

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS DESIGN COMMISSION

**HELD AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL BUILDING
33 S. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RD.
JUNE 25, 2024**

Chair Kubow called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Jonathan Kubow, Chair
John Fitzgerald
Kirsten Kingsley
Ted Eckhardt

Members Absent: Scott Seyer

Also Present: Eric & Lillian Brahar, Brahar Architects for *902 N. Gibbons Ave.*
Anna Broucek, Owner of *902 N. Gibbons Ave.*
Steve Hautzinger, Planning Staff

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FOR MAY 28, 2024

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 28, 2024. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 1. SINGLE-FAMILY ADDITION REVIEW**DC#24-029 – 902 N. Gibbons Ave.**

Eric & Lillian Brahar, representing *Brahar Architects*, and **Anna Broucek**, the homeowner, were present on behalf of the project.

Mr. Hautzinger summarized Staff comments. The petitioner is proposing a full second floor addition and a new full front porch on an existing single-story house. An existing detached two-car garage will remain. The project does comply with the R-3 single-family zoning requirements.

Overall, Staff feels the massing of the proposed second-floor addition with low pitched roof is simple and straight forward; however it is encouraged to soften the shoulders by stepping down the massing at the sides. The full front porch works well to relate to the scale of the adjacent homes. However, the proposed materials and colors are very bold and out of character with the neighborhood. The proposed dark blue siding with black windows, black trim, black gutters and a black standing seam metal roof will look very dark and out of place in this location. Staff recommends a much softer palette of earth tone colors to better fit with the neighborhood. Also, an asphalt shingle roof is recommended in lieu of a metal roof.

Additionally, the following issues should be evaluated:

- The linework on the exterior elevations is unclear. The materials and color designations need to be clarified
- The siding exposure in the gables is inconsistent and unclear.
- The material at the base of the wall on the north elevation looks uncoordinated and is not noted.
- There are “decorative painted 2x4” brackets in the side gables, but not in the front gable, which seems odd.
- The linework on the ends of the front porch roof are mismatched, and the detailing is unclear.
- The wall material in the small second-floor dormer gables is not noted.
- The proposed treated wood porch columns look too thin and will have an unfinished appearance.

Overall, Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition, with the various concerns previously stated, and the recommendations and requirements stated in the Staff report.

Lillian Brahar said they were hired by the homeowners to create a second-floor addition to the existing one-story home for their growing family. She presented material samples and reviewed the proposed color palette that includes dark grey/blue siding, black metal roofing with black trim, black window trim, and a stone base across the front elevation. With regards to the gables, she said that they have added the same gable element to the front elevation that exists on the sides of the home to keep a consistent vocabulary. **Ms. Brahar** also showed photos of two nearby homes, one on the next block and one to the north, that have a similar dark grey siding, and one home with a black metal roof. She said the home on the next block was used as direction for the design of the proposed addition. She commented that there is a lot of new construction in this neighborhood, and although the color palette being proposed does stand out, it looks really beautiful with a nice modern character that she felt did not stick out from the neighborhood. The potential for more construction like this addition in the future is a possibility, with other homeowners wanting to continue expanding their homes and do remodeling.

Commissioner Eckhardt asked the petitioner to elaborate more about the proposed color palette, and he asked about the color of the space behind the brackets and the color of the brackets. **Ms. Brahar** said the space behind the brackets will be the same color palette as the grey/blue siding color, and the brackets will be wrapped in black metal. **Commissioner Kingsley** asked about the material behind of the dormers, and **Ms. Brahar** said the dormers will be the same color as the siding. **Commissioner Eckhardt** asked about the porch columns, and **Ms. Brahar** said the columns were increased in size from 6 x 6 to 8 x 8, and will be wrapped in black metal.

