

VIA EMAIL (planning@naperville.il.us)

August 20, 2026

City of Naperville Historic Preservation Commission
Naperville, Illinois

Re: 126–128 N. Wright Street – Kroehler Mansion at Heritage Place Request for Approval
of the Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness Case # Field Change: COA 20-2321

Dear Members of the Historic Preservation Commission:

I am writing in support of the aforementioned application. I believe the three requested changes; 1) black exterior window frames, 2) a Moire Black shingle roof, and 3) the demolition and reconstruction of the front porch, represent a thoughtful and cohesive approach to preserving and restoring the Kroehler Mansion while integrating the property appropriately into the Heritage Place community.

The Kroehler Mansion is an important part of Naperville's architectural history, and the goal should be to preserve its character while ensuring that the surrounding new construction complements, rather than competes with, the Mansion. The information and presentation offered by DJK Custom Homes makes a compelling case that the proposed changes accomplish that objective.

Black Exterior Windows

I support the request to use black window frames in place of the previously approved white frames. Black windows are already well established within Naperville's Historic District. The presentation offered by DJK Custom Homes reflects that at least 23 other homes currently have black windows, which includes homes where existing window colors were changed to black, demonstrating that black is not inconsistent with the character of Naperville's Historic District.

More importantly, black window frames would provide a restrained architectural appearance that allows the Mansion itself to remain the focal point of Heritage Place. Rather than drawing attention away from the historic architecture, the darker frames would recede visually and complement the masonry, rooflines, and architectural details of the property.

I believe this is particularly important because Heritage Place was designed around the preservation and restoration of the Kroehler Mansion. The new construction should serve as a complement and backdrop to the Mansion—not compete with it.

Moire Black Roof

I also support the request to change the previously approved Weathered Wood colored roof shingles to Moire Black.

The presentation notes that the original roofing material is believed to have been orange clay tile and that Moire Black is the roofing color used throughout the Heritage Place townhome units.

Using the color Moire Black would therefore provide greater visual consistency within Heritage Place and would work particularly well with the proposed black window frames. The combination would create a cohesive and understated appearance while allowing the Kroehler Mansion's historic masonry, proportions, and architectural details to remain visually prominent.

Reconstruction of the Front Porch

August 20, 2026

Application – Certificate of Appropriateness Case # Field Change: COA 20-2321

Of the three requests, I believe the reconstruction of the front porch is especially important to the preservation of the property's historic character.

The porch was removed only after exploratory work revealed substantial deterioration, including rotted wood, a sagging roof, sinking foundations and porch slab, and cracking of brick associated with the sinking piers.

The proposed reconstruction is not an attempt to redesign or modernize the porch. Instead, the intent is to recreate the original porch using its historic dimensions, proportions, and architectural details. A new foundation and concrete slab have already been installed, and the porch has been reframed to duplicate the original size and provide the structural support necessary to support weight as it originally was when it had a walkable upper surface. The planned trim is also intended to match the original style.

The proposed details—including matching railings, rebuilding the brick piers to their original height, and restoring the flowerpots atop the brick columns—further demonstrate that the objective is restoration rather than modernization.

A Unified Preservation Effort

Taken together, these requests make sense as one preservation effort.

The black windows and Moire Black colored roof would provide a cohesive, understated architectural backdrop for the Kroehler Mansion, while the reconstruction of the front porch would restore an important historic feature of the building. None of these requests diminishes the historic character of the property. To the contrary, they are intended to strengthen the relationship between the restored Mansion and the surrounding Heritage Place development.

I recognize the Commission's responsibility to protect Naperville's historic resources, and I believe these requests are consistent with that responsibility. The goal is not to create something new or incompatible, but to restore the property's architectural character and ensure that the Kroehler Mansion remains the defining historic feature of Heritage Place.

