



# DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

## MINUTES (FINAL)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2022

6:00 P.M.

ZOOM WEBINAR

**CALL TO ORDER:** Tamie Ehinger, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

**PRESENT:** Tamie Ehinger, Chair; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair; Leslie DiCarlo; Chris Bennett; Tad Roemer; Ellen Sheehan; Jeff Gritsavage

**STAFF:** Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, City of Saratoga Springs

### **A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, made a motion to approve the December 8, 2021, DRC Meeting Minutes with minor corrections. Ellen Sheehan seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

### **VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

### **B. POSSIBLE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

The intent of a consent agenda is to identify any application that appears to be “approvable” without need for further evaluation or discussion. If anyone wishes to further discuss any proposed consent agenda item, then that item would be pulled from the “consent agenda” and dealt with individually.

1. **#20220028 61 LAWRENCE STREET SIGNAGE**, 61 Lawrence Street, Architectural Review of a wall sign within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center District.

2. **#20220017 WEST AVENUE CHICKEN SIGNAGE**, 107 West Avenue, (250 Washington Street) Architectural Review of a wall sign, within the Transect-5 Neighborhood Center (T-5) District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there were any questions or comments from the Commission regarding these applications. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wished to comment on these consent agenda items. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, made a motion in the matter of 61 Lawrence Street Signage, 61 Lawrence Street; West Avenue Chicken Signage, 107 West Avenue (250 Washington Street) that these applications be approved as submitted. Jeff Gritsavage seconded the motion.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

**VOTE:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, in favor; Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, in favor; Chris Bennett, in favor; Leslie DiCarlo, in favor; Ellen Sheehan, in favor; Tad Roemer, in favor; Jeff Gritsavage, in favor

**MOTION PASSES: 7-0**

**COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR:**

Tamie Ehinger, Chair noted no new applications will begin after 10:00 P.M. If your application has not been called by that time it will be adjourned to the next meeting's agenda.

**C. DRC APPLICATIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:**

**1. #20220031 KLEIN & BRONTOLLI PORCH MODIFICATIONS,** 49 Bryan Street, Historic Review of porch modifications within the Urban Residential-2 (UR-2) District.

Applicant: Robert Klein

Mr. Klein stated when they proposed the carriage house, they were hoping to use historic railings which could have been modified for the porch. As they proceeded it was not doable. The appearance on the porch would have been different than that on the stairs. There was a fence like railing on the porch not on the stairs and it was not historic. The porch materials were not usable, and they investigated other options. An example was provided for the Commission to review. The rear porch is a unique design and is not up to code height. In conversation with Samantha Bosshart, Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation she noted this may not be required to have a railing because it is historic and was designed in this manner and we were not modifying the porch it might be acceptable as is. The only question is liability in the event someone fell.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated she has spoken to the Building Inspector and if you are not modifying this porch in any way, it is standing there in its original design, and you have done nothing but repairs, it is not required to be brought up to code. It is the individual property owners' homeowners' responsibility if they would like to make it more code compliant

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated it is code compliant as it is. Historically it is without railings, and this is how it should be presented. The Chair read the Historic District guidelines regarding porches. A porch and its elements replaced due to severe deterioration or in this case absence, should match the original in size, shape, rhythm, dimensions, material, and quantity. Duplication is preferred. Keep original elements to use as a pattern. The railing you are suggesting while a unique design and appealing, in terms of our guidelines is not historically accurate. If there are any historical photographs as to what might have been original would be helpful to determine what is appropriate. In the Chair's opinion, unfortunately, what you are presenting is not. Although you have indicated that the diagrams provided are not entirely proportionate, it is not historically accurate it does not meet the design standards and the Chair noted she could not move this application forward. In terms of the rear porch, ideally it is code compliant and historically accurate as it is. In terms of the style you have presented, it is ornate but does not appear inappropriate and it is on the rear of the home and not visible from the street.

Chris Bennett spoke regarding the height of the railing. He is unsure if the Building Inspector is aware that this structure has been completely renovated.

Mr. Klein stated it has been gut renovated.

Chris Bennett stated when a structure reaches a percentage of renovation then things must become code compliant. You are allowed to maintain the railing, but they usually require a sub rail that makes it code compliant. The historic railing remains in place and another sub rail is added to meet compliance. There are exceptions.

Mr. Klein provided a visual of what previously existed on the porch.

Chris Bennett stated if there is no photographic evidence of what previously existed then he defers to creativity. It is beautiful ironwork, and he has no issue with producing something unique. He suggests the applicant return with a more accurate example and diagram of what is being proposed. What you have done is unique, interesting and goes well with the structure.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, agrees with Chris. It is obvious from the Sanborn Maps this porch was constructed sometime in the 1950-s or 1960-s. There is no historic precedence as to what was there or what should be there. The creativity with the railing is fine and he likes it. As far as the rear railing and bringing that to code he has no problem with that either. Regarding personal liability the applicant should contact their insurance provider to assess the situation.

