

Minutes
Historic Zoning Commission
May 12, 2020

Call to Order

The "Zoom" platform meeting was called to order by Chairman, Mal Wall at 3:00pm

Commission members present

Chairman, Mal Wall Gavin Duke Ron Farris Bunny Blackburn
Jeanette Whitson

Staff members present

City Manager, Beth Reardon City Attorney, Doug Berry
Assistant City Manager and Building Official, Lyle Patterson
City Recorder, Edie Glaser

Consideration of the Minutes

Minutes of the HZC meeting held April 14, 2020

Motion to approve: Farris **Second:** Duke **Vote:** All aye

Old Business:

1. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Province Builders, John Swift (20012), 1210 Nichol Lane for the demolition of existing home (Property of Conservation) and construct a new single-family home. *The demolition permit of the existing home was granted at the January 14, 2020 HZC meeting.*

Presentation: Chris Goldbeck with P. Shea Designs, at the last meeting there was some concern about the overall height of the structure and the size of the front door and how it relates to the windows on either side of it. We have addressed lowering the height 2 feet and have raised the height of the front door from the standard 8 feet to 9 feet. We took photos of the houses in the neighborhood and the two prominent styles are neo classical traditional homes and French provincial styles. When it comes to the height, width, and size I tried to make a more statistical case for why our house is in keeping with the immediate neighborhood. We looked at the height, width, and square footage of the houses on the block and then compared it statistically to our own design that we are proposing.

Board Questions/ Comments:

- Farris, could you highlight your width and height analysis?
- Goldbeck, the average width for the houses in the area we studied are just over 75 feet. Our house is 83 feet wide. The standard deviation for the neighborhood was 21 feet. Our house is within the average. In addition, there is almost no correlation between the year of houses built and the width of the houses. Many of the older houses were just as wide as the newer ones. The height of the finished grade number is 36 feet and the average house height for the area is 28 feet with a standard deviation of 8 feet. We are right on the border between an average house and a house that is larger than normal. There are five houses in the neighborhood that are taller than the house we are proposing.
- Blackburn, are there other houses this tall around it on Nichol Lane?

- Goldbeck, the house heights on Nichol Lane are:
1202 - is 24 feet
1204 - is 35 feet
1206 - is 17.5 feet
1208 - is 21.5 feet
- Blackburn, so this house is taller than any other house on Nichol Lane?
- Goldbeck, by 1 foot yes. We looked on other streets to give more data points since we are restricted to only one side of Nichol Lane. The other side of Nichol Lane is Metro. There were not a lot of homes on Nichol Lane to compare it to.
- Duke, I am looking at the inspirational photos and in each one of those the front door is exactly the height of the top of the transom or the windows.
- Farris, the pitch hip roof could go shallower since it is not a very deep porch. I can see a way where you could get that door up higher. I have the same comment as Duke.
- Goldberg, I could go with a flatter roof at the entry. That would switch us to a rubber membrane roof. It would drop the pitch allowing us to use a 10 foot door.
- Farris, or a copper. I would suggest you widen the opening. That would make it more in line with the windows right and left.
- Duke, what is the detail above the window? Is that limestone?
- Goldberg, yes.

Public Comments

Gray Thornburg, 1212 Nichol Lane, I submitted a letter. We appreciate what you are trying to do, and we are not going to oppose this, but we would prefer that the mass of the house be pushed towards the back.

Goldberg, I failed to mention in the presentation that there are some large trees in the back left of our building envelope. We are keeping the house pulled up to the front and to the right to stay out of the large trees as much as we can in hopes of keeping those long term.

Blackburn, the last time we met Gray you mentioned some concern on the size of the garage relative to your house, has that been addressed?

Gray Thornburg, we met with John Swift and we mutually agreed there would be enough landscaping. Our only comment is there is a lot of bulk with this house. There are many large houses on Nichol Lane, but the peak breaks up the mass. There is a lot of mass in the front of the house.