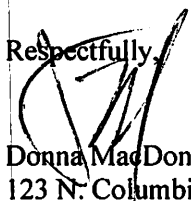
For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Commission to approve the Application – Certificate of Appropriateness Case # Field Change: COA 20-2321:

1. Black exterior window frames in place of the previously approved white frames;
2. Moire Black roof shingles in place of the previously approved Weathered Wood colored shingles; and
3. Demolition and reconstruction of the front porch intended to replicate its original size, proportions, architectural character, and historic details.

Approving these requests will allow the project to move forward with a restoration that respects the history of the Kroehler Mansion while creating a cohesive and appropriate finished appearance for Heritage Place.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to preserving Naperville's historic resources.

Respectfully,


Donna MacDonald
123 N. Columbia St.
Naperville, IL 60540

City of Naperville Historic Preservation Commission
400 S Eagle St
Naperville, IL 60540
planning@naperville.il.us

RE: Remarks About Heritage Place Concerns

To Whom It May Concern:

As a 26-year resident of Naperville and a current resident of Heritage Place, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the requests before the City of Naperville and the Naperville Preservation Commission.

I want to begin by making something very clear → I support historic preservation. The Kroehler Mansion is an important part of Naperville's architectural history, and its restoration as the centerpiece of Heritage Place is something our community should embrace. But effective historic preservation also requires judgment, consistency and proportionality, and after reviewing the materials presented about this matter before the City and Commission, I have serious concerns that the process surrounding this project has lost sight of those principles.

Consider what is actually before the Commission:

1. **Black Window Frames:** The applicant has documented 23 other homes within Naperville's Historic District that already have black windows. The materials also document properties within the District where windows have changed from other colors to black in recent years. So it is difficult to understand how black windows on this particular property could reasonably be viewed as a meaningful threat to the historic integrity of the District. At some point, precedent should actually mean something.
2. **Roof Materials:** The applicant is requesting Moire Black shingles, which are already used on all the other Heritage Place townhomes and would create greater architectural consistency within the development. Again, this hardly seems like a departure from the character of the surrounding community.
3. **Mansion Front Porch:** The materials indicate that exploratory work uncovered substantial structural deterioration, including rotted wood, a sagging roof, sinking foundations, a sinking slab and cracking masonry. More importantly, the proposed reconstruction is not an attempt to modernize or reinvent the porch. The foundation, dimensions and architectural character are intended to replicate the original, including its brick piers, railings, trim details and other historic elements. In other words, the applicant is reconstructing a deteriorated historic feature to resemble its

documented original appearance. That would seem to be precisely the type of outcome a Historic Preservation Commission should encourage.

My broader concern, however, goes beyond these three (3) items. Heritage Place has been under development for many years. The residents who purchased homes here have lived with construction, unfinished areas, disruption and uncertainty for an extraordinary amount of time. There is a real consequence when relatively minor architectural decisions become additional layers of administrative review. Process has a cost. Delay has a cost. And inconsistency has a cost. Those costs may not appear on an agenda or architectural rendering, but they are borne every day by the people who live in this community.

A preservation commission serves an important public purpose when it protects historically significant structures from inappropriate alteration or destruction. But that mission is diminished, rather than strengthened, when the same level of regulatory attention is applied to questions such as whether historically compatible windows should be black instead of white or whether a roof should match the other homes surrounding it. **Historic preservation should not become an exercise in preserving bureaucracy.** Nor should the pursuit of theoretical perfection prevent the completion of a project that has already invested substantial time and resources into preserving one of Naperville's historic structures.

There must be a point at which the process recognizes the difference between protecting history and debating aesthetics. I believe we have reached that point. The requests before you are reasonable. They are supported by existing conditions throughout the Historic District. They improve consistency within Heritage Place. And, most importantly, they allow the restoration of the Kroehler Mansion and completion of this community to move forward.

I respectfully ask the Commission to approve these requests and allow this project to proceed without further unnecessary delay.

Preserve what is historically significant. Exercise reasonable judgment on what is not. And allow Heritage Place, after many years, to finally be completed.

