explained Mr. Iwicki, the Glen Ellyn Review Guidelines reference the "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings" from the U.S. Department of the Interior. The project, he concluded, has been reviewed and determined to be in compliance with the majority of the Guidelines, because the proposed building design includes minimal changes to the style, texture and color while replacing deteriorated materials. The proposed project, noted Mr. Iwicki, was determined that it is not in compliance with the standard that states, "Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved." Originally, he explained, a distinctive brick-laying technique was used on each side of the second-floor "bump out" where bricks were laid in an angular manner that visually follow the slope of the gable, while those on the first floor were laid horizontally. Staff, he stated, believes such craftsmanship would provide a subtle flow and continuity between each floor and suggests incorporating such techniques on the second floor. Similar techniques, he noted, are used throughout the downtown district. Mr. Iwicki outlined AAC action on the case.

Petitioner's Presentation & Commission Discussion

Adam Clabaugh stated that the Petitioners tried to get as close as they could to "what I know everybody wants, while keeping the functionality of the building." He expressed appreciation for an "awesome" idea from Commissioner Mees for a side entrance, though deemed it unworkable. Discussion ensued about door width, with Ms. Gosling pointing to space, including ADA, challenges. She also said she'd favor duplicating the brick pattern and original color schemes for authenticity.

Commissioner Goranov suggested placing the vestibule parallel to the street. Ms. Gosling expressed a fear that this approach would restrict natural daylight and limit functionality of a space that should promote community “connection.” Commissioner Goranov argued that the conference room is detached from the street, anyway, and his concept would still allow for light as well as would provide a buffer from busy Main Street, thereby enabling quiet, and make the configuration less chopped up. Commissioner Albrecht agreed that this design would maintain the centered entry door, in line with the original building. Ms. Gosling indicated that Mr. Goranov’ proposed design would interfere with the fireplace, though the Commissioner insisted the (nonfunctional) fireplace could be relocated. Mr. Nast said that the fireplace chimneys “go all the way up,” and that attempting to move them would pose a danger of negatively affecting neighbors and the integrity of the building. In response an assertion by Ms. Gosling that the fireplace serves in structural and aesthetic capacities, Mr. Goranov replied that the fireplace is not a structural element and proposed placing the mailboxes in its place. Ms. Gosling countered that moving the fireplace would be costly and have negative impact on the structure, while Mr. Nast complained that the suggested scenario loses “the allure” of window seats. In agreement, Commissioner Rahn noted the desire from a Village standpoint to “activate” the storefront. Commissioner Mees perceived a need to help the Petitioners meet Board directives, to which Commissioner Rahn requested more insight into the Board’s position. Commissioner Albrecht emphasized adherence to established standards, which she concluded prohibit changing the door location. Mr. Nast recalled the “spirit” of the Board’s direction being that the Petitioner had to “holistically... get much closer” to the original architectural expression. “But the fact is,” declared Commissioner Goranov, “this is a historical building.” Sr. Planner Fard said that, based on what she was told about the Board meeting, Mr. Nast’s recollection is accurate, and added that she feels that ADA compliance matters more than strict observance of historic character, as well as is mindful of budget constraints.

Commissioner Sallwasser asked if a diagonal brick treatment is planned, to which Ms. Gosling expressed a willingness to embrace this application, a decision that received AAC support. Ms. Gosling said she performed considerable research to identify colors close to existing hues. Commissioner Rahn discerned that the updated concept for the upper portion of the building is in keeping with its character, but that the ground floor would typically be stone and brick, so suggests not taking the detailing down to street level, for which Ms. Gosling sought the priority. Commissioner Albrecht voiced a preference for Option 2, specifically identifying the color palette. Commissioners Goranov also preferred Option 2 (for which Commissioners Mees and Jacobson also opted), but took exception to the second-floor window configuration shown. The Petitioners agreed to executing – with new materials, the existing arrangement. For Option 2 Mr. Goranov suggested a brick base (in lieu of stucco) under the three windows for greater durability; Mr. Rahn concurred.

Expressing budget concerns, Mr. Nast mentioned the possibility of receiving Village assistance to cover the costs, while Ms. Gosling posed the idea of “repurposing” line items. Ms. Fard said she didn’t know how the grant program works, Commissioner Sallwasser suggested prioritizing items. Ms. Gosling pointed out that the design concept calls for integrated recessed lighting in the canopy over the entry way, which Chairperson Jacobson said she is “okay” with being off-centered. Ms. Gosling outlined a potential passage configuration associated with the entrance. Elimination of a window was suggested as a compromise, and the Petitioner outlined anticipated vestibule activity.

Ms. Sallwasser asked Ms. Gosling if the rendering would be modified to present the recommended concept to the Trustees; Ms. Gosling responded affirmatively, and Ms. Fard said she could send around an updated drawing reflecting conditions. Mr. Nast reiterated the desire for windows that allow natural light and maintain seating, as well as noted the need to accommodate the fire-rated stairwell. Mr. Goranov argued that ADA compliance could still be achieved with a centered door, and asserted that the existing door is recessed. Ms. Albrecht said that, in light of the effort made, she could “wriggle” on the door location. Relating that the plans say no exterior changes should happen, Ms. Fard said the ordinance was approved when there was no AAC and a permit issued for the interior work. With a coordination gap she didn’t see these plans, she said, and the Building Division cautioned against doing exterior work, but people in the field didn’t follow the plans. Mr. Nast said that the situation is confusing to workers, but proclaimed that the Petitioners feel confident they can meet Village expectations “based on the vibe” of the Board meeting. Mr. Goranov said a brick treatment on the first floor would not compete with the Tudor detail of the second. Audience member and Plan Commission Chairman Tim Loftus presented a 1930’s image of the building, in which a centered door was observed. Duplication of windows and angled brick were specified for the second-floor. No corner detail in wood on the first floor was also mentioned. Commissioner Mees moved for the following:

After conducting a public meeting and deliberating on the request of the petitioner, Adam Clabaugh on behalf of Brick and Mortar, for approval of an exterior appearance review for 411 N. Main Street in the C5A Central Retail Core Subdistrict, the Architectural Appearance Commission hereby recommends approval based on the findings of fact, as discussed or amended at the Architectural Appearance Commission public meeting on March 8, 2023, which are hereby incorporated into the Motion by reference as though fully set forth herein, and a copy of which will be attached to the minutes of this meeting and kept on file as part of the permanent records of the Village. The Architectural Appearance Commission makes this recommendation of approval with the following conditions:

1. That the project shall be constructed in substantial conformance with the plans and drawings as submitted and the testimony presented at the March 8, 2023 Architectural Appearance Commission meeting with modifications proposed by AAC, and before the Village Board of Trustees.
2. That the project be constructed in substantial conformance with the goals set forth in the *2020-2022 Strategic Plan*.
3. That a building permit shall be required for the exterior alterations.
4. On the second floor new windows will be installed to duplicate the configuration of the existing windows.
5. That brick at the second floor will be angled to duplicate the existing brick pattern.
6. The first-floor exterior will be horizontal brick, with a limestone sill under the window, and brown signage band with cream lettering to match the stucco.

Seconded by Commissioner Albrecht, the motion passed with Commissioners Mees, Albrecht, Rahn and Sallwasser, and Chairperson Jacobson voting, “YES,” and Commissioner Goranov voting, “NO.”

Courtyard considerations were briefly discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Jacobson at 8:58 p.m. following a voice vote on a motion made by Commissioner Mees and seconded by Commissioner Sallwasser.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Dutton-Thomas

Recording Secretary