

Minutes
HZC Meeting via "Zoom"
City of Belle Meade
March 9, 2021

Call to Order

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

Commission members present

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

Staff Members present

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

Consideration of the Minutes

Consideration of the HZC meeting minutes held February 9, 2021

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

Consideration of the HZC RETREAT meeting minutes held February 9, 2021

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

Old Business:

1. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Province Builders, (21022) 903 Lynwood Boulevard to construct a new single family home. Demolition was granted at the January HZC meeting.

Presentation: Chris Goldbeck with P. Shea Designs, and John Swift with Province Builders.

Jeanette Whitson, the five issues that were discussed at the last meeting and why this application is back for review are:

The removal of the dental molding around the house.

The Symmetry of the left side window.

The removal of the pediment on the front door.

Review the pediment dormers.

Review the rear roof pitch.

Board Questions and Comments:

- Duke, I also did not see any proposed grades.
- Goldbeck, the existing grade and finished grade is on the plan. There is not a tremendous amount of manipulation that we are doing to the site. We pushed the house back a bit from the street to work with the existing contours that we had and minimize the amount of manipulation we had to do. In regard to the five issues, I think we have addressed those.
- Blackburn, why did you raise the level of the house because I know it is already taller than the neighbor to the right if you are facing the street.

- Goldbeck, part of the discussion that we had in the last meeting was looking to raise the roof pitch of the roof forms at the rear of the house. We did not want the hipped roof to get over the gable of the main house. We discussed raising the roof pitch from 12:12 to 4:12 because it would be consistent with the style and would also allow us to raise the roof pitch in the rear segment.
- Duke, with this you still meet the Belle Meade height requirements.
- Goldbeck, correct.
- Blackburn, can you tell me about the height and elevations of the houses on the same side of the street?
- Goldbeck, there has not been a lot of redevelopment on that block yet. This will be taller than the neighboring houses. But we believe it is in keeping with the story and a half character that we have.
- Blackburn, this is a lot of roof. It appears to be more roof than the main body of the house.
- Duke, this roof will be cedar shake?
- Goldbeck, correct.
- Blackburn, it looks disproportionate to me with roof.
- Goldbeck, we raised the pitch to a 14:12 roof to accommodate the steeper roof in back.
- Duke, we were trying to go for a French Norman roof. What they had before seemed a little flat. We requested it to be more of a steep French Norman roof.
- Blackburn, I understand you want a steeply pitched roof with this style it is just the overall height of it looks very disproportionate to me. It looks very tall relative to the other houses. I am afraid we are going to look at this house and see roof, even though it will be pretty with shaker. I am worried what it does to the other houses around it, height wise. How big is this lot?
- Goldbeck, .57 acres.
- Duke, would it help if those dormers came up? How far is that window seal on that dormer up there from the finish floor of the second story? That would help to diminish the proportion between the downspout and the eave.
- Blackburn, I am afraid the dormers will get top heavy.
- Duke, they would just need to bring that consistent line across and move the dormers up.
- Whitson, instead of having the dormers on the face of the house move them up.
- Blackburn, what proportion of the house is roof alone?
- Whitson, that is a flat perspective, the roof will be receding.
- Goldbeck, for the windows and dormer, the heads of the windows are 8ft 4inch and the sills are 2ft 4in.
- Farris, I agree if they were moved up, they would be more in proportion with the house.
- Blackburn, are these pho chimneys on the house?
- Goldbeck, correct, there are not fireplaces underneath them. They are decorative chimneys not functional.
- Whitson, is the fireplace on the screen porch functional?
- Goldbeck, yes, wood burner. The chimney will be painted stucco.
- Swift, the fireplaces inside the house are vent free.
- Blackburn, I do not think the pho chimneys are up to our standard of building here in quality of what we are looking for in construction.

- Duke, do you have a chimney pot in mind?
- Swift, it will be decorative aluminum, either painted aluminum or copper. It is full decorative chimney pot with a screen.

Board Discussions:

Motion to deny this application: Blackburn

(Motion failed for lack of a second)

Motion to approve the application with stipulations: Duke

Second: Whitson

Whitson, if you are looking at the side massing of this house the back portion is right up at the top of this front section. It is a very large addition on the back of that front section. It is equal in mass to the front. Normally that roof would step down some. In looking at the roof heights is that just a lot of empty attic up there. Why does it go all the way to the top? Why is the rear portion not subservient to the main massing of the house?