Sincerely,



Marcelino (Marc) Menendez
127 N Columbia Street
Naperville IL 60540



RE: Naperville Resident Letter to City of Naperville / Historic Society - Heritage Place

From Marc Menendez <[REDACTED]>
Date Wed 8/12/2026 7:52 PM
To Laff, Allison <[REDACTED]>
Cc Louden, Jennifer <[REDACTED]>; Marlott, Isaac <[REDACTED]>

CAUTION: This e-mail originated outside of the City of Naperville (@naperville.il.us).

DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you confirm the incoming address of the sender and know the content is safe.

Allison,

Thank you for the thoughtful response and for providing the additional background. I appreciate the clarification, particularly regarding Ordinance 20-108 and the timeline associated with the current application. I also want to acknowledge the City's efforts to schedule a special HPC meeting on August 27 rather than requiring the applicant and community to wait until the regularly scheduled September meeting. That accommodation is appreciated.

Your explanation does clarify an important distinction that I want to recognize. The 3 items now before the HPC are modifications to requirements contained in the previously approved COA, rather than previously approved changes that were subsequently reversed. I appreciate you correcting my understanding on that point. Similarly, I understand the City's position regarding the porch. If the Municipal Code required notification and review before demolition, even where substantial deterioration existed, then the applicant had an obligation to follow that process. I don't believe residents should ask City staff to disregard established procedures simply because we are frustrated with the duration of the overall project.

That said, I don't believe those procedural issues materially change the broader concern I was attempting to express. My concern is less about whether City staff properly administered the existing ordinance and more about whether the historic preservation process, when viewed as a whole, is producing a reasonable and proportionate outcome for the property and the surrounding community.

We are now considering whether black windows are appropriate when the applicant has documented 23 other homes with black windows within the Historic District. We are considering Moire Black roofing when that roofing is already used throughout Heritage Place. And we are considering reconstruction of a deteriorated porch where the proposed design is intended to restore the dimensions and architectural character reflected in the historic photographs. Those strike me as important facts for the Commission to consider when determining whether these modifications actually diminish the historic integrity of the Kroehler Mansion or, alternatively, help complete a cohesive restoration of the property.

There is also a broader issue that I hope the Commission considers. Residents of Heritage Place have lived alongside an unfinished development for many years. I recognize from your explanation that it would be unfair to attribute that entire timeline, or even the current application timeline, to City staff or the HPC. My concern is instead that every participant in this process should now be focused on reaching a reasonable conclusion and getting this project completed.

Historic preservation is important. So are consistency, proportionality, predictability, and recognition of the practical consequences that prolonged development has on the people who live within it. The Kroehler Mansion should absolutely be protected as an important part of Naperville's architectural history. But I hope the Commission can distinguish between alterations that genuinely threaten that historic character and reasonable modifications that allow the building to be restored, the development to be completed, and the surrounding neighborhood to finally move forward.

Thank you again for taking the time to respond and for ensuring that my comments are included in the Commission's packet. I appreciate the clarification and look forward to the discussion on August 27.

Best,

Marc M.

Marc Menendez
Managing Director | **BACA Ventures**

www.bacaventures.com |



Sent from iPhone - generally I can spell better!

This e-mail is confidential and may contain legally privileged information. It is intended only for the addressees. If you have received this email in error, kindly notify us immediately by telephone or e-mail and delete the message from your computer.

From: Laff, Allison <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2026 4:09 PM
To: Marc Menendez <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Loudon, Jennifer <[REDACTED]>; Marlott, Isaac <[REDACTED]>; Laff, Allison <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Naperville Resident Letter to City of Naperville / Historic Society - Heritage Place

Mr. Menendez,

Thank you for your letter. We will be sure to include it in the agenda packet sent to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) for their 8/27/2026 meeting at which the Kroehler Mansion will be discussed.

In addition, I wanted to take a minute to respond to the concerns noted in your letter.

