PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

AUGUST 21, 2000

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with Messrs. Bloomfield, Raser, and Senhauser and Mmes. Borys, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace present. Messrs. Dale and Kreider were absent.

MINUTES

The minutes of the July 10, 2000 meeting were approved as amended (motion by Raser second by Spraul-Schmidt); the minutes of July 24, 2000 were approved as amended (motion by Sullebarger second by Spraul-Schmidt); the minutes of August 7, 2000 were approved as amended (motion by Spraul-Schmidt second by Sullebarger).

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND CONDITIONAL USE, 1630 SYCAMORE STREET, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

After distributing drawings and photos, staff member Caroline Kellam summarized the staff report. This is a continuation of an application that came before the Board on July 10, 2000; the Conditional Use, the general Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of the garage addition at the rear and the rehab of the buildings were approved, subject to three major design revisions:

1. The size of the new window openings on the Milton Street (south) elevation would now be reduced to match the size of the existing openings on the south and west walls.
2. The construction of the penthouse and upper roof deck would be eliminated.
3. The sidewalls of the rear cut-away roof deck would remain intact.

The revised plans addressed all the concerns and conditions of the Board.

Architect Denis Back described an addition to the plan, a cut-away roof deck with the floor elevated 2' on the front elevation of the building. The ridgeline of the roof and sidewalls would remain intact, minimizing the visibility of the deck from the street. Staff suggested detail and section drawings on the capping of the side walls and retention of some roofing materials on top of that wall so it gives the impression that a roof remains.

Mr. Back said the cornice and existing windows in the fascia would be replaced. A wrought iron deck rail will extend a maximum of 18" above the cornice in front and 24" above the deck wall in the rear.

Don Beck, 550 Liberty Hill, spoke in favor of the recommendation. He expressed concern that a metal cornice at a building on Milton Street fell and was destroyed after the building roof was removed to provide a roof deck. He encouraged the Board to ascertain that the attachment for cornices remains solid and safe when rafters are removed to accommodate roof decks in the district. Mr. Back explained that in the Milton Street instance the cornice had dry rot and that it may have been struck by lightning. Ms. Sullebarger expressed concern over the loss of original materials in the district.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger second by Bloomfield) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of 1630 Sycamore Street as per plans dated 8/27/00 with the condition that the wrought iron roof deck railing extend no more than 18" above the soffit in front and 24" above the rear wall of the roof deck and that final plans, particularly regarding location of mechanical equipment and details as referenced above, be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a COA and a building permit.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND ZONING VARIANCE, 1883 MADISON ROAD, EAST WALNUT HILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Caroline Kellam distributed architectural drawings and a final landscape plan for this project that was tabled by the Board at the June 19, 2000 meeting. Because this is the continuance of a tabled application, no notice of this hearing was sent out; abutting property owners and East Walnut Hills Assembly representatives who have attended HCB meetings on this matter in the past were telephoned. Neighboring property owners Mr. Hahn and Ms. Skidmore came and examined the plans; both were supportive of the project; staff has not heard from other interested parties. Ms. Dottie Vogt of the East Walnut Hills Assembly attended this Board meeting.

The plans have changed since the June 19, 2000 HCB meeting, as outlined in the staff report. Major changes included eliminating the proposed solarium on the rear terrace and revision of landscape plan between the new garage and the property line. The owner brought copies of the original plans for the house and carriage house. Francis Barrett, Esq. explained that the owners have endeavored to comply with HCB recommendations. Chris Kepes, architect, presented the window survey results; Steve Smith, landscape architect presented landscape plan.

The three main issues addressed at this meeting were
1. The roof material of the garage connector
2. Replacement windows
3. Foundation for the kitchen addition.