Goldbeck, that is attic space. It had been more subservient to the main house, but we raised the pitch because the board had asked for that to make it more consistent with the main house. It is taller and larger than it was at the last meeting. That is the direction we were asked to explore.

Farris, in reviewing my notes from last month's meeting and the requests that we made. We had an emphasis to the rear elevation, and its roof pitch, and how it tied into the main body of the front of the house. We did ask the applicant to raise the pitch, which he has done. We also asked that the eave condition of that addition, or the rear component to be more in congruent with the style of the front of the house. I do not fault the applicant for raising the pitch of the rear portion of the house as we asked him to do. Its pitches a better complement to the steeper pitch at the front of the house. What I am still troubled with is the eave conditions of that hip roof area do not seem to tie into the front body of the house. I am concerned with maybe the hip roof versus the gable of the main body of the house from the back elevation.

Goldbeck, it had been a rear facing gable previously. We were asked to change it to hip at the last meeting.

Farris, it is how its transitioning itself into the eave that seems to be dissimilar to the front, along with how the screened in porch eave details are dissimilar. They do not have to be exactly the same but that pitch at 4 and 12 seems a bit out of character with the steeply pitched front roof. The applicant has made improvements to the window composition. I think there are some minor tweaks to the back area that would only improve upon what has already been done at the front.

Duke, I feel like the roof would diminish some if we could get those dormers up into a reasonable height.

Blackburn, how many square feet is this house?

Goldbeck, 4800 on the first two floors and another 800 in the basement.

Blackburn, it is a lot of house on that lot.

Duke, you have the allowable being 5600 and the actual around 5400 for the FAR, is that correct?

Goldbeck, yes, because the basement does not count toward FAR.

Duke, you have 11 square feet allowable on your footprint to go.

Blackburn, almost 700 under roof, is that correct?

Goldbeck, correct, counting the first floor, second floor, the garage, basement space and covered porches.

Whitson, I have a little bit of an issue with how big it is massed up out of the ground because that basement is exposed in the back.

Farris, will the house comply with the allowable FAR.
Goldberg, yes, we are 5454 for FAR and allowable is 5618.
Patterson, is that including attic?
Goldberg, the attic above the main house is 628 square feet.
Blackburn, I am concerned with the pho chimneys. Is the working wood burning fireplaces made up of stucco over frame?
Goldberg, yes.
Blackburn, is that allowed?
Patterson, no.
Swift, are they not allowed because they are stucco, what if they are brick?
Blackburn, I do not think you can support a brick chimney that is pho without a base.
Swift, you reinforce the roof.
Patterson, that is correct.
Blackburn, my concerns are the dormers do not look accurate to me. On the side elevation you have stucco, half timbering, clap board, mortar rub, and brick veneer. There is a lot going on.
Swift, I would like to clarify there will be no stucco on the house. It will be brick.
Blackburn, what are you calling the architectural style of this?
Goldberg, French Norman.

Motion to defer up to sixty days until changes that have been suggested are made: Blackburn Second: Farris Vote: All aye

Committee Suggestions:

Dormers further up to get aesthetically in character with the other houses in the neighborhood.
Clarification of materials to address the pho chimneys and the fireplace on the back and if they will be copper chimney pots or aluminum.
Revisit the rear eave lines of the rear wing to be more in congruent with the front style.
Concern over the massing of the house.
Does the house meet FAR.

New Business:

1. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Jay Fulmer, (21031) 1106 Nichol Lane, for demolition of an existing home (Property of Conservation) and construct a new single-family home.

Presentation: Jay Fulmer, owner, I misunderstood the conceptual elevations. We had prepared some hand sketches on the concept. It may be appropriate to break this up into a demolition application then a separate approval of the future home. I would like to move forward with removal of this structure. I would also appreciate feedback on the architecture. We bought this property in September 2020. It is intended to be our personal residence. The lot next to this will be coming before this committee in the next month or two. The lot to the North of it was just built on a few years ago. This house has been unkept over the past fifteen years. We had first wanted to renovate the home, but this home has so much smoke damage and tobacco smoke that it is just beyond repair on the inside. We have been working on plans for the last six months and we are happy with the direction we are going. The house was built in 1951. It has 8ft ceilings. The previous owner was a hoarder and a smoker. It would cost \$500 a square foot to repair it. The walls are yellow and just everything about the home it is just not habitable. The low ceilings and with these other factors it would never appraise for the

value of money you would have to put in it in order to make it a viable project for anybody.