Tad Roemer stated the rear railing has a nice appearance, and making it code compliant will make it less appealing. No objections to what have been presented.

Ellen Sheehan questioned if the railings were going all around the porch and down the stairs. She requested accurate drawings and diagrams of the exact design prior to approving the application. If it will appear as you describe, it will work well.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he loves the rear elevation. The rear balcony details look fine, he would give it a dark color. Regarding the front railings he does not mind the expressiveness and is fine with it.

Leslie DiCarlo questioned if the porch floor is below the door opening as it exists.

Mr. Klein stated it is approximately 2ft. below the door opening.

Leslie DiCarlo stated if the railing is needed for safety that is fine, if not, it is nice without it. If the front entry was added sometime in the 50-s as Rob stated it is entirely appropriate that the railing reads as a new railing and not a historic railing.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated if there was no front porch until the 1950-s and it is not original, then a different type or more modern type of railing is more appropriate versus a faux late 1800's. The Chair questioned Rob DuBoff regarding the porch's age.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated because it was a block structure, it would have to be dated post 1950. This is where you would have had barn doors. When it stopped being used for this purpose it was converted to a home and this detail was added in the 1960-s.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated with that information it has influence as to what is appropriate and what is not. The Commission feels that the railing is appropriate and would work. We do need a more accurate drawing of it. If the applicant can provide that information, the Commission will be able to move that forward. In terms of the rear porch railing, the Chair notes no objection to the railing as is. Ideally leaving that as is would be the most historically appropriate action. Should you, however, decide to bring that up to compliance or prefer a railing, there are no issues with the railing presented. If this information can be supplied to staff by next week, we can place you back on the agenda or even on the consent agenda.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if there was any further discussion. None heard.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he just viewed the Sanborn Map from 1954 and there is nothing there so the porch was built after 1954.

**2. #20220009 102 LINCOLN EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS & NEW ACCESSORY STRUCTURE**, 102 Lincoln Avenue, Architectural Review of exterior modifications and a proposed accessory structure within the Neighborhood Complementary Use-2 District.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, requested that the applicant's agent first present the information regarding the exterior modifications and then move onto the proposed accessory structure.

Applicant: Marcela Gaudin

Agent: Sue Davis, SD Atelier Architecture

Ms. Davis stated after speaking with Samantha Bosshart of the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation we were able to integrate some of them into the plans and will note them as she proceeds through the power point presentation. A visual of the property was provided noting the applicant is proposing this as a single-family home. Previously it was a bed and breakfast. The applicant does entertain during the summer but is not proposing any property rentals. A visual of the existing site plan was provided noting the size of the lot and what currently exists on the site. The applicant is proposing to repair the front porch, framing and decking, replacing in kind. Mahogany tongue and groove will be used for the porch decking. The front porch railings will remain and those in need of replacement will be replaced in kind. The existing deck and stairs are also to be replaced on the side porch as well as new stairs on existing porch on the Jefferson Street side. The rear entry addition entails the removal of what currently exists which is not original to the home. The intent is to create a better rear entry to the home and will be the width of what currently exists. The existing stairs and rail will be removed. The storm door will be refurbished and used on the rear entry new door. The existing molding and elements of decoration will be removed and reused where possible. The new windows proposed initially had a grid pattern however, the Preservation Foundation preferred no grills, like the remainder of the home, so the windows will not have grills. Ms. Davis reviewed the west elevation noting the landing and set of stairs are weathered and are to be replaced. We are trying to respect the original integrity of the railing which is historically much lower than code requirements. A sketch of what the applicant is proposing, replacing it in kind matching to the front porch and creating a booster rail to bring it into compliance. The newel posts will be removed with a more solid post. On the east elevation they are proposing an entrance that is new, using the current existing door. The railings will mimic those on the other elevations of the home.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated we can now discuss the elements and proposed changes of the project as well as the proposed materials.

Ms. Davis provided information regarding the proposed materials for the front porch, cedar railings, the existing to remain. Balusters, existing to remain – match in kind where necessary. Decking mahogany tongue and groove. The Side Landing and Stairs – the railing cedar painted, balusters match existing in kind, painted. Decking – composite tongue and groove vintage collection. The door, proposing to re-use the existing storm door over Therma-Tru classic craft door. The rear addition will have cedar clapboard siding painted. The exterior trim – poly fly ash by Boral, and windows will be Marvin, Signature Series.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, questioned staff regarding the railings on the west elevation and if a booster railing is required.

