

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BUILDING REVIEW COMMISSION OF THE
VILLAGE OF KENILWORTH HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, 419 RICHMOND ROAD
AT 7:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2007.**

Chairman Bossu was present and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. She called the roll as follows:

Present:	Jackie Bossu	Chairman
	Jane Hopper	Member
	Richard Schumacher	Member
	Rachel Noel	Member
Absent:	Ray Drexler	Member
	George Sola	Member
	George Luscombe	Member
Other Village Officials Present:	Bradly Burke	Village Manager
	Susan Criezis	Community Development Director
Others Present:	Curtis Barnett	626 Wayland Avenue
	Kathy Barnett	626 Wayland Avenue
	Tim Sheridan	Nagle Hartray Architects
	Barbara Dyson	513 Sheridan Road
	Bob Sklare	501 Sheridan Road
	Linda Forsberg	521 Sheridan Road
	Kelli Kobor	620 Abbotsford Road
	Antoinette Vigilante	123 Melrose Avenue
	Jack Bigoness	126 Abingdon Avenue
	Kathleen Cummings	Architectural Historian

Chairman Bossu reviewed the purpose of the Building Review Commission and how the Commission looks for alternatives to demolition of houses. She said since the time the Commission has been in existence, they have reviewed 31 houses and found 10 of those to be significant. Chairman Bossu stated the purpose of this meeting was to review 513 Sheridan Road, and if it is found to be significant, the project moves to Phase II of the Building Review Commission process.

The Commission changed the order of the agenda and moved approval of the previous meeting's minutes to the end of the meeting.

The request of Mr. Jack Bigoness for early termination of the delay period for demolition at **126 Abingdon Avenue** was discussed. The Commission reviewed the history of the application and the zoning variance request for 126 Abingdon. The Commission agreed that Mr. Bigoness had presented a very good zoning variance application and was respectful of the existing house and the neighborhood. The variance request was

denied. Chariman Bossu said Mr. Bigoness did make a good effort to find an alternative to demolition. Chair Bossu noted the demolition delay period was set to expire on February 2, 2007

Commissioner Schumacher expressed his opinion there is nothing to be gained by continuing the delay.

Commissioner Noel expressed her opinion it would be a silly formality to hold off permission for a couple of weeks.

Commissioner Hopper thanked Mr. Bigoness for trying, and agreed with the rest of the Commission that it would be pointless to delay Mr. Bigoness.

Mr. Bigoness thanked the Building Review Commission and staff for their help and noted the dilemma between the conflicting objectives of the Building Review Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mr. Bigoness said he took it for granted the two entities would work hand in hand, and recommended, in future cases, the Building Review Commission lobby the Zoning Board of Appeal members. Mr. Bigoness stated he felt the Building Review Commission had a lot of power.

Commissioner Schumacher made a motion to end the delay period for 126 Abingdon Avenue. Commissioner Hopper seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yea: Noel, Hopper, Schumacher, Bossu

Nay: None

Absent: Drexler, Sola, Luscomb

Abstain: None

The motion was carried, and the delay period for the demolition of 126 Abingdon Avenue was ended.

The application for demolition of **513 Sheridan Road** came up for discussion. Chairman Bossu introduced Kathleen Cummings, the architectural historian hired by the Village, and enumerated her qualifications.

Kathleen Cummings described the house at 513 Sheridan Road, then reviewed the criteria of the Building Review Commission which was met. She stated the house was designed by Jerome Cerny in 1953 and built in 1954. Ms. Cummings said the tennis court obscures the view of the house from Sheridan Road, and noted the home was designed in an "H" shape with 2 wings and a service extension. Ms. Cummings said the house has not been changed on the outside and is intact. Ms. Cummings noted there is a prominent pediment over the entry door which is characteristic of Mr. Cerny's work as is the iron trellis work on the house. Ms. Cummings mentioned these ornamentations are typical early American architectural details.

Ms. Cummings said two criteria are met by this house. The criteria are *110.10(a) The structure, building, object or site has significant character, interest or value as part of the historic, cultural or architectural characteristics of the Village, the State of Illinois or the United States; and 110.10(c) The structure, building, object or site is the result of the notable efforts of, or is a known example of work by a master builder, designer, architect, architectural firm or artist whose individual accomplishment has influenced the development of the Village of Kenilworth, the State of Illinois or the United States.*

Ms. Cummings reviewed the Sanborn map which explained the lot consolidation up to 1960. She noted that the area has not been totally studied and stated early 1950's construction began with the lane east of Sheridan Road. Ms. Cummings said 421 Kenilworth Avenue was built in 1938 and was the first indication of the movement to neo-colonialism. Then 427, 429, 431 and 433 Sheridan Road were all built by Hemphill with Houlihan and Marks as the architects. Jerome Cerny build the house next to 513 Sheridan and a neo-colonial area of the village was created. The styles vary from Cape Cod to Georgian Colonial. Ms. Cummings said this is a unique area at the northeast part of Kenilworth.