Board Questions and Concerns:

- Patterson, I have been in this home and recommend approval of demolition.
- Duke, no part of this house will be saved?
- Fulmer, we are going to put back the driveway in its existing location but widening it. A portion of the subgrade and its base for the driveway is intended to be used.

Board Discussion:

Motion to approve the demolition of this property as it is not a property of significance built after 1950 and is not contributing to any architectural significance in the neighborhood: Whitson Second: Duke Vote: All aye

**Motion to defer the proposal of construction of a new family home: Wall
Second: Blackburn Vote: All aye**

Comments: At the next appearance, the applicant needs to provide dimensions and more detail on the materials. Accurate grades need to be provided as well.

2. The application for a certificate of appropriateness for Steve Cates (21032) 325 Walnut Drive, for demolition of an existing home (Property of Conservation) and construct a new single-family home.

Presentation: Ron Farris, Farris Concepts in Architecture, and Anne Daigh, landscape architect, our research indicates the residence was established July 30, 1965. According to Metro Parcel I have not found any evidence of it being constructed earlier. From my analysis, the house does not rise to the level of being worthy of conservation. I do not think it possesses integrity of design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, or an association from a style from the date of the period of construction. The aesthetic is austere and unadorned. It lacks composition in proportion in both its horizontal and vertical massing. It lacks any detail that tie it to a specific style, and it lacks quality of materials. The brick used was a very common brick that lacks texture or appearance of being handmade. It has a very poor tonal value and color value. It also suffers strongly with a sighting issue. Where the finished floor level was placed nearly at grade. Therefore, it lacks an identifiable base. Its eave lines are placed quite close to the second story windows making it appear like a hat that has been pulled to close to one's eyes. Ceiling heights are approximately eight feet. It has a six inch depth of footing and it is composed of suspect and deficient mortar. Its telegraphing evidence of structural movement, floor systems sagging, and it appears that there was a five to six inch mortar base laid before laying block. We would not be building on top of that foundation if we were to renovate this house. Internally, all systems structural, mechanical, and electrical appear to be mostly original and deficient. This home does not check any of the boxes that would make it worthy of conservation.

Board Discussions:

**Motion to approve to request to demolish the home: Duke
Second: Blackburn Vote: All aye**

Presentation of new build: Ron Farris, Farris Concepts in Architecture, the proposed new residents will be in the style of English cottage. The house will be adorned in a lap siding with a limestone base (photos displayed of the level of bracketing and roof details). Identifying characteristics of this house is the H shape with a nod of symmetry at the front. Proportion and composition follows English tradition of steeply pitched roof with forward facing gables embodying both minimal eave overhangs with minimal cornice details and overhanging eaves supported by detailed bracketed wood timbers as well as floor overhangs supported by decorative pendants. Windows will be both double hung and picture units with classically proportioned panes. Exterior materials are going to be composed of a consistent and identifiable base of native limestone. Simple lap siding. We indicate in our application wood shake or slate. In this presentation we are going to say wood shake. Windows will be encased in wood with a minimal or two scale crown cap. Overall, a strong effort was made to ensure all four elevations present a composition of balance and scale. Balance and scale where windows are aligned and centered throughout the compositions. Additionally, a strong emphasis was placed on including details that will enrich the simple style. Bays will have again simple classical detailing with flat paneled parapet walls. Inclusion of curved wood brackets when eaves are extended to improve vertical proportion. All shed dormers will include a simple curve shape to them so they will not be a single pitch shed. They will also include a simple cove crown at their eave lines. There will be no overt ornamentation, or extraneous components of detailing. In summary, our hope is for the residents to present a simple yet adorned style of composition of materials found throughout Belle Meade in the 20s and 30s with limestone base, simple clapboard siding, simple proportion pane windows, wood shake roof, nothing overt or extraneous in its detailing. Main elevations of this presentation site will be the front and back. You can see the back of this residence from Lynwood Boulevard. The house will include entry from Walnut, off center but on the low right side of the topography and that will be on center to the main dining room window. There will be an organized motor court allowing for the parking of two vehicles at the front. The driveway peel around and down where the garage doors will be placed underneath or in the basement level. The rear of the site plan will include a small pool all within setback. The house includes a base of both stone walls and landscaping. We are doing a simple shed dormer and simple nice stone walls that help create the terrace level for the pool.