Amanda Tucker, Senior Planner, stated if the stairs are simply being repaired and not replaced in their entirety then they do not need to be brought up to code.

Ms. Davis stated if it is an original porch and railing, you are allowed to replace it in kind due to the historic precedent. However, if it is a new porch, new railing system and deck it must be brought up to code compliance. The railing on the front porch we will work with. On the west elevation that is not original to the home, is in disrepair, and we would be required to bring this to code. We would like to replace and remove the entire stairs and railing system and replace. A booster rail will be used and created out of wood.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated she feels with the changes on the exterior and the addition, she does not see anything that is inappropriate with the use of all natural materials. The Commission members will further discuss the use of Boral trim. The caveat being the composite wood on the west landing. The Chair feels this should be a natural material.

Jeff Gritsavage spoke regarding the south elevation, rear entry addition. The window above the proposed rear addition appears on the photograph to be located to the right but on the drawings appears to be located to the left of the proposed addition. The shed dormer as showing is squatty and the aspect ratio is taller than that. Can you address the drawing inaccuracies? The booster railings he feels the use of steel which will allow it to fade away.

Ms. Davis stated the window above the rear entry addition will remain as is. However, drawing of an elevation straight on is difficult to portray the perspective absolutely correct. We are focused to get the accuracy correct on what we are proposing.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated all the areas we are discussing except for the front porch are anything earlier than the 1960-s. In fact, the side porch on the western side of the house was constructed in the early 1990-s, as well as the front porch. This was all completely redone in the 1990's. He has no problem with the rail proposed on the western elevation. We are not dealing with anything historic. Nothing is more than 30 years old. The only issue he has is the use of the Boral material, which is partially plastic and there is no reason to use that trim material on this house.

Ms. Davis stated she spoke regarding their reasoning for the use of the synthetic products in the areas designated for their use.

Leslie DiCarlo reiterated what Ms. Davis stated regarding the use of the synthetic products. We used AZAK tongue and groove on a home of hers years ago. Most people think it is a painted hardwood floor. It has held up beautifully for 12 years in the sun and rain and it also has the added benefit of not being as slippery as painted wood. Since this porch is so exposed and it is not in the historic portion of the house, she does not object. Ms. DiCarlo questioned the detail on the step overhang on the addition which reads as much more craftsman style compared to the lighter bracket work on the other porches.

Ms. Davis stated this is simply a bit of protection over the door and we kept it simple. We can detail it a bit more than what is currently shown, and we can look at this when we return for further approvals.

Chris Bennett stated overall it is an interesting project and all the improvements seem to work quite nicely. He echoes Rob's comments regarding the synthetics. A suggestion for open stairs would be to build it in stone. The decking in this area could also be constructed of ipey type of material which is a possibility. Perhaps making the railing system taller, then a booster rail would not be required. Any elements you do remove should be saved

Ellen Sheehan stated all the modifications work very well with the existing structure. As far as materials, wood would be great, but it seems such a judicious use of materials. She agrees with the use of ipey, but she noted she would also be okay with the synthetic materials because it is so limited and is warranted in the areas in which they are proposed. This is a great project.

Jeff Gritsavage stated the lattice on the west elevation is vertical but on the remainder of the house it is diagonal. Vertical would be preferred on this house, but it needs to be consistent. On the rear elevation, the sunburst pediment is completely appropriate. He agrees with Leslie, the brackets are too craftsman like. If you look at the turret above the porch, replicating that would work.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated there were several things we discussed. Rob expressed concerns regarding the Boral product. Most of the Commission is comfortable with the Boral. Regarding the synthetic decking of the west elevation. This is exposed and is not historic.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated he simply suggested the applicant's agent explore other products.

Chris Bennett stated Ipe is a tropical hardwood which comes from sustainable harvested materials. It is wood. The State Park uses it. It is a durable product and weathers to a brown color.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated in terms of the booster rail. The Chair stated she and Jeff both prefer an iron rail versus a wood booster. The Commission is comfortable with the wood booster.

Discussion ensued regarding what the applicant is proposing, and the suggestions provided by the Commission.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated the Commission has provided a great deal of feedback to the applicant's agent regarding the proposal. We will now move onto the pavilion.

