

**ALGONQUIN HISTORIC COMMISSION**

**MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING**

**September 11, 2024**

**7:00 PM**

**Held at Historic Village Hall – 2 South Main Street – Algonquin**

**CALL TO ORDER – ESTABLISH QUORUM**

Present: Chairman Lewis and Members Dombrowski, Donahue, Himes, Jolitz, Teuber, and Thompson.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF AUGUST 14, 2024, AND WORKSHOP MEETING OF AUGUST 17 AND 24, 2024**

Moved Member Donahue; Seconded Member Jolitz.

Voice Vote: All Ayes. Minutes Approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT – AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Public Hearing for Consideration of a Major Improvement in the Old Town District; Case No. HC-06-24, 605 La Fox River Drive for replacement of siding, a door, and a window – Applicants: Miguel Mendez and Andy Bobrow:

**Staff Presentation:** Stephanie Barajas, Village Community Development Planner, presented the case on behalf of Village Staff. Ms. Barajas reported that Miguel Mendez of MJC Contracting Inc. (the Applicant), and Andy Brobow (the owner of the Subject Property), applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the siding on the dormers, a door, and a window at the Subject Property located at 605 N. La Fox River Drive. The proposed modifications would be in public view, are considered a “major improvement” under the Old Town District Preservation Code, and must be reviewed by the Historic Commission at a Public Hearing prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Permit.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff Report explained that the Applicant proposes to replace the siding on the small front dormer and the large rear dormer of the home on the Subject Property. The current siding is 6-inch exposure wood lap/plank-style, and the proposed siding is 6-inch exposure James Hardie fiber cement lap/plank-style. The Applicant also proposes to replace an exterior door on the rear elevation, without modification to size or material, and to replace a picture window on the rear elevation, without modification to size or style. The current material for these elements is wood, and the proposed material for the new elements is fiberglass. The Applicant also proposes to wrap the existing wood fascia and soffit with custom fabricated aluminum with no modifications to the style, replace all 5-inch aluminum gutters and downspouts with no modification to layout, material, or size (except downspouts, which will increase to 3-inch by 4-inch for water flow), install 5-inch aluminum gutter guards, and replace the aluminum window trim wrap with no modifications to the style or material.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff report also noted that the Old Town Survey indicates that this dwelling is contributory due to the dwelling's historic character, and Village Staff believes that the proposed improvements will use more durable materials and be consistent with the existing conditions of the Subject Property. Village Staff therefore recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

**Staff Recommendation:** Village Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted with the conditions that the Applicant comply with all applicable Building Code requirements and obtain all needed building permits prior to beginning any construction.

### **Petitioners' Comments**

The Applicant and Owner of the Subject Property both concurred with the Village Staff presentation, and confirmed that their intention is to maintain the current appearance of the home, but swap out materials as described above.

### **Commission Discussion**

Members noted that the appearance of the proposed changes would be consistent with the style and age of the house, using modern and more durable materials.

### **Motion**

Motion by Member Jolitz, seconded by Member Himes, that the Building Commissioner issue the requested Certificate of Appropriateness for Case No. HC-06-24, 605 La Fox River Drive for replacement of siding, a door, and a window, as submitted by Petitioner and his contractor. Chairman Lewis asked if there were any further questions or discussion needed on the project. There being none, a Roll Call Vote was taken. Roll Call Vote: All Ayes.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Public Hearing for Consideration of a Major Improvement in the Old Town District; Case No. HC-07-24, 108 Center Street for siding replacement – Applicants: Miguel Mendez and Karen Posmer:

**Staff Presentation:** Stephanie Barajas, Village Community Development Planner, presented the case on behalf of Village Staff. Ms. Barajas reported that Miguel Mendez of MJC Contracting Inc. (the Applicant), and Karen Posmer (the owner of the Subject Property) applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness for siding replacement on the dwelling on the Subject Property. The proposed modifications would be in the public view, are considered a “major improvement” under the Old Town District Preservation Code, and must be reviewed by the Historic Commission at a Public Hearing prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Permit.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff Report explained that the Applicant proposes to replace the 8-inch exposure aluminum lap/plank-style siding on the entire exterior of the dwelling on the Subject Property. The proposed new siding would also have an 8-inch exposure, but would be James Hardie fiber cement lap/plank style siding, rather than aluminum siding. The existing detached garage on the Subject Property also has lap/plank siding with an 8-inch exposure, and the owner of the Subject Property requests that the new siding on the Subject Property match the architectural style of the detached garage. Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff report also noted that

