

MADISON HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 14, 2020

Attendance: Clyburn, Eskew, Grant, Rice, Scott
Staff- Kocher

The January 14, 2020 regular meeting of the Madison Historic Preservation Commission was held at 5:30 p.m. at the Public Safety Building in Meeting Hall. The meeting was called to order by Chair Clyburn.

Item/Issue

Discussion/Action

Election of Officers &
Announcements

The Chair welcomed new Commissioners Glenn Eskew and Zeb Grant.

Rice nominated Flynn Clyburn for Chair, seconded by Scott. There were no other nominations. Clyburn was elected Chair by acclamation.

Scott nominated Brad Rice for Vice Chair, seconded by Grant. There were no other nominations. Rice was elected Vice Chair by acclamation.

Rice nominated Chuck Dorr for Secretary, seconded by Eskew. There were no other nominations. Dorr was elected Secretary by acclamation.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Eskew to approve the December 10, 2019 minutes with noted corrections; second by Rice; vote to approve motion passed 6-0.

New Business:
COA application

465 Pine St.
Matt & Libby Chandler

Matt & Libby Chandler presented an application for construction of a pergola, installation of parking, and other site changes. Kocher reviewed the staff report. Clyburn noted that the placement of the privacy fence 75% back from the front wall of the house is consistent with the guidelines

Rice asked for a description of the brick. Ms. Chandler said it would be red. Rice asked if it was just edging or if there was to be an apron. Mr. Chandler said there would be two or three courses at the street. Rice suggested staff review of this aspect. City Manager Nunn, present at the meeting, said he would also review this aspect as it relates to construction standards.

There were no comments from the public.

- Motion by Rice to approve the application as submitted and presented, based upon the aforementioned reports, reasoning, clarification, and findings provided the parking will have a brick apron at the street, dimensions to be approved by staff; second by Scott; vote to approve motion unanimous.

New Business:
COA application

829 S. Main St.
Ken Kocher

Kocher recused himself as staff to present the application as owner. Ken Kocher, accompanied by contractor Curtis Whitsel, presented an application for construction of a roofline balustrade. No staff report was prepared due to conflict of interest. Mr. Kocher read the description submitted with the COA application. Mr. Kocher asked Mr. Whitsel to explain the choice in material.

Mr. Whitsel explained that the gutters would set outside the balustrade meaning there would be contact with water above and below. He described the types of wood currently available and surmised that even with inspection and repair every six months, a wood baluster would fail rather quickly. Mr. Whitsel said the proposed material was the best alternative.

Rice said that this situation reminded him of some Frank Lloyd Wright designs where appearance had won out over the engineering of the time. He added that wood available today does not have the same structure as old growth wood. Mr. Whitsel discussed the low slope nature of the roof combined with the placement of the newels for the balustrade creates difficulty shedding water around the newels.

Eskew asked if ghosts of the original placement had been found. Mr. Whitsel said they had not as yet but may appear as roofing is stripped away. Eskew expressed concern about the use of synthetic material comparing PVC with vinyl siding. Eskew said he was curious to know whether all avenues for an alternative had been exhausted. He asked if architectural salvage places had been checked. Mr. Whitsel said that he had not gone to that measure but that even if enough matching balusters could be found, the rails and newels would still be a problem. Eskew said is because of the choice of where to place the gutters. Mr. Whitsel explained the gutter placement is a restoration of the original gutter system. Rice noted the reversibility of the proposed work and confirmed that the balustrade would be painted. Whitsel said it would.

Eskew asked if the balustrade had been removed 50 years ago or more. Mr. Kocher said this was unknown but felt that even if it was, the change did not have historic significance. Rice agreed pointing to the difference between a purposeful stylistic change and one due to lack of maintenance.

Scott asked if there was any precedent for synthetics in a similar situation. Mr. Kocher noted that the building on Washington Street where the Fetch House is was approved for paintable synthetic trim due to moisture issues. Rice said that an approval would mean precedent for use of synthetics for elements in similar unprotected situations such as the roofline baluster to be replaced at the Walsh house on Foster Street. Mr. Whitsel said the key is the unprotected nature of such locations.

Rice stated that he felt that recapturing the original design is the important issue. Grant agreed. Mr. Whitsel was asked how many balusters would be needed. The number is approximately 320. Scott felt this was a unique situation with mitigating circumstances. Rice said the scope was important, the difference between finding a single salvaged door versus 320 balusters.

Public comment. Julie Jenkins said she was pleased that the commission was considering synthetics noting that her house was built 20 years ago and was required to use wood windows. They now need replacing because the wood available now does not last.

Mr. Kocher left the room.

- Motion by Rice to approve the application as submitted and presented, based upon the aforementioned reasoning, clarification, and findings noting that the approved materials is based on the nature of the design, the scale of the design makes finding salvage material unfeasible, the exposure of the materials, and that the installed elements will be monitored as part of the ongoing consideration of such materials; second by Scott; vote to approve motion unanimous.

Kocher returned to the room.

Staff Report

Kocher reported the recent administrative approvals.

- 465 Pine St. – construction of a deck
- 156 Academy St. – change to approved shed

Kocher outlined a memo explaining the proposed approach for updating Madison’s Historic Resource Survey. He asked that the commission approve submission of a grant application to the Georgia Historic Preservation Division for Phase 1 of the survey.

- Motion by Scott to approve submission of a grant application to the Georgia Historic Preservation Division for Phase 1 of a historic resource survey; second by Eskew; vote to approve motion unanimous.

Committee Reports

The following committee assignments were made:

Designation: Chuck Dorr, Beth Scott; noncommission member: Richard Simpson

Policy: Chuck Dorr, Glenn Eskew, Brad Rice

Status: Nancy Bush, Zeb Grant; noncommission members: Julie Jenkins, Fran Hilsman, Zack Sitler

Outreach: Glenn Eskew, Zeb Grant, Beth Scott

With no further business, Rice moved for adjournment.

Read and approved this 11th day of February, 2020.