Blackburn, are there any pictures of homes on Nichol Lane? The pictures you presented are on Canterbury.

Patterson, there are no pictures of homes on Nichol Lane.

Goldberg, I was comparing the homes with the same massing and height in the general neighborhood not just Nichol Lane itself.

Whitson, a lot of the homes on Canterbury looked like Nichol lane ten years ago. I don't think we just have to limit to Nichol Lane the landscape especially. The dates of some of these homes it is being compared to are in the 1940's. These homes could also be subject to new buildings.

Duke, it meets all the ordinances for BZA correct?

Patterson, that is correct. It meets the bulk standards, footprint and FAR.

Board Discussions:

Farris, I see an identifiable style to this. We need to address the front entry and its scale and proportion to be more consistent with the applicant's inspiration pictures.

Blackburn, I do not think the limestone and metal standing roof matches the rest of the house. In looking at the inspiration pictures it seems in conflict with the rest of the house.

Farris, I have a similar reaction. I would like to see the front door in line with the two side windows. The massing and proportion of the front could be further improved if we did that. The majority of this house is going to be seen at its front view and its two side views. If you look at the right side elevation the main body of the house and its roof line is rather narrow as a scale. The left side elevation is presented more as a one story and stepping down. I think the little bay could work with its soffit overhang and roof and tuck in that overhang to be a little more sympathetic to the style and scale. John Swift, we did submit the materials list with the original application.

(Patterson displayed the materials list on the screen)

Duke, does this house have architectural shingles on it?

Goldberg, yes

Blackburn, what are you using for the railing on the other porch?

Goldberg, the railing will be rod iron.

Whitson, what are the gutters made out of and the down spouts?

Swift, they are aluminum.

Duke, what are your dentals made of on the house?

Swift, they will be composite python that are paintable.

Whitson, what is the brick on the house?

Goldberg, it is full brick.

Whitson, Lyle can you say if this meets the minimal standards that are required?

Farris, I do not see anything that is outside the City ordinances.

Patterson, I do not either.

Motion to approve requiring the applicant to submit to L. Patterson revisions to the front porch in proportions addressing the comments we made today aligning the front door and revising the roof that would allow for that and the study of the side bay with similar detail adjustments: Farris

Second: Duke Vote: 3 yes, 1 opposed

2. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Matt Bass, (20021), 429 Royal Oaks Drive for the demolition of existing home (Property of Conservation) and construct a new single-family home. **Deferred**

3. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for El Jack Custom Homes, LLC. (20032), 4310 Sunnybrook Drive, for the demolition of existing home (Property of Conservation) and construct a new single-family home. **Deferred**

4. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Chandelier development (20033), 100 Bellevue Drive South, for the demolition of existing home (Property of Significance) and construct a new single-family home.

Presentation: Joel Lyons, property owner, and Preston Shea with P. Shea Designs.

Board Questions/Comments:

-Blackburn, I went into this house and there were some things that we were told about this house in the last meeting that are inaccurate. The ceiling height on the first floor is 3 inches shy of 9 ft. and on the second floor they are a little over 8 ½ feet. The steps are not sagging and the stone foundation in the basement is completely intact. There is evidence of water in the basement that is of any house in Belle Meade with out proper grading.

-Lyons, I would disagree with the measurements. I have 8'6 at certain locations on the first floor and 8'2 on the second floor. They are low ceilings in today's standards.

-Wall, I went through this house twice. The house has been very poorly maintained for a very long time.

-Lyons, we have provided two options regarding new construction.

Option one, the house faces Bellevue West. The two houses next to it are very similar in style. Last month the design was 39 feet, the current house is 30. This is a 7 foot difference in height. This is due to the first floor being 10ft and the second floor being 9ft. The current home is built on grade.

-P. Shea, the second option is still colonial revival and gable style. I believe this one suits the homes on Bellevue Drive South.

-Duke, the second alternative adds more character to the block of the street.

-Whitson, I agree, it is a good fit.