Next, Ms. Cummings discussed the architect, Jerome Cerny's, significance. He began working in the 1920's in the office of Anderson and Tuchner, probably as a draftsman. He did southern colonial house designs and, in the late 1930's, Cape Cod designs. Mr. Cerny established a private practice in the 1930's and began his work in the clock tower in Lake Forest. He worked with contractor Davies for the next 15 years or so. They were the team that built 513 Sheridan Road. Ms. Cummings said Mr. Cerny was building traditional houses when other architects were building modern 1950's houses, so his work is difficult to analyze and there is no published work on Mr. Cerny which would indicate his work was just as important. Ms. Cummings said his work shows a high quality of architecture and construction, and is the final stage of neo-colonial houses. Mr. Cerny's biography in a Lake Forest book goes up to the 1940's, but not the '50's. Ms. Cummings said there are a lot of examples of Mr. Cerny's work in this area and in Kenilworth. They are all more expensive houses in which the craftsmanship exceeds other construction. Ms. Cummings discussed Mr. Cerny's relationship to David Adler and other Neo-Colonial work in the area.

Commissioner Hopper asked if the sunroom on the back of the house was original? Ms. Cummings said yes, but she was not sure about the windows. Barbara Dyson, the applicant, said the sunroom windows are not original and explained the rounded windows probably are.

Chairman Bossu said the second floor window in the back does not seem to fit with the rest of the house and asked if it were original to the home. Ms. Cummings said it is original. Tim Sheridan, Barbara Dyson's architect, said most of the windows have been replaced.

Chairman Bossu asked for more information about Anderson Tuchner Architects. Kathleen Cummings said she believed they came out of David Adler's office, and

worked all over the North Shore. She said Jerome Cerny's significance is that he offered an alternative to modernism with his traditional, conservative style. Ms. Cummings said Susan Benjamin, another architectural historian, said Mr. Cerny's houses have not been studied but she would consider them significant.

Commissioner Hopper asked if those houses were the end of Jerome Cerny's work. Ms. Cummings stated he lived another 10 years.

Tim Sheridan, the applicant's architect, of Nagle, Hartray Architects, said Mr. Hartray of his firm knew Jerome Cerny. Mr. Sheridan said Jerome Cerny was a classically trained architect who tried to meld traditional and modern architecture together and it was not successful. Mr. Sheridan had a letter from Jack Hartray which he distributed to the Board. Mr. Hartray's letter stated he did not believe the house is significant. Mr. Sheridan said this group of buildings are much more modest than work done by Mr. Cerny further north in Lake county.

Kathleen Cummings said, again, there is little information on Jerome Cerny. She said there are historic records about him, but she has not been able to get into the descendent firm to look at them. Ms. Cummings said the heart of the 1950's problem is the difficulty with availability of records.

Commissioner Schumacher asked why the applicant wants to tear down the house. Barbara Dyson said she had not originally intended to tear it down, but so many problems have surfaced in trying to fix the house, that it would be cheaper to start over than fix it. She stated she lives in a George Maher house, and it has more of a presence than this house at 513 Sheridan.

Linda Forsberg, a neighbor, said she would like to understand the big picture. Chairman Bossu explained what the Building Review Commission does and its limitations. Ms. Forsberg asked what Barbara Dyson wants to build. Barbara Dyson said basically a 3 bedroom house with an art studio for her painting and sculptures. She said it will be a nice little two-story house and not a McMansion.

Robert Sklare, who lives next door to 513 Sheridan Road, said he has lived in his house for 28 years and is the most directly affected by what happens to this house. He said he has serious reservations that this approach will cause Kenilworth to be looked at as hard to work with. He said 513 Sheridan is a shambles and disagrees with it being considered significant. Mr. Sklare said our interest should be to build and retain the best community possible and he urged the Commission to consider allowing this project to move forward.

Chairman Bossu discussed each criteria from Kathleen Cumming's report.

Commissioner Noel said she thought the house was interesting, but was not sure it was significant. She said not every area of Kenilworth is of the highest standards.

Commissioner Hopper said she did not get a feeling of a 1950's development discussed in Ms. Cumming's report. Commissioner Hopper expressed her opinion the area referenced is not cohesive.

Commissioner Noel asked if the houses being linked together in this cohesive grouping means no house can be torn down.

Commissioner Schumacher said the visibility and impact on the surroundings are limited with this house. He said the facts of the report are not compelling.

