

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2008

3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Fisher, Wallace, Chatterjee, Kreider, Raser and Young present.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1222-1224 REPUBLIC STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented a report on a proposal to rehabilitate two joined three-story buildings into eight residential condominium units. Ms. Kellam explained that the majority of work will be replacement in kind to match the existing, with new aluminum sash windows to be installed in unmodified openings that have lost the original windows. New dormers, porches and decks added to the side and rear elevations will be visible across parking lots located on adjoining properties north and south of 1222-1224 Republic.

Ms. Kellam said that changes to the north elevation will be the most substantial. Dormers on the north side will run the length of the wall to provide sufficient headroom to convert an existing attic into habitable space. She said that although such a large addition is generally discouraged by the guidelines, in this circumstance the additional space is necessary to make the project economically viable. The applicant has submitted cost estimates to document the need.

Ms. Kellam indicated that the side elevations would not normally be visible from the public way; however, extensive demolition and the presence of large surface lots to the north and south have opened up these elevations to full view from 13th, Republic and 12th. The owner of 1237 Vine controls the surface lot at 13th and Republic, but some spaces may be leased to residents of 1222-1224 Republic. The Board approved the lot at its April 7, 2008 meeting.

[Mr. Kreider joined the meeting]

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Raser) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the building at 1222-24 Republic Street is a contributing building within the Over-the-Rhine Historic District.
2. Find that some of the more visible additions and the removal of the chimneys do not meet the guidelines for the Over-the-Rhine Historic District.
3. Find that the applicant has made a case for economic hardship related to the necessity of creating 8 units and altering the rooflines.
4. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of 1222-24 Republic Street with final plans to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a building permit.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 1123 BROADWAY STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented a report on a proposal to replace all of the windows in a four-story contributing building at 1123 Broadway. She said that the storefront on Broadway has been lost and the first floor façade reconfigured as residential space with metal casement windows;

however, the structure is generally intact on the upper floors where original 6/6 wood sash windows remain. Ms. Cowden indicated that most of the wood windows were in poor condition; the applicant has indicated that no more than 10 of the 39 windows could be repaired.

The owner proposes to replace the windows with vinyl units having mullions sandwiched within their thermopane glazing. Ms. Cowden said that the owner would consider applying an exterior strap mullion, but that the appliqué would have no depth. It is staff's opinion that neither solution would have the appearance of the extant windows under the district guidelines.

The applicant David Buchman was present to answer questions from the Board. He said that his objective is to replace the existing windows with ones that will be efficient and within his budget. He indicated that wooden replacements cost \$22,000 more than the vinyl units he proposes.

In response to Mr. Senhauser, Mr. Buchman confirmed that the present window trim would be salvaged where possible. Mr. Senhauser observed that its simple cornice and 6/6 windows give relief and detail to the façade of 1123 Broadway. Mr. Raser said that there are manufacturers that offer vinyl replacement window with exterior mullions that that meet the historic district guidelines.

There was general agreement that the first floor casement window replacements were acceptable, and that with further investigation, the owner could identify economical vinyl sash units for the upper floors that met the district guidelines.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following actions:

1. Find that retaining and repairing the existing wood six-over-six windows on the second through fourth floors of the main (east) façade and the rear (west) elevation is not feasible.
2. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing, non-original casement windows on the first story of the main (east) façade with new vinyl casements.
3. Deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed one-over-one vinyl sash finding that these specific windows do not meet the Over-the-Rhine Historic District conservation guidelines.
4. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for a replacement window, either true divided light or with a dimensional exterior grid, to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to installation.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & ZONING VARIANCES, 225-227 STARK STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Ms. Cowden presented a staff report on a proposal to rehabilitate these two contributing buildings as office and fabrication space for Magnetic Marketing Solutions. She indicated that most of the exterior work was repair/replacement in kind and focused on proposed changes to window/door openings and the use of glass block.

Ms. Cowden said that the most significant changes are proposed for window and door openings including the enlargement of garage door openings to accommodate access for new equipment and deliveries. Manage openings will be infilled with brick or glass block. Ms. Cowden indicated that the guidelines discourage glass block, but that the Board has accepted glass block infill on minor elevations not highly visible from the street when an applicant could demonstrate a compelling

need. Ms. Cowden said that staff was not as concerned about infilling the openings in a modern 20th century addition.