-Farris, let's re-visit the demolition as first order of action.

Public Comments:

Carolyn Sorenson, 106 Bellevue Drive South, my husband and I sent a letter in regarding the demolition.

Laura Rhodes, 101 Bellevue Drive South, read a letter she submitted to the Commission opposing the demolition. This house will be massively larger than any other house on the Street. The long view of this home with a three car garage will be my view. I think having this long footprint with three car garage and loosing green space is significant. This is a very old home connected to the Belle Meade Plantation property. I think a builder can come up with several reasons why they should demolish a home, but the Commission is here to protect them, and I am hoping you all will.

I would hate to look at this home. It has a large three car garage that no one on this street has and there are no garages that are that close to the street. I hope nothing like that ends up on this property.

Lyons, in response to Mrs. Rhodes comments I would like to say that the house is just over 5,000 square feet and well within the bulk standards of Belle Meade. The house was marketed by the family as a tear down.

Board Questions/Comments:

L. Patterson displayed the photos of the home, 106 Bellevue Drive South, on the screen.

Blackburn, this house was built in 1939 and should be protected.

Whitson, it is a tough thing to have generations of people not keep up a house but then require a future owner to do what has not been done. My take is this house has been really let go.

Farris read through the guidelines and commented he is not struggling with the category of demolition he is struggling with the design that is being presented to us.

Duke, I agree with Farris. I would like to have more information as far as proportion and scale of what is going in its place.

Whitson, I agree, this home to me does not satisfy the requirements in the guidelines. It has been altered over the years in ways that are not good.

There is a lot of sentiment that goes with these older homes in the neighborhoods. We have to make sure that is not what we are relying on. There are very concrete things that we have outlined in the guidelines.

Farris, the alternate that I am seeing is headed in the right direction in terms of massing, scale, and character of that street. Sensitivity of the replacement in this neighborhood is key. It is a transitional neighborhood with different home types and styles. This is a corner lot, so it presents two faces to the City.

Duke, I think the second alternative has more promise than the first case presented. It could be a positive for that street and that area.

Farris, we cannot really give our opinion if something is within the bulk standards.

Whitson, I agree but those bulk standards still need to blend in with the historic character of the neighborhood. I do think it's appropriate to look at both streets since it is a corner lot.

Lyons, it seems like alternate 2 is the direction the Commission would like us to go. I am committed to do that. My preference would be to have approval to do the demo and I will commit to staying on alternate 2.

Berry, I would suggest that if you make a motion to allow the demolition that you make a finding that it is not a significant property under the criteria.

Motion that the 100 Bellevue Drive South house does not possess the qualities that render a property of significance under our Historic Zoning Commission Guidelines and allow a demotion of the property: Whitson

Second: Duke Vote: 4 yes, 1 opposed

Jeanette, I like the cedar shake roof. I would like to see something that surpasses what the existing residence have as far as integrity of materials. If you could incorporate some pretty gutters, at least on the front, that would be a nice detail that is quality.

Duke, the front portico could be celebrated a little more. There are some other houses in Belle Meade that offer some good examples to tie it into the City's character. There is one on Lynnwood that is very similar to this.

Farris, gambler style houses offer a significant look back in the history of Belle Meade. You can find examples throughout the City that are very sound and proportionally well done. The Belle Meade Country Club has a gambler. I am going to be very sensitive to window placements, scale, and proportion. How you make the transition to the rear wing in this gambler style is going to be part of this challenge.

Duke, I would suggest you explore a belt course to do a water table to let the house slide down a little. Typically, you see a water table about the level of where the front porch elevation is.

Wall, is it necessary to put a three car garage on it?

Lyons, in my experience it is a negative if you don't have a three car garage.

Duke, do you have enough room to bring a drive so that you are not seeing this from the street view on the site plan? Is there a way you could bring it in from one side and still be able to pull in and out?

Lyons, we do plan to screen that side of that yard. We could look at changing the entry point.