Mr. Barrett stated that the owners have tried to comply with the HCB requests at the June 19, 2000 HCB meeting. Significant new work includes the replacement of the original windows and front door. He said that installation of a belowground foundation for the kitchen would probably destroy the root system of the 40" oak tree south of the family room addition. He also said the proposed copper roof for the garage connector was a response to the guidelines' injunction not to mimic original materials in an addition. If the Board deems a copper roof inappropriate, the roof can be of the same half-round clay tile on the existing coach house that is to be used on the roof of the new garage and the restored roof on the original house.

Mr. Kepes explained that all three of the windows on the third floor are replacement windows. On the main floor, the windows and exterior doors are deteriorated, rotted, missing hardware and difficult if not impossible to open. Where the frames are intact, he proposes to replace the sashes with Marvin insulated window sashes that have integral muntin bars; he said they would be identical in appearance to the original windows.

Ms. Kellam explained that whenever an applicant wishes to replace original windows in a historic structure, he must demonstrate why they cannot be repaired and need to be replaced. The proposal is to replace the existing single glazed window sash with a thermal pane window with applied exterior wood mullions.

Ms. Sullebarger said that if the muntins are only applied and the profile is not the same, the replacements are not identical to the originals. Mr. Senhauser said the proposed replacements are simulated divided light, not the same as a divided light; Ms. Spraul-Schmidt commented that they are not a true divided light.

Mr. Kepes said the proposed replacement windows are identical in appearance to the old from the outside. Board members disagreed, saying they are not true divided lights; they are not the same; they are similar. Mr. Bloomfield said the issue here is that approval is being sought for a window that gives an appearance similar to the original but is not identical.

Mr. Senhauser said the Secretary of the Interior's general rule of thumb is, initially to repair; secondly, extensively repair or replicate portions; and finally, as a last resort, to replace in kind to match. The guidelines for this historic district suggest similar levels of remedy.

Mr. Kepes and Mr. Smith addressed the issue of the foundation and the preservation of the 40" oak tree. The kitchen addition will encroach upon the root system of the tree. Mr. Smith said that in his experience trench footers within the root clear area of an oak can so damage the root system that the tree dies. This is why the foundation for that portion of the addition is planned as concrete piers with wood lattice and flower boxes below the windowsills. Mr. Forwood has reviewed the issue of the landscaping with Ms. Skidmore and Mr. Hahn; they expressed approval and support for retaining the oak tree.

Mr. Smith outlined the landscaping plan including a retaining wall north of the new driveway, a walk from the entry drive to the entry court, post lights at the junction of the drive and the walk and the parking area for service vehicles. There will be a landscape buffer between this property and neighboring houses. When Ms. Sullebarger asked about the silver maple in the existing island at the front of the house, Mr. Smith explained this tree is dying and will be removed.

Mr. Forwood said the turf pavers once proposed for access to the rear of the property has been replaced by two parking spaces with a walkway to the house. This will permit more landscaping materials along the property line to screen it from adjacent property views.

Ms. Sullebarger asked about terracing for the formal garden in the rear. Mr. Smith said this area would provide an open view and perhaps a play space for the children. He said the plans are incomplete for this area.

Mr. Raser asked about the rails proposed where the atrium was. Mr. Smith said there would be a 36" wrought iron rail on the lower and side terraces and around the entry court and handrails at the steps.

Ms. Sullebarger stated she thinks replacement of the existing windows will detract from the appearance of the house. She said a custom mill-worker could reproduce the windows

exactly. She also said she has no objection to the copper roof on the garage connector, although a tile roof may be an acceptable alternative.

Mr. Barrett explained that the owners intend to replace the deteriorated windows with a type of thermal pane as close in appearance to the original as possible, so that the existing aluminum storm windows, (not original to the house) that detract from the appearance of the house can be removed.

Mr. Bloomfield stated that he thinks it impractical and almost irresponsible to require non-thermal pane sashes in this day and age, especially on a house of this size. He said the use of a thermal pane replacement that closely resembles but does not duplicate the original sash may not be a perfect solution but will allow the applicant to install an insulated window and remove the present storm windows. He proposed an amendment that would allow the applicants to replace all the present sashes with simulated divided light thermal pane sashes, maintaining as many of the existing frames as possible; where it is impossible to repair the existing frames, they should be replaced in kind. The proposed amendment did not receive a second.

