



Design Review Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 13, 2022
via tele/videoconference

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.

Members present: Chair Scott Kraehnke, Bryan Koester, Lybra Loest, Daryl Melzer, Larry Pachefsky and Mike Skauge.

Others present: Annette Roehl, Todd Roehl, Joe Shea, and Planning & Development Director Bart Griepentrog.

2. Approval of the December 16, 2021 meeting minutes.

Mr. Pachefsky moved to approve the minutes, as drafted; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 6-0.

3. Consideration of the application and plans on file for the installation of dormers at residential property 4453-55 N. Murray Avenue.

Joe Shea, general contractor, and Annette and Todd Roehl, property owners, were present to discuss this item. Mr. Shea noted that Annette is a graduate of the UWM School of Architecture and designed the project. Ms. Roehl noted that new gabled dormers were proposed to run north/south and occupy the center third of the proposed third floor. A bedroom, bathroom and closet with the required minimum head-height would occupy the space. She also noted that a second means of egress, via an internal stairway, would be added to the front of the house. Modifications were proposed for the existing second floor, including enlarging the bathroom and a kitchen remodel. New windows would be installed in both locations.

Ms. Roehl described the proposed elevations. No changes were to take place on the west elevation. On the east elevation, the second-floor porch would be remodeled, a sunrise gable would be added, and window modifications to the second floor, inclusive of a set of French doors, was proposed. The south elevation would be changed by the addition of a gable dormer matching the roof pitch of the street and alley elevations, and shortened windows in the second-floor kitchen. The new dormer would feature a matching bank of four windows to the first and second floor dining room. Mr. Shea noted that the height of the proposed dormer was reviewed and approved by the Board of Appeals at their January 11, 2022, meeting. Ms. Roehl described that the same dormer would be added on the north elevation to accommodate a bathroom and closet. Two skylights and a new window within the open stairway were also proposed.

Current photos of the property were reviewed.

Chair Kraehnke confirmed that all of the proposed changes were up for review even though the agenda only detailed the dormers. Director Griepentrog noted that the inclusion of “plans on file” is always added to assure that all changes can be reviewed. The further specification on the agenda is included to be helpful, but it is not meant to be all inclusive.

Ms. Roehl showed a SketchUp model to demonstrate the proposed massing, and how it would be viewed from the street. Mr. Shea noted that the dormers would not look as prominent from the street level as seen on the elevation.

Chair Kraehnke shared his perspective that the dormers seemed large and out of proportion for the house. He noted that he disliked interrupting the major ridge line of the roof. He stated that he would rather see a shed dormer off the ridge. He questioned why the dormers needed to be so high above the ridge. Ms. Roehl stated that she preferred the gable dormer over the shed style, and that the gables mirror the front and back of the house. Mr. Shea confirmed that the dormers would have flat ceilings, not cathedral. He also stated that the dormers have been designed with the same roof pitch as the house, which pushes up the height. He noted that the initial design featured shed dormers, but the homeowners did not like them. He also said that a mansard style dormer was considered. Ms. Roehl expressed appreciation for all comments, noted that she believed the diversity of style on the block did not limit the dormer style, and reiterated her preference for the gable style dormer to match the house. Chair Kraehnke maintained his opinion that a shed dormer would look better or perhaps two smaller gables with a shed infill.

Mr. Melzer stated that he agreed with Chair Kraehnke’s comments about the dormer being overwhelming because it extends above the existing roof ridge. He also believed a shed style dormer would be more appropriate.

Mr. Pachefsky noted that the dormer on the house to the north featured a dormer style with a clipped ridge and desired to see that maintained on the front of the house and replicated on the new side dormers. Ms. Roehl noted that the roof ridge to the north is much taller than hers. She stated that the same massing would be required with that clipped roof feature and noted that the massing is being driven by the minimum required head height in the dormer. Mr. Pachefsky suggested that this house was not lending itself towards a gable dormer.

Mr. Skauge also stated that the only way to do this project would be with a shed dormer. He said that clipped gables would tie into the existing style of the roof, but that the massing was the issue. He stated that the current dormer proposal is overpowering.