In 2020, the Naperville City Council approved Ordinance 20-108 (attached) which approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Kroehler Mansion. Exhibit D to this Ordinance (which was prepared by DJK) specifies the design requirements of the Kroehler Mansion, including the white window color, weathered roof shingles, and preservation of the front porch. This ordinance and its exhibits are binding and cannot be administratively altered by staff.

With respect to the demolition of the front porch, I also understand from speaking to Mr. Kittilsen that demolition was undertaken after discovering substantial deterioration during initial exploratory work. While demolition to a landmarked structure also requires approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) by the Historic Preservation Commission *before* this work is undertaken, the Naperville Municipal Code does permit certain work to occur outside of the COA process if needed to remedy a dangerous condition (see Section 6-11-10 below). Unfortunately, Mr. Kittilsen did not notify City staff before the demolition of the porch was completed; therefore, staff did not have an opportunity to either verify or approve this work in accordance with the allowances provided under Section 6-11-10 .

Finally, with respect to timing, the City notified Mr. Kittilsen of the need to return to the HPC for additional review of the proposed changes to the Kroehler Mansion on March 18, 2026. At that time, we provided Mr. Kittilsen with information as to what was required to be submitted in order to be scheduled before the HPC. The required materials were submitted by Mr. Kittilsen on August 7, 2026; City staff reviewed the submittal and confirmed it for completeness the same day (August 7th). While the HPC would not normally meet until September 24, 2026, we arranged for the HPC to hold a special meeting on August 27, 2026, in order to expedite review of this request.

If you have any other questions about the City's historic preservation or code requirements, please let me know.

Thanks,
Allison Laff

Allison Laff, AICP

Deputy Director – Planning & Development – TED Business Group

City of Naperville | 400 S. Eagle Street | Naperville, IL 60540

Office: 630-420-6107 | laffa@naperville.il.us

6-11-10: - REMEDYING OF DANGEROUS CONDITIONS:

1. In the event that a condition on property located within the historic district, or property designated as a landmark, presents an imminent danger to the public health, safety, or welfare or requires immediate construction, reconstruction, repair, alteration, or demolition as ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction or as determined by a representative of the City, then such work may be performed without a certificate of appropriateness. Work performed under such circumstances shall be the minimum necessary in order to render the improvement safe, after which any construction, reconstruction, alteration or demolition shall be processed in accordance with the provisions of Sections 6-11-6, 6-11-7 and 6-11-8 of this Chapter.

2. Under the circumstances described in Section 6-11-10:1, the owner of the property shall notify the Zoning Administrator in writing prior to performing the work necessary to make the property safe. If advance notification is not practical due to the emergency nature of the situation, the Owner shall provide written notice to the Zoning Administrator within seven (7) calendar days of commencement of such work. In either case, the written notice shall include the following: (i) a detailed description of the dangerous condition in question; (ii) the timeframe needed to complete the work; and (iii) the specific actions to be taken in the performance of such work.

August 14, 2026

Naperville Historic Planning Commission
400 S. Eagle Street
Naperville, Illinois 60540

Field Change COA 20-2321

We are residents of the Naperville Historic District and live in close proximity to the Subject Property. We support the Applicant's request for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The first purpose of the Application is to substitute black exterior window frames for the white exterior window frames previously approved. There is no conformity of color or style of exterior window frames within the Historic District, and a number of properties have black exterior window frames. Approving black exterior window frames, therefore, would not detract from the character of the Historic District. To the contrary, black exterior window frames would make the Subject Property consistent with all the buildings immediately surrounding it.

The second purpose of the Application is to substitute Moire Black roof shingles for the Weathered Wood roof shingles previously approved. As with respect to exterior window frames, there is no conformity of color or style of roof shingles within the Historic District, and a number of properties have black roof shingles. Therefore, Moire Black roof shingles would not detract from the character of the Historic District. Moire Black roof shingles would, however, make the Subject Property consistent with all of the buildings immediately surrounding it, thus adding to the cohesiveness of the Heritage Place community.

