



**Landmark Preservation Board  
Thursday, January 5, 2012**

Meeting Minutes

8:30 am Common Council Chambers

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Bob Haley called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Bob Haley, Dan Leary, Julia Marshall Jeff Romano, Joe Saya

Excused: Louise Birkhead, Tim Bonaparte, Don Radke

Staff: Kate Auwaerter

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

J. Romano made a motion to accept the minutes with the following corrections:

**OLD BUSINESS**

**CA-11-39 203 E. Water Street.**

B. Haley noted that the stair should be attached in a way that minimizes *or avoids* ~~any~~ damage to ~~the historic fabric~~ *any significant historic feature of the building such as decorative molding, cornice or other feature.*

**CA-11-41 1658 James Street** Giuseppe Zavaglia presented the additional information that the board had requested from the previous (December 1, 2011) meeting. In regard to the front porch, G. Zavaglia noted that the porch flooring would be replaced with a yellow pine decking with a ~~baked-on~~ *heat-treated* finish. All other features of the porch would be repaired in-kind, including scraping and painting the porch railing, repairing and reinstalling a missing front porch column, and replacing the sections of missing porch skirt board with finish wood. He also noted that he planned to replace in-kind the aluminum fascia and soffits around the porch roof and reinstall an aluminum porch ceiling. The board recommended that he consider returning these features to a finish wood instead of the aluminum as it may be less expensive and would improve the condition of the porch. He also plans to install the missing balcony railing with a plain, metal railing, 36" high, 8' feet deep and 11' wide.

The motion was seconded by D. Leary. The motion passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**CA-11-39 203 E. Water Street.** Anthony Catsimatides (Open Atelier Architects) and Mike Wicker (SNL Properties) presented revised plans for the storefront design at 203 E. Water Street. The applicants had worked with the Onondaga Historical Association to find historic images of the building, which indicated that there was transom glass above the storefront windows. The applicants proposed an opaque glass spandrel panel to replace the existing metal panels. The storefront windows are in good condition and will not be replaced. The board thanked the applicants for their research and agreed that glass was an appropriate material. J. Marshall made a motion to approve the opaque glass spandrel panels painted to match the burgundy color of the surrounding window and door frames, contingent on the submittal of the final color sample to staff. She also moved to approve the proposed aluminum replacement doors for the north, south and west entrances into the building. The bottom panel of each door will match the height of the base panel of the storefront. The motion was seconded by D. Leary and passed unanimously. The applicants are finalizing a submission for the window repair and/or replacement as discussed at previous meetings. They are also working through the code and other design details of the fire escape to be located on the north elevation of the building.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

CA-12-01 101 Durston Avenue. Lynn and Mitchell Wilson presented the application to replace all concrete sidewalks and steps surrounding the house in-kind, to excavate and install drainage tile on the east and west sides of the property, to install new window wells and plastic hoods at each basement window, to install a new Bilco cellar door, and to install a new retaining wall on the north side of the property next to the property's parking area. The board noted that the sidewalk and step replacement, as long as it was in-kind, did not need board approval. The board discussed the drainage issues extensively with the applicant. The applicant stated that there is water coming through the basement walls and around the basement windows. He also noted that the house had no gutters and that he was not interested in installing gutters because of the required maintenance. The board expressed concern that the proposed window wells and hoods would not solve the problem of the water infiltration problem and may even exacerbate the problem.

J. Marshall commented that although water off the roof was a problem, it was more likely the pressure of groundwater against the foundation of the house that was causing the issues. The board recommended that the applicant consider re-grading around the foundation away from the house, installing fabric next to the foundation and installing drainage tile around the entire perimeter of the house which would help direct water away from the foundation. Gravel could be laid below each basement window which would help drain the water away from the windows and to the drainage tile. The board recommended against raising the grade at the foundation both because aesthetic issues and also because water would infiltrate more easily through the exposed brick foundation than through the concrete below grade. It commented that the plastic window hoods were not acceptable in the preservation district and with the proper drainage system would not be necessary. The board noted that if the applicant considered just the installation of the drainage tile and minor grading away from the house that this would not need board approval. However, if the contractor reported that this was not possible, the applicant would need to come back for further discussion.

The board also reviewed the proposed installation of a Bilco cellar door. The applicant noted that there was evidence of an earlier cellar door that must have been removed when an apartment was installed in the basement of the house. The board noted that the composite material of the proposed door, which is made to look like wood, was not acceptable in the preservation district. It recommended a steel painted door. Finally, the board discussed the installation of a 2' x 24' Versa Lok retaining wall proposed for the north side of the property. The wall would remove a short steep slope that the applicant noted was hard to mow. He also noted that he did not want a planting bed in that location nor was he interested in planting groundcover. The board discussed the use of natural materials in the district. The most appropriate solution would be a dry laid stone wall, with a concrete or a parged concrete block wall as alternatives. The applicant noted that his primary concerns regarding a stone wall were cost, the skill-level needed to install the wall, and maintenance. The board agreed that a skilled mason would be needed to install a stone wall, but that if done correctly, the wall would require minimal maintenance. The applicant agreed to investigate the cost of a stone wall in comparison with the Versa Lok. He also stated that he would discuss the board's recommendations regarding the drainage around the house with his contractor. J. Marshall made a motion to approve steel Bilco cellar door painted a dark color (brown, black or green). The motion was seconded by J. Romano and approved unanimously.

Project Site Review (modification): 401-07 S. Salina St (Dey's Centennial Plaza). K. Auwaerter reported that the applicants proposed to remove an entrance on the E. Fayette Street side of the property and replace it with a fixed-window storefront unit that matched the surrounding storefronts. However, she noted that the applicants' drawings were incorrect. The board agreed to recommend approval of the project with the strong recommendation that the applicant submit accurate drawings to the Zoning department before approval.

Variance: 1009 Willis Avenue. The board reviewed the project to install a wheelchair ramp on the front of the house. It was noted that the application stated that the ramp could not be installed on the side of the

house because of the narrowness of the lot. It agreed to recommend approval of the application, however, it requested that the applicant consider a temporary aluminum ramp rather than the more permanent wood ramp as proposed. The board noted that frequently wooden ramps become permanent additions even after they were no longer needed.

### **DISCUSSION**

St. Patrick School Rehabilitation. K. Auwaerter reported that the St. Patrick's school on N. Lowell Avenue will be rehabilitated into market-rate apartments. It is a Rehabilitation Tax Credit project, but would not require a Project Site Review and so will most likely not be referred to the board for comment.

First Presbyterian Church closing. B. Haley reported that he had heard that the same individual who had purchased the Tiffany windows from South Presbyterian Church was now interested in the windows at First Presbyterian Church, which will be closing after Easter this year. He and K. Auwaerter had had discussions about how to get ahead of this issue, possibly with a local designation of the church complex. K. Auwaerter noted that the office has a very thorough Historic Resource Survey form ("Blue Form") on the church and associated structures. J. Romano noted that PACNY might be interested in forward a designation application to the board for the church.

### **ADJOURN**

J. Marshall made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by D. Leary. The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.