Board Questions and Concerns:

- Whitson, what is the size of the house?
- Farris, the allowable FAR on this property is .225, the lot size is 6976 square feet. We are about 800 square feet under the allowable FAR.
- Whitson, can you talk about the character of the neighborhood and the other houses that are near it and how this is going to fit into the neighborhood?
- Farris, the house to the left is a very low one story 50's or 60's vintage.
- Blackburn, this house feels very tall to me. How does it compare in height to the other houses on the street?
- Farris, it will be taller than both of the houses to the left and to the right. It is within the allowable max height of 40 ft.
- Blackburn, what about other houses on the street how does it compare to those?

- Farris, the street is a combination of multiple house styles. There are houses that are one story, story and a half, and two story.
- Blackburn, I love the materials you are using I am just a little concerned with the style.
- Duke, English cottage leans more to stucco or brick or a little more durable material. I am a little concerned with clapboard being tied in to all this white. Is the house going to be white?
- Farris, it will be a softer white not stark white.
- Farris, most of the inspirational photos in the Field Guide are a clapboard house. For example, on page 104. This home has the eave and bracketing that we are proposing.
- Blackburn, it is a bit boxy compared to these inspirational photos. I do not think the mid-section by the front door are like your examples.
- Duke, in the back you could use some shutters. You are going to see that going down Lynwood. It is very visible.
- Farris, shutters can certainly be added to that elevation.
- Blackburn, can you talk me through the front door and the section there?
- Farris, the effort is to have more glass than not.
- Blackburn, I do not think it matches the side windows. I love the side windows. Is the front door in the center?
- Farris, yes.
- Whitson, are you speaking of the sidelights around the front door?
- Blackburn, there is a sidelight and transom to the front that I feel like are wrong with the windows. The whole composition in the middle feels wrong with this house. That part does not feel English to me.
- Farris, I can bring some inspiration to that. But the effort was to confuse it with a little bit of breath of fresh air with daylight into the front of the house. You would then get to see the light fixture that would hang inside the entry hall from that viewpoint versus a solid front door or shuttering around that front door.
- Whitson, I am going to disagree. I think there is room for a bit of modern interpretation of a style and the windows to me match in style. It is a bit of a box front that is not readily apparent on the front elevation. You have to look at the side to understand.
- Farris, the bay at the front will have pilaster columns that will create the subtlety of the detail.
- Wall, I think it goes together very well.
- Duke, how many square feet to this house?
- Farris, just the first and second floor FAR is just over six thousand.
- Whitson, what is the height of this house?
- Farris, 38ft 2inches just at the center main body. We are not at maximum.
- Whitson, that is appreciably lower than it could be.
- Farris, that is correct.
- Duke, regarding the materials list are you doing copper gutters, shake roof, and are the windows going to be dark or light?
- Farris, these will be a light color.
- Duke, the materials carry it a lot.
- Blackburn, the shake roof makes this house.
- Whitson, the landscaping is very elevated. This design is really going to place this house in a beautiful setting. It is very well done.
- Blackburn, if the height is objectionable is there a way to lower the height of the house?

Public Comments:

Mary Wade, 323 Walnut Drive, we are to the right of the house being presented. Our concern is the basement. You have mentioned this does not apply but they are getting, storage, media, garage and accommodate the pool. He mentions the height of the house is from the middle, but the drawing there does not seem to take in account the whole slope, because I would think that their first floor with the whole basement added in will now be looking at the top of our roof. There is one driveway and then our house because this house is on a narrow lot. That concerns me because of the aesthetics, the way it fits in the neighborhood, what you see coming up and down Walnut, it really just shoots the volume up. And I know Steve Cates builds these to get as much money as he can out of them living in them for a short period of time. I do not begrudge him that, but I think he is going to change things a lot around here. The overall design of the house I like. It is just that whole basement piece is like a rocket making the house take off. Particularly as it looks from the rear side. We will now be looking at garage doors instead of a house. The other thing with all this going on, there is a huge amount of water running off that we have all seen since they built the house up on Lynwood. My concern is the huge volume that this basement adds. You look at those steps right there in front, it does not have to go up that high. You are adding a whole car height to bring it up above the ground and that just seems unnecessary and problematic as far as once you get to the water mitigation side. I know Paige Duke did all the drains and the water pipes that we have in our yard. If you put in fences that is going to be a problem to work around with water. I had a question about some of the landscaping as to what is on that property that needs to be maintained that was indicating being on our property.