Mr. Kepes explained that the proposed sash is a simulated divided light that is two panes of glass with muntin millwork glued to either side and a metal spacer bar between the two panes of glass that looks like the edge of an individual divided light of insulated glass. He said that it is difficult for the lay person to see the difference from the outside, even at a short distance.

Ms. Sullebarger said she thinks the existing circular drive is much more characteristic of the district and the period than the proposed enlarged motor court that adds enough new parking in front of the house. She said she has reservations about the extra two parking spaces for service vehicles by the carriage house because the guidelines state that front yard parking areas should be permitted in extreme situations only. Mr. Smith said the two parking spaces in the service area would remove service vehicles from the parking court and not block the front of the building, providing a more attractive vista for passers-by.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted (motion by Sullebarger second by Raser) four (Borys, Raser, Sullebarger, Wallace) in favor, two (Bloomfield and Spraul-Schmidt) opposed, to:

1. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of an addition, final landscape plan and alterations at 1883 Madison Road with the following conditions:
   (a) Repair the existing windows or replace in kind
   (b) Amend the landscaping plan to eliminate the two extra parking spaces north of the garage
   (c) Submit detailed information on all new railings on the house to the Urban Conservator for review and approval.
   (d) Any additional work including fencing or major revisions to the project must be reviewed by the HCB prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. Approve a variance to allow the construction of the addition less than 35' from the rear property line as per Section 1407-400 (f) (4) finding that such relief from the literal implication of the Zoning Code:

(a) 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; and
(c) 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.

After a motion by Spraul-Schmidt seconded by Bloomfield, the Board voted five in favor (Bloomfield, Borys, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace); one (Raser) opposed, to reconsider the previous motion.

Mr. Bloomfield moved that the Board change its position regarding existing windows to allow for an insulated wood, simulated divided light sash consisting of interior and exterior mullions and a divider between the two panes of glass, retaining or replacing in kind the existing frames, and removal of the existing storm windows; Ms. Spraul-Schmidt seconded the motion.

Ms. Vogt had left the meeting and was unable to express an opinion. Mr. Raser spoke in favor of requiring replacement in kind of the existing windows.

Mr. Bloomfield said there are two issues. One is the existing storm windows that detract from the building; the other is the cost of energy that makes heating and cooling buildings with large windows very expensive. Mr. Bloomfield spoke in favor of accepting a window close in appearance to the original even if it is not an exact replication; Mr. Raser raised the issue of setting a precedent and questioned how close in appearance is close enough. Ms. Sullebarger asked to hear the guidelines regarding windows; Ms. Kellam read them.

Ms. Borys expressed concern as to what the standards of preservation regarding window repair/replacement are. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt concurred and expressed her concern about what is deemed to be the best and most appropriate appearance for this residence and elsewhere; she also expressed concern about setting precedents.

Ms. Sullebarger addressed the question of precedents and mentioned the Board's action in denying a COA in the case of the house on Keys Crescent where, without a permit, windows were replaced in a totally different style.

The Board voted four (Bloomfield, Borys, Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt) in favor, three (Raser, Sullebarger, Wallace) opposed, to change its position regarding the existing windows at 1883 Madison Road and to permit an insulated, wood, simulated divided light sash consisting of interior and exterior mullions and a divider between the two panes of glass, retaining, repairing or replacing in kind the existing frames, and removal of the existing storm windows.

[Mr. Bloomfield recused himself from Board discussion of the next item, left his seat at the Board table, and joined the audience.]

PRELIMINARY REVIEW, PENDLETON HOUSING, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT

After Mr. Bloomfield left the Board table and joined the audience, staff member Daniel Young explained that the Board will review this project at three different levels, but no official Board action is required at this time.