Whitson, moving the driveway in with a row of trees will do a lot to help the neighbor across the street.

Blackburn, I would encourage you to make it authentic, a true architectural style that would meet the criteria to be a real Dutch colonial which I think would fit in this neighborhood very well.

Blackburn, I emailed Lyle three good examples to send to you of architectural design on Dutch Colonials.

Farris, I agree with Blackburn and would suggest a study of one of our suggested books, A Field Guide to American Houses. The gambrel roof is prevalent in Dutch Colonial, Georgian shingle style. My evaluation would be to have an identifiable style that we can evaluate and react to. I think the direction it is heading is a much better massing study. The problem is how it gets detailed out.

Lyon, I would like to build a nice home. I don't want to build a standard speck. That is not my intent.

Blackburn, I believe some of the concern with the neighbors was that they were not pleased with the home and the quality of the home you already built on the street.

Lyons, I would have to disagree with the quality of that house. It is a high quality home. That was a custom home. I was the builder, but I did not design the home.

Duke, I would applaud the second alternative and appreciate that.

Wall, I would suggest to maybe turn the garage.

Public Comments

Cameron Sorenson, 106 Bellevue Drive South, there is a high probability there will be a family to live in this house with multiple cars. Is there any way to make it safer for cars coming in and out of the garage? Perhaps by turning the garage or turning the ingress into the property? We like that idea if it would be softened from a hard entrance onto the street.

P Shea, I think that can be accomplished by shifting the driveway further up the lot. That way it is not a direct line in or out. This will force the driver to face the street when exiting.

Board Discussions and Comments:

Motion to Defer the design consideration for sixty days: Farris

Second: Duke Vote: All aye

5. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Shelby Brown (20042), 815 Westview Avenue, for the partial demolition of existing home (Property of Conservation) and renovation of more than 35%. **Deferred**

New Business:

1. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for David Ingram (20051) 4421 Tyne Boulevard for an addition to existing property of more than 35% (Property of Conservation).

Presentation: Van Pond with Van Pond Architecture, the house is a 1940 or 1941 build. It is a very straight forward and simple Georgian or regency revival. It is very streamline with classic proportions. The roof exterior is black slate. There are Queen Anne gutters lined with copper. The lot is trapezoid. There is not an opportunity to do an addition on the rear of the house due to the shape of the lot and a significant slope going down to the creek in the back of the house. We think the addition will complement and extend the language of the existing two story main residence.

We are requesting to demolish the existing story and a half portion and replace it with a one and a half story that is longer but still within the building envelope. The reason for taking it down is the construction is very

high quality making it very difficult to adapt to making any changes inside. We also want to create some additional space without disturbing the existing interior space of the two story house.

We are putting a master suite and a kitchen on the main floor. The existing kitchen is very small. All the material are going to match with the existing. We are proposing a rear addition which will be a sunroom. It will be very glassy almost a greenhouse feel but not a glass roof.

Board Question/ Comments:

Whitson, the part to be demolished, I am trying to figure out its significance if any.

Pond, I believe the breakfast area, hall and garage are part of the original structure. At one point it may have been a pull in portico-chere. Those areas are service areas not defined areas of the home. The family room in the back was a contemporary addition from 1995.

Whitson, this home was renovated in the 90's so not in its original form.

Pond, there will be one variance. It is in the back facing the creek.

Motion to approve: Blackburn Second: Whitson Vote: All aye

L. Patterson announced Kristi Kaminski, 609 Belle Meade Boulevard, has changed her plans on her home from stucco to brick. Patterson displayed the brick on the screen. Farris, Duke and Blackburn expressed they would come by City Hall to see the brick before the next meeting. Farris suggested Kaminski present a drawing of the revision.

Berry, Commission is not to discuss without the applicant.

Berry and Patterson to discuss and bring back as a formal matter.

Motion to adjourn: Duke Second: Whitson Vote: All aye

Chairman Mal Wall

City Recorder Edie Glaser