Chair Kraehnke noted that he did not have an issue with the height of the dormer, but that the proposed massing was overpowering the building as a whole. He stated that the major form of the house has a defined ridge height and that a new form is being proposed with the dormer addition that competes with it. He noted that it looked out of place or tacked on. Mr. Shea questioned if the roof pitch could be lowered on the gable. Chair Kraehnke suggested that it would need to be lowered to match the existing ridge and that it would look awkward.

Mr. Shea noted that numerous dormer styles were considered and showed prior roof studies, which led towards this design. He stated that more unique roof options would need to be custom framed and would be more expensive. Chair Kraehnke noted that the Design Review Board is more concerned with the design and not the cost. Ms. Roehl stated that she is very sensitive to the exterior appearance of the home and wants the dormers to be a complement to

the house. She noted that she would be willing to sacrifice interior square footage for a more pleasing exterior.

Mr. Koester noted that he owned the property to the north of this house. He stated that he was informed of and attended the January 11, 2022, Board of Appeals meeting. He shared that he also was concerned with the size and mass of the proposed dormers. He stated that he was not in favor of the dormer exceeding the ridge. He confirmed that height was not his concern. He further noted that he was not aware of the Board approving a dormer exceeding the roof ridge in his time on the Board. Mr. Skauge agreed that he did not recall seeing one but was not 100 percent sure.

Ms. Roehl reiterated that she was open to other ideas but did not prefer a shed dormer for aesthetic reasons. Mr. Skauge shared that he was not fond of shed dormers either but stated that they have their place and suggested that this was one of them. Ms. Roehl questioned if a larger shed dormer was preferable than the smaller, but taller, dormers proposed. Mr. Melzer believed that the larger shed dormer would be preferable for most. Chair Kraehnke stated that he would not like to see massive, shed dormers on both sides but that shed dormers would be a better option. Ms. Roehl noted that if budget were not an issue, the entire roof could be lifted two feet. The Board agreed that would be ideal.

Mr. Shea asked for confirmation on what the issue was with the current design: height, massing, or design. Chair Kraehnke noted that he heard that the primary issue was the massing. He stated that height was not a problem for him, but as a cohesive design, he would not want the dormer to be higher than the ridge.

Chair Kraehnke believed that the current design would not be approved and questioned if the applicant wished to withdraw the current proposal and bring back a revised design for future consideration. Director Griepentrog noted that if the application were voted on and denied that a new application would need to be submitted for future consideration, whereas if the item was deferred, the same application could be kept open, but amended with revised plans.

Mr. Koester questioned if the Board had any comments pertaining to the proposed window changes. He noted that he liked the proposed improvements to the second-floor porch. Mr. Shea confirmed that the two center windows on the second-floor porch would become doors and the two outside windows would remain. Ms. Roehl questioned if there was any opposition to the proposed sunrise detail. Chair Kraehnke stated that he was not opposed. Ms. Roehl confirmed that it would only be modified in the front. Mr. Shea noted that the modified windows proposed in the kitchen on the south elevation would be awning windows that opened from the bottom. Chair Kraehnke questioned if the infill would be resided. Mr. Shea noted that it would be hard to match the metal siding, and that he would propose a panel infill. Chair Kraehnke stated that he would rather see siding in-filled. Mr. Koester confirmed that a similar panel in-fill was recently denied in preference for siding.

Ms. Roehl summarized that she heard the concerns to be the massing and scale of the proposed dormers and the fact that they extend above the primary roof line.

The Board deferred action until revised plans were submitted for review.

4. Consider 2021 Design Review Board Annual Report and Future Initiatives.

Director Griepentrog noted that the same report was discussed at the December 16, 2021, meeting, but action was deferred, so that the Board could further review it. He noted that he sent the Board the draft Residential Design Guidelines and the document that details current staff administration and DRB review responsibilities.

Mr. Melzer noted that he read through the draft residential design guidelines. He also stated that he did not think that DRB needed to expand their current review responsibilities.

Director Griepentrog noted that both of those items could remain on the initiatives list but shared that he did not think that there would be enough time available to adopt residential design guidelines. He did think that a review of DRB's responsibilities was possible and stated that whether or not the Village Board was willing to update the Code was a different question.

Mr. Melzer motioned to approve the report as drafted; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 6-0.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Skauge moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Koester. Vote 6-0.

Recorded by,



Bart Griepentrog, AICP
Planning & Development Director