Commissioner Kingsley asked about the areas of vertical siding on the north elevation at the base of the home, and **Ms. Brahar** said they wanted to create contrast there; however, the vertical siding will be replaced with the same

spacing and horizontal siding used on the rest of the home. She also said that she disagreed with Staff's recommendation to soften the shoulders, and she explained that the siding in the gables is intended to be 4" exposure where the rest of the house is about 8" exposure for more contrast. The sides of the porch will have an exterior cement board painted to match the siding. All of the brackets will be wrapped in black metal, and she presented a revised front elevation drawing with brackets added in the front gable and the front dormers.

Commissioner Kingsley acknowledged that all the exposed wood decorative elements are wrapped in black aluminum, and she asked about the railings, which **Ms. Brahar** said will also be black. **Commissioner Kingsley** said the drawings indicate the railings will be stained treated wood, and **Ms. Brahar** clarified that the railings will be a dark, composite material.

Chair Kubow asked if there was any public comment on the project and there was response from the audience.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Len Olson, 827 N. Gibbons, which is across the street and diagonal from the site. He has lived here since 1981 and the homes in this neighborhood are all the same, so he encourages a project like this because it brings some variety to the neighborhood, instead of all the homes being 3-bedroom ranches. However, he does not like the color black and to him, a black metal roof and the color black is new and trendy and will not last, but that is his personal opinion. The more homes that add a second level like this just makes sense with growing families. He supports the project, but with an earth tone color palette.

Pawtz Matysa, lives in the neighborhood and was not here tonight for this project but decided to make a comment about it. He is an Architect and wants to speak positively about the design being shown, which in some ways is maybe ahead of its time, but it is a positive change for this neighborhood, as more projects like this happen throughout the community. He is in favor of the design being presented.

The commissioners summarized their comments. **Commissioner Kingsley** said that while she feels it is okay to put a second-floor on a home, especially in a neighborhood that is all one-story homes, we have to be sensitive to what is already there. That being said, the proposed color palette is noble, nice, and modern, and she liked the examples of the other homes that were shown by the petitioner that are just a block away; however, she felt the homes being shown as examples are very different homes than the design being presented tonight. If the petitioner was presenting a home that was similar to one of the examples shown, then she would be in favor of it, but the aesthetic and style being proposed is more traditional and less modern, so she would only be in support of earth tone colors for the proposed traditional style home. The dark colors being proposed lend themselves to a more modern aesthetic, and the examples of other homes shown tonight are not 100% black in color; they have siding that is grey, with texture, it has variation in color, and the roof is not black, but a grey and not quite as dark; so there is subtlety in that. **Commissioner Kingsley** said that is where she is headed with the materials, and if these are the materials the homeowners really wants, then the design needs to change to respond to those materials, and some of those changes are simple. In her mind, changes would include eliminating the cross gable on the front of the house, eliminate the dormers, a straight shed roof over the porch keeping it simple and clean, with as much void as possible, eliminate the stone, and make it lighter. The building has to be lighter if the color is going to be so dark. In general, that is how she feels about the design.

Commissioner Kingsley questioned the color of the existing windows and asked what will be done to them, and **Ms. Brahar** replied that the windows would either be painted or replaced. **Commissioner Kingsley** said it was okay to keep the existing windows, but the color of all windows should match. With regards to the brackets and detailing in the gables, she said it would look better without the brackets; it looks more like a western cabin versus a modern home. If the homeowners want the design being shown tonight, then it should be in earth tone colors, which will work a lot better. **Commissioner Kingsley** also said that the columns on the front of the home should be thicker, beefed up to a minimum of 10-inches and go all the way down to the porch floor without the stone piers, which will save money and go better with the home that has no other stone on it.

Commissioner Fitzgerald liked a lot of the comments made by Commissioner Kingsley. He is typically open to colors and he is okay with the colors proposed for the siding; however, he preferred a warmer tone for the stone that is very cold as shown, and suggested a stone with a grey buff mixture that would coordinate better with the other colors being proposed. He liked the idea of stepping down the massing on the sides of the home, but would not require it, he was okay with the metal roof and the vertical siding on the side elevation, he liked the idea of simplifying some of the gables and some of the architecture to match the style of the colors, and he felt that 8 x 8 was still a little small for the columns.