Alex Wade, 323 Walnut Drive, I would like to invite Ron Farris and Lyle Patterson to walk down our driveway and see the problems we deal with just from the existing house with pipes put in stone walls, big drains in the driveway, just to get rid of the water that is already coming down. I do not have any problems with the house. I have problems with the water.

Patterson, there will be a full stormwater plan by our engineer Steve Casey of CEC for this lot to retain the first one inch rainfall, whether it be a rain garden, underground detention, level spreaders, pop up valves, whatever is necessary. The fact that you have stated your concerns during this meeting will definitely point out and highlight the concern to the right of this home, your home, that will be taken into consideration for the engineer when he draws up the calculation for this lot. That is of the utmost concern to protect the neighbors on each side, especially on the lower end where you are. As far as the height of the house, you are allowed 40 feet. Ron Farris spoke to it being slightly over 38. That is taken from an average natural braid. This lot falls heavily from the left to the right. You can not necessarily help the massing of a daylight basement on your side. But that is addressed in the average natural grade.

Farris, I am calculating the height from the center of the house.
Duke, I noticed a wall on the service court side. Did they calculate how tall that wall would be. I know you have to be five feet off the property, is that with retaining walls too?

Patterson, no, driveway.

Ann Daigh, the service court wall height will be between 3 and 4 feet tall and will be retaining from the Cates side. We have to cut about a foot or two.

Duke, looks like ten steps to get up to the back yard.

Daigh, I think that becomes free standing as it gets closer to the street.

Erin Wiseman, the retaining wall by the service court on plan North will be retaining approximately four to five feet at its tallest, which will be by the back steps. They will be heavily screened on the lower side. The service court is located at garage level. From entering at the gravel arrival court, you will be going down, there will be a pretty mild slope down to the service court that is the lowest point that you are driving on or walking on hardscape wise and then that retaining wall plan North will lower and it is retaining the neighbor's side of the yard. The lowest part of the site will remain at existing grade which will be the north eastern side of the lot.

Duke, do you have positive drainage to the street?

Daigh, we do.

Wiseman, it will be north east direction. At the service court, that retaining wall will act as a buffer for our water, it will not be shooting over to the neighbor's property.

Mary Wade, that is not what happens. The problem is it does not go towards the street it comes towards our house and that is why we have elaborate drainage there. There is a stone wall, and you have to watch the way the water pushes against the wall coming through. More water coming off because of a higher roof or whatever else may happen just have to be really careful of that.

Wiseman, we will be at the service court going down lower than what is existing. Will be basically kind of containing ours.

Whitson, this is something that should be taken up with stormwater. Our meeting is really to review.

Mary Wade, this basement part just adds to this having this whole extra floor added on seems to me that it could be addressed in the design phase to make things simpler down the road.

Daigh, it will be sunken, you will not see it from the base of the garage doors up.

Wade, you have a higher floor going up though because you have the height of the garage that is not there now, it does not exist.

Daigh, that is correct, but the new garage is going lower than where it is now.

Steve Cates, this is an interesting process and to be sitting here having all this critique. I appreciate the thoughts that have been shared. Ron Farris has worked for us several times. We are residence of Belle Meade. We love living in Belle Meade. The types of homes we build we try to build high quality legacy homes that last, and I can assure you that our partnership with Ron in the past has allowed us to build homes that are going to last and be what you want them to be. It is about doing it right. I think a comment was made earlier about making a lot of money. You make a bunch of money when you do not build them right. When you build them right and hire great professional like the ones that are on this call, I think you get things the City can be proud of. The shutters

on the left side elevation we are glad to take that as a contingency. There is an outstanding stormwater engineer working on the project. The Belle Meade stormwater engineer is outstanding in his reviews as well. I think stormwater is part of another conversation. I think the siding of the house is correct. So that its relationship to the street is proportional versus what is there now. I think the project here is a benefit to the City versus what is there now. We like to go in and work and make the City proud and I think that is what we will do here. Thank you for your consideration.