there is a stone-like surface, possibly stucco, under the existing aluminum siding, and siding manufacturers recommend that furring strips be installed underneath the new siding where needed to create a level surface over which to install the new siding.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff Report further explained that the Applicant and owner also propose to remove and replace the existing triple 4-inch aluminum fascia and soffit with no modifications to material or style, and replace the 3.5-inch-wide aluminum over wood window trim wrap and underlying wood trim with no modifications to the style or material. The Report also notes that the Old Town Survey indicates that this dwelling is contributory, and Village Staff believes that the proposed improvements will be made with more durable materials, and the proposed 8-inch exposure on the lap/plank siding will match the existing lap/plank style and exposure. Village Staff therefore recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

**Staff Recommendation:** Village Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted with the conditions that the Applicant comply with all applicable Building Code requirements and obtain all needed building permits prior to beginning any construction.

### **Petitioners' Comments**

The Applicant and owner of the Subject Property concurred with the Village Staff presentation, and explained again that the property appears to have stucco under the current siding. According to the Applicant, they have consulted several manufacturers, and all have advised that it would be possible to retain the original stucco siding and install 8-inch Hardie Board over it, provided that the original stucco walls are furred out where needed, in order to create a level surface to which the Hardie Board can be attached. The Applicant also explained that the homeowner hopes to use 8-inch reveal white Hardie Board siding, in order to match the white 8-inch reveal siding currently on her garage.

### **Commission Discussion**

Chairman Lewis explained that the house was originally sided with stucco, and stucco would therefore be an appropriate new siding under the Preservation Code. Chairman Lewis further stated, however, that an 8-inch reveal siding as proposed by Petitioner would be inconsistent with the age of the home, and therefore inappropriate under the Preservation Code. Chairman Lewis and Member Jolitz stated their views that, if lap siding were to be used instead of stucco, a 3–4-inch reveal lap siding would be consistent with the age of the home and therefore appropriate under the Preservation Code.

Member Thompson asked how many years the existing 8-inch reveal siding has been on the house, and the owner stated since the 1960s, which would be half the age of the home. Member Thompson then noted that some older homes in the Historic District originally had a wider reveal siding than 4 inches, which would support the use of such wider sidings under the Preservation Code. She further noted that the Preservation Code does not strictly require an exterior appearance consistent with the period the home was built, but instead allows for alterations and repairs that have essentially the same appearance as the “previous and/or original” exterior, and that the Code also supports retaining changes to a home that have been made over time and acquired significance in their own right. For these reasons, in this particular case, Member Thompson

would support the use of the same 8-inch reveal lap-style siding that has been on the home for the previous 60 years.

Members Jolitz and Teuber responded by noting the need for consistency in requiring use of the same 3 to 4-inch reveal lap siding that other in the Historic District have been required to use. Chairman Lewis and Member Dombrowski also observed that the Preservation Code protects all homeowners in the Historic District by requiring homes to maintain an appearance consistent with their history.

The Applicant and homeowner again explained their intention to retain the exterior appearance of the home as it has been since the 1960s, and to match the 8-inch reveal siding that is currently on both the home and the detached garage on the subject property. That said, the Applicant and homeowner were willing to consider using a six-inch reveal lap-style siding, which some Commission Members believed would be closer to the historic style of the dwelling than an eight-inch reveal siding.

### **Motion**

Motion by Member Jolitz, seconded by Member Donahue, that the Building Commissioner issue the requested Certificate of Appropriateness for Case No. HC-07-24, 108 Center Street for siding replacement, with the following conditions: (1) Petitioner may either re-stucco the exterior of the dwelling or use a 4 to 6-inch reveal clapboard-type siding with mitered or butt corners (no u-channel corners); (2) the aluminum soffit and fascia trim are acceptable as proposed; and (3) the aluminum over wood trim on the windows is also acceptable as proposed. Chairman Lewis asked if there were any further questions or discussion needed on the project. There being none, a Roll Call Vote was taken. Roll Call Vote: All Ayes.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Public Hearing for Consideration of a Major Improvement in the Old Town District; Case No. HC-08-24, 703 La Fox River Drive for porch expansion and modification – Applicant: Historic Commission Member Sharon Himes, who recused herself from the hearing and vote on this application:

**Staff Presentation:** Stephanie Barajas, Village Community Development Planner, presented the case on behalf of Village Staff. Ms. Barajas reported that Sharon Himes (the Applicant and owner of the Subject Property) applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new 6’ by 21’ front porch on the Subject Property. The proposed modifications would be in public view, are considered a “major improvement” under the Old Town District Preservation Code, and must be reviewed by the Historic Commission at a Public Hearing prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness and Building Permit.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff Report explained that the Applicant proposes to expand the existing 6-foot by 6-foot front porch to a 6-foot deep by 21-foot-wide front porch. The proposed front porch will have the same roof line as the existing porch, scalloped shingles, painted redwood spindles and balusters, tongue and groove decking, and a beadboard ceiling. The proposed expansion will not exceed the current setback.