Commissioner Eckhardt said the way the colors are being presented on the material sample board make it look like everything is black, when the individual colors are actually not so black. He was okay with the colors as proposed. The siding color is beautiful and he liked it. He was unsure if adding more brackets inside the gables and dormers was necessary because the gables look a little busy to him now, and he suggested using tight boards instead to make them simpler. He also suggested a bright historic cedar on the posts, for an opportunity to brighten up the home and have a contrast of natural materials. He said that a color rendering of this elevation would help everyone see the details of it, and he agreed with Commissioner Fitzgerald that the stone color should be warmer. In conclusion, **Commissioner Eckhardt** wanted to see the details of the two gable ends made simpler, a different coloration with some cedar elements for a nice contrast, and he recommended adding a roof covering over the door on the rear elevation.

Chair Kubow said when this commission sees a bold color palette like this, it is helpful to have a color rendering to show how all the colors will work; he was having a difficult time envisioning the proposed colors on this home. He agreed with Commissioner Kingsley's comments that the proposed design wants to lean into a modern architecture, but there are Arts and Crafts and Traditional elements on the home. He questioned which direction the homeowners want to go in? If the homeowners want a modern home, that would mean simplification of the current design as suggested by Commissioner Kingsley, which would be more cost effective, but if the homeowners want a more traditional home, that would mean going with what is proposed but with a more traditional color palette. **Chair Kubow** commended the homeowners for adding on to the existing home instead of tearing it down, which he always appreciates. Overall, he felt it was a very nicely designed home, and regardless of what color palette is chosen, the addition will be a great addition to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Eckhardt said the design presented tonight is not modern, although the examples of other homes in the neighborhood shown by the petitioner are. He agreed with Commissioner Kingsley & Chair Kubow that if the homeowner really likes a modern home, then they should design one. He was okay with either home design, but they are different homes. He did not want to delay the project, but changing the design to something more modern will require another review by this commission, and he felt the petitioner should be given direction tonight. **Ms. Brahar** introduced the homeowners, and **Ms. Broucek** said that they like the proposed colors and agreed with the commissioner's comment about the stone; she does not want the stone at the base, and the stone options to choose from were very limited. They could also increase the size of the columns to 10 x 10.

Commissioner Fitzgerald said that simplifying the design could be really nice, but to him that did not mean reinventing the design. The design can just be simplified and he encouraged Staff to review any changes, since we are not talking about an entire new home, just a clean-up of some of the details for the color palette proposed. With regards to the columns, if the petitioner chose to remove the stone, then he would suggest the columns be increased to 12 x 12. He reiterated that he is okay with Staff approving that change. **Commissioner Eckhardt** added that because the columns are so big on the bottom and so little on the top, there is no transition, and the trim details are not shown.

Mr. Hautzinger said Staff is not opposed to reviewing minimal changes to the design, as long as the required changes are clearly described and straightforward; however, Staff is not comfortable approving a revised modern version of the current design, which would therefore need to be re-reviewed by the Design Commission. **Commissioner Kingsley** agreed and felt it would be hard for Staff, and she pointed out that the petitioner has not indicated if they want a modern design or not. Personally, she felt it was worth the two extra weeks to have the homeowners respond to which way they want to go and then come back for another review. **Ms. Broucek** said they could probably come to an agreement tonight about the direction of the design, and she was not opposed to the brackets being eliminated.

Commissioner Kingsley suggested continuing the project to a date specific and not voting tonight. **Chair Kubow** partially agreed, but was also uncomfortable directing a lot of the design. He felt the petitioner should think about the direction they want to go in and then make whatever changes are needed, and return in two weeks with something they are comfortable with. Don't rush it just because they want to finish it tonight. **Mr. Hautzinger** said that revised plans for the next meeting in two weeks would need to be submitted to Staff by the end of this week.