Marshall Sanders, 310 Walnut Drive, there is no question that with this design it is going to be a beautiful house. I think the initial discussion that took place was does this house fit on Walnut Drive, the size, the height, and just the volume. This house is going to be different than any other house on Walnut Drive. And to add further insult to injury if you are driving into Belle Meade from Abbott Martin, there is a huge house that was just built on Lynwood. So then across the street from that house will be the house next door to this house. So, we potentially have the gateway into Belle Meade to have a monstrosity on the left and another house that just does not fit in with the current fabric. I think that is the point of this meeting to make sure that the houses that although it has the volume that is allowed. Houses this size on Walnut Drive are on lots greater than an acre or many times two lots. I feel like we are cramming in a beautiful, nice house into a small lot. That is really high. What are some of the things we can do to make this house not seem so giant? The roof of this house could be brought down. Why is this house built with such a foundation, a high raise of the foundation? I think the house is beautiful. I think there are some design elements that could be changed to make it fit in more with Walnut. We are excited about having a new house on Walnut, it is great for the neighborhood and the street, we just want to make sure it fits in with the street.

Blackburn, what could you do to lower this? How tall are the ceilings on each of the floors, including the basement?

Farris, 9ft ceiling height in the basement, 11ft on the main floor, 9ft on the second floor.

Blackburn, could you lower that ceiling height? That is very tall for this kind of English cottage.

Farris, it would be taken height out of the ceilings.

Wall, if you drop the basement four feet, you get back almost to the finish grade that the existing house has.

Farris, yes, it would be trying to lower the whole presentation. One of the things that is interesting to me about the City's ordinances and where we came from, to where we are today is that proceeding their 40 foot max height was a height of 35 feet. And what that presented in my experience is that presented houses that suffered from ill proportions. And they started to look a bit squatty. I appreciate Walnut's character. The City chose to raise the max height, up to 40 feet to allow for better proportions and scale. This is a contemporary modern house because it is being built today. There are ways we could probably look at lowering this house a bit. I do not know what it will do to the grading and drainage component of it.

Whitson, because it is already five feet down to get into the garage. So, if you are lowering that three feet, that is a significant drop going into the garage underneath.

Blackburn, maybe you do not do that.

Duke, it is an advantage having that big magnolia in front, it is going to help block the corner.

Daigh, the magnolia will add a lot of context to this house because it is about 50 to 60 feet tall. The elevation of that basement was determined based on having positive flow out of there to the lowest point on the site. If we lowered it anymore, we would have to rely on a sump pump to get any water out of the basement. We have added a series of walls on the front of the house to give it a graceful approach. Gives it more context with the lay of the land to soften it.

Wall, the bottom line is, I am looking at the existing garage, you are going to cut 5 or 6 feet along the driveway in order to get to the finished floor elevation of the basement.

Wiseman, it is actually three to four feet.

Wall, I do not know how the math works, you have eight feet or nine feet in the basement from ceiling to structure. And the garage is at grade now.

Wiseman, our max cut will be at four feet the average of it will be about 3 feet over at the service court.

Wall, you are basically raising your finished floor elevation five feet above the existing grade.

Daigh, we have raised the finish floor 30 inches from where it currently is.

Whitson, would your client and you consider lowering the finish ceiling on the first floor some, putting the house a foot further in the ground, just small measure will add up in different areas?

Duke, you would have to make sure you have positive drainage under there for that garage.

Whitson, how high is the existing house?

Farris, I am guessing it is probably 26 to 27 feet.

Whitson, so it is going 10ft more up.

Farris, this existing house suffers setting at grade and shallow roof pitch.

Blackburn, how many steps up to the first floor.

Wiseman, it is a total of 10. It is separated into six and four and there are six inch risers.

Steve Cates, if you go to 200 Jackson Boulevard and see the way Ann Daigh and Ron Farris separated the steps to gracefully take it to the front door, it is

very similar. Unfortunately, we have lowered the grade as low as we can for the drainage to work.