The final purpose of the Application is to demolish and reconstruct the front porch of the Subject Property. The porch has already been demolished, and the Applicant has presented evidence that prior to demolition the porch had deteriorated well beyond the point where it could be fixed by simple repairs. The Applicant's plans for reconstruction are not intended "to redesign or modernize the porch, but to reconstruct it in the same size and character as the original porch." We are not aware of any contrary information and believe that the Applicant's plans for the front porch will enhance the Subject Property in a manner in keeping with the Subject Property's original design and the character of the Historic District as a whole.

The City has already approved the overall renovation of the Subject Property and work on it is well underway. The changes requested in the Application are inconsequential compared to what has already been approved and will not negatively impact the Subject Property or the Historic District. Rather, they will help the buildings immediately surrounding the Subject Property complement, rather than overshadow, the Subject Property by helping to give the entire Heritage Place community a more unified look. Accordingly, we support the Applicant's request for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Sincerely,



Brian Silbernagel and Teresa Snider

113 N. Columbia Street
Naperville, Illinois 60540

City of Naperville Historic Preservation Commission
400 S Eagle St
Naperville, IL 60540
planning@naperville.il.us

To Whom It May Concern:

My husband and I are homeowners at Heritage Place and am writing in support of the three field changes being presented for the Heritage Place Mansion Townhomes: the black exterior window frames, Moire Black roofing shingles, and reconstruction of the main front porch.

We respect the purpose of historic preservation and understand the Commission's responsibility to protect the architectural character of Naperville's historic properties. At the same time, I believe preservation decisions also require judgment and perspective—particularly when dealing with field conditions that arise during the rehabilitation of an older structure.

In reviewing the information provided to homeowners, we don't believe these three changes undermine the historic character of the mansion.

The black window frames do not strike me as inconsistent with the Historic District, particularly given the examples presented of other historic homes in the district with black windows. The black window frames also seem entirely consistent with both Heritage Place and the surrounding Historic District. The homes already completed within the 41-home Heritage Place development all have black-framed windows. Beyond that, we are very familiar with the Historic District—I drive through it regularly and walk through the neighborhood approximately five times a week—and I have personally noticed many homes with black-framed windows. To my eye, they have a classic, timeless appearance that takes nothing away from the historic character of these homes. If anything, I believe the black frames enhance the overall look and feel of the area. The materials provided for this request reinforce that observation by identifying 23 homes within the Historic District that currently have black windows.

The Moire Black roofing also creates consistency with the roofing being used throughout the Heritage Place development. These seem to me to be aesthetic differences rather than changes that fundamentally alter the historic character of the mansion.

The front porch is a little different because I understand that it is an important part of the mansion's original character. But from the information provided, it sounds like they discovered some pretty significant structural problems once the work began—rotted wood, a sagging roof, sinking foundations and cracking masonry. Given those conditions, I'm not sure what realistic alternative there was other than to rebuild it. What is important to me is that the porch be reconstructed to look and feel like the original, with the same dimensions, proportions and architectural details. That appears to be exactly what is being proposed.

We also think these three requests need to be looked at in the context of the entire Heritage Place project. This development has been underway for years, and those of us who already live here have been living with ongoing construction and an unfinished community for a very long time. We absolutely respect the importance of historic preservation—that is part of what makes this property special. But we also think there has to be some balance and practical judgment. If these changes preserve the character of the mansion, we don't see how continuing to delay the project over black window frames, a roof color that matches the rest

of Heritage Place, or rebuilding a porch that had serious structural problems serves anyone particularly well.

At some point, there has to be a reasonable balance between preserving the important historic elements of this property and allowing a viable redevelopment project to move forward. For those reasons, we fully and respectfully support approval of the three requested field changes and hope the Commission will allow the project to proceed without further unnecessary delay.

We appreciate the Commission's commitment to preserving Naperville's history and the time its members devote to this work. We believe these requests provide an opportunity to accomplish both objectives: protect what is historically important about the mansion while allowing Heritage Place to finally move toward completion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Robertson

Lawrence E Milan

106 N Wright St

Naperville, IL 60540