

Legislation Text

File #: 19-274, Version: 1

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Consider the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request to demolish the existing single family residential home and construct a new single family residential home on the property located at 26 N. Sleight- COA 19-402

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Gabrielle Mattingly

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

Submitted for Historic Preservation Commission review.

BACKGROUND:

The applicant, DJK Custom Homes, Inc., on behalf of the homeowners, Christopher and Mary Anne Yep, has submitted a Certificate of Appropriate (COA) request for the property located on the corner of Sleight Street and Franklin Avenue with a common address of 26 N. Sleight. The COA request has been submitted to demolish the existing single family residential home and construct a new single family residential home in its place. The subject property is approximately 9,693 square feet and is currently zoned R2 (Single-Family and Low Density Multiple-Family Residence District). The existing home is a 2 story, Gable Front architectural style residential home. According to the historic survey conducted in 2008, the property is classified as a contributing structure. Staff has one COA on record for the property (COA #18-3316). COA #18-3316 proposed demolition of the existing single-family home. Prior to review of the COA, the applicants choose not to pursue the project and withdrew their request.

Per City of Naperville Municipal Code Section 6-11-8:2.11 and Section 6-11-8:2.8, a COA, subject to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approval, is required for demolition of a principal structure and for review of the primary façade of any new principal structure.

DISCUSSION:

Demolition

The applicant submitted two structural reports of the existing single family home completed by Craftstone Architects, Inc. and Johnson Wilbur Adams, Inc (JWA). Both structural reports provide a recommendation for demolition of the existing structure based on the need for significant repairs. A summary of the reports can be found below.

Summary of Johnson Wilbur Adams, Inc. (JWA) Report

The report conducted by JWA identifies the following items in need of repair: foundation cracks, water damage, uneven floors, foundation pulling away from main structure (especially around the bay

window), leaning walls, and damaged footings. In summary, the JWA report recommends demolition based on the extent of the structural damage throughout the house stating the repairs may not be economically feasible.

Summary of Craftstone Architects, Inc. Report

Craftstone Architects, Inc. identified the following issues that are in need of repair: uneven floors, cracked and failing foundation, leaning walls, foundation pulling away from home (specifically around the bay window), rotting wood, and rotting wood columns. Craftstone also identified that all the mechanical, electrical and plumbing needs to be replaced. In conclusion, Craftstone Architects, Inc. finds the existing home to be in an unsafe condition and recommends the home be demolished.

Staff Review

Staff reviewed both structural analyses and requested that the petitioner provide more information to quantify the cost of the repairs. In response, the petitioner provided two reports estimating the cost of the repairs (included in the attachments). Reports find that required repairs might range in cost from \$410,000 to \$535,000.

Section 6-11-8:5.3 provides the factors for consideration of a COA. One of the factors for consideration is economic reasonableness. This factor states that any recommended changes determined to be necessary to bring the COA application into conformity should be economically reasonable. While there are no specific percentages determining the economical reasonableness of a COA request, staff feels the petitioner provided substantial evidence regarding the extent of work required on the structure and the cost of such work; based on this information, staff believes that the petitioner has made a strong case in support of demolition of the existing home.

Proposed Home

Along with the request for demolition, the petitioner is requesting approval for construction of a new single family home.

The Historic Building Design and Resource Manual identifies guidelines for proposed new homes (p. 64-66). A copy of these guidelines can be found below. Given the timing of submittal, staff has not conducted a full review of the proposed architectural style; however, the petitioner requested that the COA for the proposed building also be included for HPC review at this time in order to understand the full proposal for the subject property. While staff has not completed its review of the proposed home against the guidelines, the petitioner will be able to address questions regarding the architectural style of the proposed home at the meeting. In addition, the petitioner has provided a response to the factors for consideration of a COA. This response is included in the attachments.

New Residential Buildings

Total demolition of the existing structure in order to accommodate a new primary building is highly discouraged. Where a vacant lot already exists, new construction of a primary building should be compatible with neighboring houses or blend in the neighborhood through replication. Compatibility entails reinforcing typical features that existing buildings display along the block such as similar roof shapes, materials, window and door sizes and placement, porch size and location, and foundation heights. Replications are dwellings which are constructed to be exact copies of historic building forms or architectural styles in the district.