Blackburn, you can lower the ceiling height in the house. You do not have to have 11ft ceilings.

Cates, if we lower the ceiling heights it would not make the windows work correctly with the interior spacing and the proportions. What we find is that we need 11ft to do what we do to the window treatments.

Blackburn, you do not need 11ft, you just do not. We are going to have to have some kind of give here on this.

Cates, we have provided some give already with what we submitted. Are the City rules, the City heights, and the City FAR's, are they what we are supposed to go to or is this subjective? All are we are trying to do if follow the rules of Belle Meade.

Blackburn, this house is very tall house, and we are trying to work with you. The design is lovely on this house. But this is a very tall house, and you may need to be flexible to get it approved.

Whitson, Mrs. Blackburn is one member of this committee and does not speak for all of us.

Blackburn, I do have a vote and I do care what the neighbors think.

Whitson, what are the heights of the other houses on the street so we can understand the landscape.

Farris, I do not have that specific data at my fingertips to answer.

Whitson, does anybody in objection to the height have the heights of the other houses? Because what the applicant has given us is the height of a house that is within the limits of what Belle Meade is allowing.

Mary Wade, 323 Walnut Drive, the design of the house is fine. But sometimes ordinances do not nail things down 110 percent, we have seen that. If you are looking at the height, again, it is the slope of the lot, given the height requirement in the averages. You can fit it in anywhere you want to, in terms of trying to make things work, but it is the slope here with that, and the buildup if it is absolutely not necessary.

Doug Berry, the City's maximum height is not the sole consideration. The whole purpose of the Historic Zoning Commission is to consider compatibility. The decision making is not subjective. We do not make subjective decisions.

Cates, I have received positive affirmation about what a beautiful plan that Ron Farris has drawn here, and what a beautiful landscape plan by other neighbors on the street. This is the first time I have heard any unfavorable comments. The height is one that we have worked as hard as we can to fit within what I felt the rules are and the guidelines are, but I do not have any flexibility to do much more is the issue, or I certainly would.

Blackburn, is there a reason you cannot make the house work with 10 ft ceiling on the first floor?

Farris, first and foremost, you have an applicant and an owner that has purchased this and wants 11 ft ceilings. The guidelines of the city and the ordinances of the city allow for a maximum building height of 40 feet. What I have tried to do within the program requirements received from my client is to give a house that is proportioned and well composition, with the stipulations of the ceiling heights they are desiring. There are some subtleties to some things I can do to get a little bit of max height out of it. I am not sure that is the right proportion game for it.

Cates, I feel pretty sure this is going to be the tallest house built on the street. We are trying to create the right proportion to fit with the slope of the lot and stay within the Belle Meade guidelines and rules which is what I thought the City ordinances did. If Ron tells me that he can get the first floor ceiling down to 10ft and it makes everybody happy. I do not think it is the right thing to do from the type of houses we build because of the window treatments and the plank ceilings we do. We have never done a ten foot ceiling. This is a very unusual conversation to me. I do not understand if we are meeting the city rules and guidelines, how we are getting into interior design conversation, which is basically the ceiling heights.

Whitson, the core of this conversation is compatibility with the neighborhood, and that it is not interior design.

Berry, the City bulk standards, which existed before we adopted the Historic Zoning regulations would then and now allow forty feet in height. But we got an overall responsibility in this Commission to consider compatibility with the adjacent properties. If there was a finding that the proposed construction was not compatible, it is not necessarily entitled to have the full 40ft height that the city ordinance allows.

Patterson, we have an ordinance that has got a maximum of 40ft and until that language is changed to address lots that slop from side to side, I do not see how you can rule against this in my opinion.

Whitson, the house itself is a beautiful example of what we would like to see in Belle Meade. Is there any wiggle room with pushing the house any further down to have some mediation for the massing of the house as it sits a bit lower?

Daigh, honestly, I just do not think so.

Patterson, my concern is that you would be adding more water to the stormwater situation.

Board Discussion:

Motion to approve the project with the conditions of shuttering the Lynwood side of the house and the rear elevations that we viewed today are being approved and not the ones that are on the website that were submitted and to lower the height of the house up to at least one foot: Whitson Second: Duke
Vote: All Aye

Meeting Adjourn at 7:15pm

Mal Wall, Chairman

City Recorder, Edie Glaser