Ms. Cowden said that in addition to work on the buildings, an adjoining parking lot would be resurfaced and landscaped. The plan calls for enclosing the lot with a 6'-0" high metal picket fence at the street and an 8'-0" high privacy fence at the rear; the chain link fence on the neighboring property will remain. Ms. Cowden said that the height and opacity of the privacy fence will require a variance from the zoning code. Likewise, the reduction from 11 to 6 spaces will require relief from the minimum required on-site parking spaces under the code.

Project architect Steve Hampton and owner Brian Vealhower were present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Hampton indicated that the owner has occupied 227 Stark since 2001 and has purchased 225 Stark to expand his manufacturing business. He said that the glass block infill was necessitated by the industrial use and addresses the reality of the neighborhood. The manufacturing process necessitates moving heavy materials throughout the building, often breaking windows and doors in the process. Glass block was selected to admit light, to provide a durable interior surface and to offer some security from those who vandalize the property on a regular basis. Likewise, the 8'-0" fence provides additional security for a building and any vehicles left unguarded a night.

In answer to Ms. Spraul Schmidt, Mr. Vealhower said that the window were shuttered at night. Mr. Raser said that he is sympathetic to the issues of security and did not object to the glass block infill on the newer additions. He indicated he was more comfortable with infilling openings on 227 Stark that had been constructed as an industrial building than those on 225 Stark. Mr. Raser said that although he is opposed to the use of glass block infill, the location of the building in an industrial section of Over-the-Rhine at the remote edge of the historic district justifies the treatment.

In response to Ms. Fisher, Mr. Hampton confirmed that the front picket fence would continue across the front of the property to the corner of 227 Stark and across the front of 225 Stark which sit back several feet from the fence line. Mr. Hampton acknowledged that the basement windows on the street side of 225 Stark might be left as windows to preserve that façade. Mr. Young suggested there might be greater consistency in the windows to be retained and those to be infilled, particularly on the Branch Street elevation. Mr. Hampton responded that the exterior pattern of openings reflect the interior use, that windows have been retained in areas of lighter use and infilled in heavier ones.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Kreider) to take the following actions:

1. Find that although glass block does not meet the Over-the-Rhine guidelines, the applicant has demonstrated in this case that security concerns, the user's requirements for interior durability and the building's location in a manufacturing area on the edge of the historic district warrant relief from the literal language of the guidelines for portions of the building.
2. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed rehabilitation and site with the following conditions:
 - a. Glass block shall not be installed in window openings on the Stark Street elevation of 225-227 Stark Street.
 - b. Glass block is permitted only in certain window openings on 225-227 Stark Street as shown on the plans submitted with the application and as presented at this meeting.
 - c. The original paneled wood doors in the main façade of 225 and 227 Stark Street shall be repaired and reinstalled if possible.

- d. The proposed brick infill of window openings shall be installed with a 1" recess.
 - e. Final construction drawings and material/product selections shall be submitted to the Urban Conservator for approval prior to construction.
3. Approve the necessary Zoning Variance and Special Exception to permit the required number of on-site parking spaces to be reduced from 11 to 6 and for the height and opacity of the 8'-0" metal picket and wood fencing shown in the attached drawings, finding that such relief will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare or injurious to property in the district or vicinity where the property is located and is necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic architectural or aesthetic integrity of the district.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & ZONING VARIANCE, 2342 UPLAND PLACE, UPLANDS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Ms Kellam presented a staff report on a proposal to rehabilitate and add a substantial addition to 2342 Upland Place a contributing building in the historic district. She reminded the Board that it had conducted a preliminary design review on this project in November 2007 and offered additional comments in February 2008. The owners have revised their plans to reflect the Board's earlier comments.

Ms. Kellam said that although the size, scale and form of the addition was essentially as originally proposed, some new elements have been added, most notably a polygonal porch/deck on the rear of the addition. Staff still had concerns about the large scale of the addition and the four-car garage, which was atypical of the district, but overall, the design was consistent with the historic district guidelines. Ms. Kellam recommended that the windows in the high brick foundation of the addition (serving the garage) be lengthened and that additional windows be added to the base of the polygonal porch.