Ms. Davis provided a visual of the size of the pavilion in relation to the size of the house. The Preservation Foundation was concerned regarding the mass and scale and what the Commission is seeing is the 2 ft. reduced version. The Foundation had no issue with the height. This is set back and will be used for outdoor gathering space and entertaining. We are trying to choose a color palette that will work with that of the house. We have opted for a darker roof and the use of a darker color will make it appear to fade away. There is fencing and trees and landscaping provides buffering. It is setback from the house. We are noticing the roof gable, a wider trim and tie in with the house motif in key areas. Ms. Davis provided a visual detail of the posts to tie in with the details on the house railing. The pavilion is 30 ft. in width versus 40 ft. for the width of the house. We are noticing the exposed rafter tails which is reflected in this drawing as well. Ms. Davis provided the overall elevations of the pavilion, floor plans and materials. The posts which are 6 x 6 are to be trimmed out with Poly-Fly-Ash by Boral. Rafters - Douglas fir, painted, roof architectural grade shingles, exterior hard surfaces – Bluestone over crushed stone or concrete slab. Windows will be Marvin Signature Series.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, read the guidelines for an accessory structure. A secondary accessory building should be distinct from and smaller in scale than the primary structure. While the shape, mass, and scale of a secondary accessory structure should reflect the primary structure it should not compete with the primary structure. Does this compete with the primary structure because of its size? In reviewing the mass and scale of this accessory structure does it negatively impact the character of the neighborhood or the historic home. The Chair still feels it may compete visually based on the size. The details and materials are nicely done and appropriate.

Jeff Gritsavage stated he does not mind how this sits on the site. It is L-shaped and like the cross gable of the building itself. That white trestle or something in iron that would fade away to make it less prominent. The hip gable ends are good and not trying to replicate something that is on the Victorian building but compliment and not overwhelm it. Something dark might help. Something less pronounced in that location might help.

Ms. Davis spoke regarding the screen wall and noted a color has not been chosen at this time. It does not have to be white at all. Something to blend with the greenery.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, stated this is an awesome design. His suggestion is to use a white or black and have it be completely its own structure to mitigate any concerns with it competing with the house. In visiting the site there is currently landscaping in front of the house. This will be well shielded from the street. Regarding the Boral use the use of stone bases on the columns would solve the issue.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated she does not feel a stone base is appropriate for this structure. The goal would be to lighten the effect of this pavilion. A stone base might add mass.

Leslie DiCarlo stated she thinks the stone would be nice, and feels the colors should tie into the house, but in a more subtle way, noticing the deeper tones. We do not have purview over color, and it will look nice no matter the color. The use of cedar lattice panels for screening and growing things is recommended which will weather and vines can grow on it. The look beautiful when weathered naturally. Is there a reason for the cupola?

Ms. Davis stated she felt the cupola helped where the two roofs met. It might serve a purpose for venting. It is not necessary.

Ellen Sheehan stated she feels the wood, or the Boral base would work better than the stone for the columns. To Leslie's point about the cupola, the roof does appear to need something, but she can also see Leslie's point regarding its use in this location. This size works and does not compete with the house.

Chris Bennett stated this is a nice structure and enhances the house. The lattice panels can be removed if they are hanging. He agrees they should be left cedar. It is less maintenance. He will do research on the Boral. Stone is an interesting idea. It is a great structure and is beautiful.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated all our eyes are drawn to the lattice. The pavilion has a light open and airy feeling and does not compete with the main house. The lattice work is competing with that open airy feeling. There is light delicate not necessarily wrought iron, dark metal, or aluminum lattice work panels which she has seen hung in pavilions and pergolas that blend in because it is black. This is worth exploring. What she is gleaning from the Commission is they would like the applicant's agent to explore other options for latticework. Most of the team does not have an issue with the composite product. A visual of what it could look like with a stone base. The Chair feels the heaviness is not appropriate for this accessory structure adjacent to a Victorian home. It should be lighter and more delicate. The Chair feels she might be the only one who has concerns regarding the mass of the pergola. Everyone else is comfortable with it.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, asked if anyone in the audience wishes to comment on this application. None heard.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated in terms of the remainder of the application for the exterior modifications, everyone seems that they are appropriate. The Commission did voice concerns regarding exploring other options for the trim and decking on the west elevation. The Commission realizes that it is exposed and not historic. Commission members voiced concern over the brackets which seemed too Craftsman. Detailed drawings on the railings and booster railing would be helpful.

Rob DuBoff, Vice Chair, questioned the foundation on the new addition which is indicated to be painted. He would like to ensure that it is not going to be left rough and painted. It must be cleaned or parged or faced with stone so that it matches the existing structure.

Ms. Davis also noted the applicant is proposing to re-open the foundation windows which are currently boarded up.

Tamie Ehinger, Chair, stated as soon as the revised drawings can be provided to staff, along with what type of windows they are proposing for the basement and other options for the cupola will also be helpful. We will then place the application back on the agenda. It is a great project.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

Design Review Commission Caravan, Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at 5:00 P.M.  
Design Review Commission Meeting, Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 6:00 P.M.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to discuss Tamie Ehinger, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Buzanowski  
Recording Secretary