It is important that new construction complement the dwellings found along its specific block. A design that is appropriate along one block may not work on another block. For example, a new

dwelling compatible with an American Foursquare design may not be appropriate for a block where two-story Queen Anne architecture predominates and vice versa.

- **Style** - To preserve the integrity of a historic neighborhood, any new buildings must be carefully designed to maintain the style and character of the block. A new building should always be compatible with homes on the existing block. Compatibility is based on an understanding of the principles used to design the existing buildings as well as how those principles can be reinterpreted using today's materials and construction techniques. The best way to think about a compatible new building is as a good neighbor that enhances the character of the historic block by respecting style and context. Windows, doors, decorative elements, roof shapes and materials all have a direct impact on the style of a home. Refer to Chapters C & D for more information on styles and building materials.
- **Scale** - Scale is the apparent size of a building in relationship to its neighbors as well as the relative size of building elements (e.g., windows, doors, cornices and other features) to each other and to the building as a whole. New construction should not exceed the predominant building height of the residences on the block by more than one-half story.
- **Massing** - Massing or shape refers to the three-dimensional form exhibited by a residence. Massing is related to specific styles. The massing for new residential buildings should relate to the existing residences on the block.
- **Placement** - Placement refers to the orientation of a new structure and its setback (distance away from the street) as compared to the surrounding buildings on the block. The placement of a new building should be consistent with the predominant orientation and setbacks of the historic residences on the block. New buildings should also comply with zoning setback requirements.
- **Materials** - Materials and the way they are used on a home are almost always indicative of the style. Material selection used on a new residence should be guided by the historic buildings on its particular block.
- **Foundation height** - The foundation height of a new building should be similar to the foundation height of the residences found on the block. Along the primary facade the foundation height should never vary, but increases or decreases in foundation height along the secondary and rear facades are allowable if required to follow the sloping grade.

Acceptable

- **Style** - The style of a new residential building should relate to the historic residences located on the same block. For example, if the proposed location for the new home is on a block where many Queen Anne style homes exist, the style of the new home should be Queen Anne. A new home should embody a single architectural style.
- **Scale** - New residential buildings should not vary by more than one-half story from the predominant building height of the typical residences on the block.
- **Massing** - The overall forms and shapes of new residential buildings should relate to the existing residences on the block. The articulation of the building facades through the use of dormers, towers, as well as facade projections (porches, stoops, and bays) should be used to reflect the dominant residential styles and shapes that exist on the block.
- **Placement** - The porch or stoop of a new residence should align with the porch or stoop of existing residences along the block. If these features don't exist in the style, the primary facade of the new residence should align with the predominant street facing facades along the block.
- **Roof Shapes** - Use roof slopes/pitches that are appropriate to the style of the new residential building and match those found on historic residences on the block.

- Materials - Refer to Chapter D: Building Maintenance and Rehabilitation regarding appropriate materials for new residential buildings.

Discouraged

- Total demolition of the existing structure in order to accommodate a new primary building.
- Style - Using styles that do not relate to the existing residence style used on the block, or blending more than one distinct architectural style.
- Scale - Creating a residence that is out of scale, height and proportion to residences on the block.
- Massing - Use of forms and shapes that do not reference the forms used on the historic block.
- Placement - New residential buildings that do not align with the existing historic structures along the street.
- Materials - Refer to Chapter D: Building Maintenance and Rehabilitation for discouraged materials.

Potential Variances

Given the timing of the submittal for the proposed demolition and construction of the new home, staff has not been able to conduct a full review of the proposal for technical compliance. If, upon review, a variance is identified, the petitioner will either need to amend their plans to comply with the zoning requirements, or seek an additional COA from the HPC/variance from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Key Takeaways

- The petitioner, DJK Custom Homes, Inc. has submitted COA #19-402 in order to demolish the existing single family home and construct a new single family home at 26 N. Sleight.
- Review by the Historic Preservation Commission is required for the proposed demolition of the principal structure and the primary façade of the new principal structure.