Ms. Kellam added that a deteriorated, non-contributing garage will be removed to make room for the new construction. Because the addition will be within five feet of the property line, a zoning variance will be needed for relief from the required 35' rear yard setback. Ms. Kellam indicated that because this was a corner building, the rear yard reads as a side yard; she commented that the shallow setback was consistent with other side yards in neighborhood.

Owners Thea Langsam and Eric Norris were present to answer questions from the Board. Mr. Norris said that the East Walnut Hills Assembly and their neighbors support the project. He argued that the size of the addition and its garage should be considered in the context of the structure across Fleming Street – St. Ursula Academy's large academic building with loading dock and dumpsters. Ms. Langsam explained that the new rear porch was designed to reflect the form of the front terrace facing Upland Place.

The Board agreed that the brick foundation of the addition should be capped to continue the line of the watertable on the original house. The applicants concurred. Mr. Kreider asked the owners to consider removing the glass block from the basement openings facing Fleming Street as well as lengthening the basement windows in the addition.

Neighbors Karen Kranick of 2336 Upland Place and Maureen Ferrel of 1341 Fleming Street voiced their support for the project that they said has taken years to realize. Ms. Ferrel, whose property abuts the property to the east, said she realized that the new addition will be quite close to her house, but that this would be an improvement over the present condition.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following actions:

1. Find that the structure at 2342 Upland Place is a contributing building within the Uplands Historic District.
2. Find the concept of constructing a two-story addition and garage at 2342 Upland Place is generally acceptable and the design is a considerable improvement.
3. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for a two-story addition and garage at 2342 Upland Place with the following conditions:
 - a. Basement windows shall be revised to be more vertical throughout; basement windows shall be added to the bay beneath the porch/deck on the southwest corner of the addition,
 - b. A watertable/cap shall be added to the brick foundation of the addition to reflect that on the original house,
 - c. Exterior doors shall be changed to four-panel, and
 - d. Final plans to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a building permit.
4. Approve a variance from Section 1405-07 Development Regulations allowing a 5' rear yard setback finding that such relief from the literal implication of the Zoning Code will not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare or injurious to the property in the district or vicinity where the property is located and is necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic architectural or aesthetic integrity of the district.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Senhauser indicated that since Mr. Forwood will be retiring from the City at the end of May, this will be his last Board meeting as Urban Conservator. Board members expressed their gratitude to Mr. Forwood for his service and congratulated him on his retirement. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt read into the record a resolution acknowledging his service.

RESOLUTION

**HONORING
WILLIAM "SKIP" FORWOOD
URBAN CONSERVATOR**

WHEREAS, William "Skip" Forwood has served the City of Cincinnati with distinction as Urban Conservator since 1998, leading the Historic Conservation Office, guiding staff, engaging the community, and advising the Historic Conservation Board; and

WHEREAS, William "Skip" Forwood has overseen the maintenance of existing designated resources, and has further advanced the preservation of Cincinnati's historic fabric through the creation of new Local Landmarks and Historic Districts, including the American Can Building, an extended Over-the-Rhine Historic District and the Woodburn Avenue NBD Historic District; and

WHEREAS, his skills, knowledge and demeanor helped to make the work of staff and the Historic Conservation Board more effective; and

WHEREAS, William “Skip” Forwood was instrumental in preserving the significant and unique records of the City of Cincinnati’s former Municipal Reference Library through the University of Cincinnati Libraries, relocating City records to the University’s Urban Archives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board commends William “Skip” Forwood, and recommends that the City Council issue a resolution in recognition for his distinguished contributions to the public interest of the City of Cincinnati through his leadership of the Historic Conservation Office.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution, signed by the Chairman of the Historic Conservation Board, be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and a signed copy be presented to Mr. Forwood as an expression of the Historic Conservation Board’s appreciation.

John C. Senhauser, Chairman
Historic Conservation Board

May 19, 2008

Mr. Forwood confirmed that the Urban Conservator position had been advertised with an application deadline in June, but that plans for the interim were unknown.

ADJOURN

As there were no other items to be considered by the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser, Chairman

Date: _____