Ms. Brahar asked for a brief recess to talk with the homeowners, and they briefly left the room. Upon their return, **Ms. Brahar** said the homeowners agree to remove all of the stone, increase the columns to 12 x 12 and wrap them in a cement board painted black, and keep the bracket at the porch entrance only and remove the remaining brackets in the gables. **Mr. Hautzinger** asked about the stone between the porch columns, and the petitioner said it will also be removed and replaced with horizontal siding between the posts, below the porch, brought down to the ground.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER ECKHARDT, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, TO APPROVE THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN FOR THE PROPOSED ADDITION TO THE EXISTING SINGLE-FAMILY HOME LOCATED AT 902 N. GIBBONS AVENUE. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON THE ARCHITECTURAL PLANS RECEIVED 5/30/24, DESIGN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS, COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE AND VILLAGE CODES, REGULATION AND POLICIES, THE ISSUANCE OF ALL REQUIRED PERMITS, AND THE FOLLOWING:

1. A REQUIREMENT TO MODIFY THE DETAILS ON THE FRONT ELEVATION, TO REMOVE THE STONE, REMOVE THE BRACKETS IN THE SECOND-FLOOR GABLE ENDS, INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE PORCH COLUMNS TO APPROXIMATELY 12" X 12", AND THE PETITIONER SUBMIT A REVISED FRONT ELEVATION TO STAFF FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.
1. A REQUIREMENT TO REMOVE THE BRACKETS IN THE TWO GABLES ON THE RIGHT AND LEFT SIDE OF THE HOME.
2. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE ARCHITECT REVIEW THE DETAILS OF THE COLUMNS WITH PLATFORMS ON TOP OF THE TREX FLOORING OF THE PORCH, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE TRIM AND DETAIL TO JOIN THE COLUMN TO THE LATERAL MEMBERS.
3. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE COLORS AS PRESENTED TONIGHT ARE ACCEPTED: BLACK METAL GUTTERS, BLACK WINDOWS, MIDNIGHT BLACK METAL ROOF, BISCAYNE BLUE SIDING, AND BLACK PORCH COLUMNS AND RAILINGS.
4. A RECOMMENDATION TO ADD A SMALL SHED ROOF OVER THE BACK DOOR TO PROTECT FROM RAIN.
5. THIS REVIEW DEALS WITH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED TO BE AN APPROVAL OF, OR TO HAVE ANY OTHER IMPACT ON, NOR REPRESENT ANY TACIT APPROVAL OR SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED LAND USE OR ANY OTHER ZONING AND/OR LAND USE ISSUES OR DECISIONS THAT STEM FROM ZONING, BUILDING, SIGNAGE OR ANY OTHER REVIEWS. IN ADDITION TO THE NORMAL TECHNICAL REVIEW, PERMIT DRAWINGS WILL BE REVIEWED FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE DESIGN COMMISSION AND ANY OTHER COMMISSION OR BOARD APPROVAL CONDITIONS. IT IS THE PETITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INCORPORATE ALL REQUIREMENTS LISTED ON THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS INTO THE PERMIT DRAWINGS, AND TO ENSURE THAT BUILDING PERMIT PLANS AND SIGN PERMIT PLANS COMPLY WITH ALL ZONING CODE, BUILDING CODE AND SIGN CODE REQUIREMENTS.

Commissioner Fitzgerald preferred siding or other material instead of lattice below the flooring on the porch, he wanted it to look more modern; to be approved by Staff. **Commissioner Kingsley** said that whatever material is chosen there, it has to breathe and there has to be air flow under the porch. **Mr. Hautzinger** asked if the Design Commission is requiring a color rendering for Staff review, and **Commissioner Eckhardt** said that only an updated drawing of the changes needs to be submitted to Staff for review.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER ECKHARDT TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ADD THE FOLLOWING:

6. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE WALLS UNDER THE PORCH BE HORIZONTAL SIDING SIMILAR TO THE

HOME, AND THAT IT BE VENTED ON THE TWO ENDS.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION.

FITZGERALD, AYE; ECKHARDT, AYE; KUBOW, AYE; KINGSLEY, NAY.
MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 2. OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comment

There was none.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER ECKHARDT, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:55 P.M. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.**