The three levels of review will be:

1. A Certificate of Appropriateness for rehabilitation of existing properties and new construction in Over-The-Rhine under the City conservation legislation.
2. The plans for rehabilitation in the district can be reviewed by the Urban Conservator and the staff under a Section 106 memorandum of agreement with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office, but plans for new construction in the district must be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. Mr. Young said the Historic Conservation Board is the liaison with the State Historic Preservation Office; so Board comments will be part of the package sent to the State Historic Preservation Office for review of the new construction. This review is triggered by the use of Federal Community Block Grant Funds administered by the City to fund partially the feasibility study and plan development for this project; this requires a Section 106 Federal Historic Compliance Review Process review. [Mr. Mark Epstein of the State Historic Preservation Office was present at the meeting for the review.]
3. Zoning variances required for new construction.

The Over-the-Rhine (OTR) Foundation is the sponsor for this project. Ken Jones, project manager for the OTR Foundation, and Marge Hammelrath, Executive Director of the OTR Foundation, were present. Mr. Jones explained that a goal of the OTR Foundation is an economic mix of homeowners in OTR where presently 90 to 95% of the housing is low income, and the majority of that is subsidized; approximately 2 to 3% of the homes in OTR are owner occupied. This is one of the first homeownership projects for market rate housing in OTR in decades; three years ago the OTR Foundation began acquiring empty properties at the end of Pendleton, Spring and Dandridge Streets. Donna Richardson of the City's Department of Neighborhood Services assisted the OTR Foundation in obtaining a grant in March 2000 to begin the development project.

Steve Bloomfield introduced other members of the design team, including Joe Bott, Dick Duval, and Craig Gosmann. He explained that their challenge is to build housing to meet the market, respond and blend in with the neighborhood and at the same time call attention to the units themselves to attract prospective buyers. Mr. Duval stressed that these units do not displace anyone; they provide new and rehabilitated housing. The cost of the units will range from $190,000 to $300,000. The developers hope to make some of the units available to families with $50,000 annual income. Using models, photographs, elevations, drawings and plans as aids, project architect Mr. Gossman presented the project.

The three Spring Street units will be three-story with rear yard, freestanding garages that have housing units above. Each unit will have decks and terraces on the second and third floors. The facade will be oversized brick above a split-face concrete masonry foundation. Sculpted metal brackets against a wood frieze board are reminiscent of cornices on adjacent buildings. The existing small frame building with aluminum siding on Spring Street is badly deteriorated; and building code orders have been issued concerning its condition. No decision has been made about it or the addition to it.

The two existing Pendleton Street units will be rehabbed, and five new units will be constructed. Each new unit will have a potentially rentable component on the ground level with access beneath the front stoop. Simple punched openings and brick facades in a variety of colors above a split-faced concrete masonry foundation will complement the existing buildings.

The Dandridge Street site has no existing adjacent buildings. This unit is one building in architectural form, with the individual ownership opportunities of six town homes. A first-floor auto court behind iron gates is built into the hillside to provide parking. Punched openings, massing and height are reminiscent of historic elements in the neighborhood; colored metal and brick panels over a rusticated stone foundation will add interest.

The HCB liked the urban, not suburban, treatment of the iron-gate auto court entrances and was supportive of the project but questioned the appropriateness of

1. Oversized brick on the Spring Street facades
2. The metal walls on the Dandridge Street facades
3. The tall buildings in the area that may make the area dark
4. Maintenance of the common areas
5. Treatment of the sidewalls of the end units.

The sheet metal facades on the Dandridge Street unit were a source of concern to the Board. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt said it stretches the guidelines and wondered how this treatment can be justified within the guidelines. The team responded that this is a play-off from the industrial buildings in this neighborhood, which has an industrial as well as a residential history.

BOARD ACTION

No Board action was necessary on this item because it is a preliminary review.

HCB RETREAT

The HCB retreat is scheduled for Monday, September 18, 8 AM - 12:30 PM at the Vernon Manor Hotel.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Raser).

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William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser
Chairman

Date_____