Ms. Barajas and the Village Staff report also noted that The Old Town Survey indicates that this dwelling is contributory, and Village Staff believes that the proposed improvements will use more

durable materials and match the existing architectural style of the existing front porch. Village Staff therefore recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

**Staff Recommendation:** Village Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted with the conditions that the Applicant comply with all applicable Building Code requirements and obtain all needed building permits prior to beginning any construction.

### **Petitioners' Comments**

Ms. Himes, the Applicant and Owner of the Subject Property, concurred with the Village Staff presentation, and added that the original porch currently on the house will not be removed, so long as it is structurally sound, which it currently appears to be. Instead, the new porch addition will incorporate skirting that will coordinate with the original porch. Petitioner also explained that, while the roofline will not change, the end of the porch addition will incorporate a roof dripline that exceeds the porch floor to create an overhang.

### **Commission Discussion**

All Members agreed that the proposed porch addition is consistent with the architectural style of the home and appropriate under the Preservation Code.

### **Motion**

Motion by Member Jolitz, seconded by Chairman Lewis, that the Building Commissioner issue the requested Certificate of Appropriateness for Case No. HC-08-24, 703 La Fox River Drive for porch expansion and modification, as submitted by the Petitioner, including the use of period appropriate materials and designed spindles, posts, balusters, and tongue and groove porch flooring, as described in the application. Chairman Lewis asked if there were any further questions or discussion needed on the project. There being none, a Roll Call Vote was taken. Roll Call Vote: All Ayes.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Member Himes rejoined the meeting as a voting Member at this point.

Members continued discussion of potential plans for events/projects for the year of the USA's 250th anniversary (2026). Further discussion of possible projects/events will be discussed at upcoming Meetings and Workshops.

Members continued discussion of a potential new order for historic identification signs for homes in Old Town, and possible means of notifying homeowners of the opportunity to order a new/replacement sign. Member Thompson also relayed a quote from the same company that manufactured the signs from the last order, at approximately \$100 each.

Members continued discussion of efforts to recruit new student and/or other Commission volunteers/members and some potential candidates who may be available and interested. Members Donahue and Dombrowski also relayed interest expressed by one or more visitors at the Commission's recent Open House event to attend an upcoming workshop and possibly volunteer.

Members continued discussion of construction/remodeling projects undertaken in Old Town without a permit and/or Certificate of Appropriateness. Chairman Lewis relayed a recent inquiry from the owner of the property located at 127 Division Street regarding what the Preservation Code would require for the stair railings on her home that were recently changed without a permit.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

Chairman Lewis approved a bill for \$46.43 presented by Member Donahue for plexiglass used in recent Commission displays. Moved to approve by Chairman Lewis; Seconded by Member Jolitz. Roll Call Vote: All Ayes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Members reported on the Commission’s Open House event on September 7-8, during the Art on the Fox event on Main Street in Old Town. All in attendance reported that the event was a resounding success, and the surprise expressed by visitors about the rich history of Algonquin that has been preserved by the Historic Commission. Many visitors also expressed an interest in returning to a future Commission Meeting or Workshop to learn more about Algonquin’s history. Member Jolitz estimated approximately 450-500 people visited the Open House event on Saturday and Sunday combined. All in attendance also noted the multigenerational demographics of the many visitors, the length of time they stayed (some for well over an hour or two), and the interest many visitors expressed in establishing a permanent place for displaying the Commission’s many historic artifacts.

**CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS, AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Lewis relayed a recent email from Deputy Village Manager Michael Kumbera relaying highly favorable feedback he received about the Commission’s Open House event, and inquiring whether the Commission would be interested in conducting another similar Open House, either combined with other Main Street fairs/events and/or for a smaller group interested in arranging a smaller gathering.

Member Thompson updated Commission Members on upcoming scheduling of the remaining renovation work at the historic Mineral Spring site, and the invoice received from the Village for recently completed concrete restoration work at the site.

Members were reminded of Commission Workshops on September 21 and 28, 2024.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Member Dombrowski moved, and Member Jolitz seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

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Secretary

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Date Approved