Chairman Bossu said no historical survey has been done by the Village, and agreed with comments reflecting that the grouping does not feel like a neighborhood. Chairman Bossu said there is no compelling reason that Criteria 110.10(a) fits.

Commissioner Noel next addressed Criteria 110.10(c) regarding the architect. She said she did not see how Jerome Cerny influenced the development of Kenilworth. Chairman Bossu said he did affect Kenilworth. Commissioner Noel said she did not see a big influence.

Commissioner Hopper said she sees so many lines, traditional and modern, clashing together and not flowing. She said it is not done well in this case.

Commissioner Schumacher said he could not get very excited about the house and expressed his opinion Jerome Cerny is not a George Maher.

Chairman Bossu said not every architect hits a homerun every time. She said it does not meet a level of significance.

Next, the Commission discussed Criteria 110.10(g) The structure, building, object or site represents distinguishing characteristics of architecture inherently valuable for the study of a time period, type of property, method of construction or use of indigenous materials.

Commissioner Schumacher said it is probably a true statement but not compelling with regard to this home. Commissioner Noel agreed. Chairman Bossu also agreed with Commissioner Schumacher.

With regard to criteria 110.10(h) The structure, building, object or site embodies elements of design, detail, material or craftsmanship of exceptional quality; Commissioner Hopper expressed her opinion the house is fine quality, but not enough to give it significance. Commissioner Hopper noted this felt like a weak argument.

Barbara Dyson said the house is not of the highest quality. There are problems with gas leaks, and the pediment over the door is out of proportion.

Commissioner Schumacher said it is apparently high quality, but he still did not see this as compelling.

Chairman Bossu said she thought the house was built with high quality materials, but no one criterion is strong enough to determine the house as significant.

Chairman Bossu reviewed criteria 110.10(i) The structure, building, object or site exemplifies a particular architectural style in terms of detail, material and workmanship.

Commissioner Noel said it does seem to be an example of a style, but expressed her opinion that alone does not make it significant. She said one does not look at this house and say it is special.

Commissioner Hopper said it is true that it does represent a style.

Commissioner Schumacher also agreed this is true, but not compelling.

The Commission next considered Criteria 110.10(k) The structure, building, object or site is, or is a part of, a contiguous grouping that has a sense of cohesiveness expressed through a similarity of style characteristics, time period, type of property, method of construction, or use of indigenous materials, and accents the architectural significance of an area.

Commissioner Hopper expressed her opinion she does not see this area as a group. The house is in and of itself and stands on its own. She does not feel 513 Sheridan meets the criteria.

Commissioner Noel expressed her opinion the area does not seem like a neighborhood and noted it was not developed with a plan, but just happened at the same time.

Commissioner Schumacher said again it is not compelling.

Chairman Bossu said she thought all 3 Cerny houses are part of a contiguous grouping, but it is not a strong enough reason to determine significance.

Linda Forsberg said she just wanted to find out what was going on, but does not have any objections to Ms. Dyson's plans.

Robert Sklare said the Commission should let Ms. Dyson do whatever she wants. He said these arbitrary constraints are ridiculous.

Commissioner Noel made a motion to declare 513 Sheridan Road not historically significant. Commissioner Hopper seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was taken as follows:

Yea: Noel, Hopper, Schumacher, Bossu

Nay: None

Absent: Drexler, Sola, Luscomb

Abstain: None

The motion was declared approved 4-0.

Commissioner Schumacher urged Barbara Dyson to share the plans for the new house with the neighbors.

Chairman Bossu discussed the letter from Dr. Pollock that was passed out to the Commissioners on December 18, 2006. Chairman Bossu said her first reaction was to ignore the letter, but then she wondered if that was wise. She said there is misinformation in the letter and noted the one statement in the letter regarding the preservation of old homes at any cost, including deceit and unfair practices, is wrong.

Commissioner Noel expressed her opinion the Commission should not give too much credence to the letter.

Chairman Bossu said Ray Drexler had told her he thought the letter should be responded to in a methodical manner with a response to each item. Chairman Bossu expressed her opinion the letter is totally inappropriate and stated she did not think something like this should go on in this community.

Commissioner Hopper expressed her opinion it is a very sarcastic letter, and felt someone should talk to Dr. Pollock to suggest he choose more appropriate behavior at meetings.

General discussion about the letter followed.

Chairman Bossu suggested the Commission should provide a response correcting the points in the letter and briefly outlining the ordinance under which the Building Review Commission is charged with administering.

The minutes of the November 21, 2006 meeting were placed before the Commission. Several corrections were suggested. **Commissioner Hopper moved to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Noel seconded the motion. Upon a voice vote, the motion was approved.**

Commissioner Schumacher moved to adjourn. Commissioner Hopper seconded the motion which was unanimously approved on voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Criezis