



Agenda Item #: 2

Project Title: 1908 Arlington Place - Land Division in the University Heights Historic District (District 5)

Legistar File ID #: 81638

Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

Members: Present: Richard Arnesen, Edna Ely-Ledesma, Molly Harris, Katie Kaliszewski, Ald. Amani Latimer Burris, Jacob Morrison, and Maurice Taylor
Excused: None

Summary

Jeffrey Chandler, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Jean Halferty, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Lester Pines, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Bruce Kieffer, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Bryan Rieber, registering in support and wishing to speak
Mary Vernon, registering in opposition and wishing to speak
Jean Parks, registering in opposition and available to answer questions
Monica Messina, registering in opposition and available to answer questions
Steve and Jenn Sauer, registering in opposition and available to answer questions
Chris Thomas, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Ernesto Livorni, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Erin Stiteley, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Samantha Crownover, registering in opposition and not wishing to speak
Dylan Mathieu, registering in support and not wishing to speak
Will Cushman, registering in support and not wishing to speak
Nicholas Davies, registering in support and not wishing to speak

Kaliszewski opened the public hearing.

Jean Halferty, Lester Pines, Bruce Kieffer, and Mary Vernon spoke in opposition.
Bryan Rieber, property owner, spoke in support.

Kaliszewski closed the public hearing.

Bailey provided background information on the project and discussed the applicable standards.

Latimer Burris asked about the comparable lot sizes nearby. Bailey said that the proposed width of the new lot meets zoning standards. There are two properties on this block with 40' lots and on the next block north, there are several properties that are 40' wide.

Kaliszewski said that the other smaller lots comparable to Lot 2 contained homes that were built at a different time when the zoning was different. She asked if someone could build a comparable single-family home on the proposed new lot, noting that it was not a factor the commission could consider in their decision. Bailey said that the reason there is a minimum lot size of 40' is because that is the lot size within this zoning where one could build a house comparable to

those in this neighborhood. She said that in comparing to other similar lot sizes, the new house may need to be slimmer, but not substantially.

Arnesen asked to look at a map of the University Heights historic district, which Bailey provided. Arnesen said that there was every lot size imaginable on the map and didn't find the argument that the lot size was not compatible to be compelling.

Latimer Burris asked staff to discuss the consideration of adjacent lots rather than lots in general. Bailey said that the standards say, "adjacent lot sizes," and for Zoning uses that means sharing a lot line. The commission needs to assess whether this is compatible with the immediately surrounding properties. She explained that the goal was so that they don't create a lot that is out of scale with the surrounding neighbors or fails to maintain the general lot size pattern of the historic district. University Heights has different blocks that have different patterns, so looking at what is happening in one section of the historic district may be different from other parts. The commission's precedent in analyzing these projects is to look at the block in question and the surrounding area.

Alder Vidaver, District 5, asked staff to speak to other lot divisions in University Heights in terms of the size of those lots and how recently they occurred. Bailey said that there was recently a division on Chadbourne, which went through the same review of looking at lot sizes and adjacency. She said that years ago, there was a division on a landmark site, the Ely House. Vidaver said the lot next to the Ely House looked narrow and pointed out another division that had taken place for the amoeba or clover house on N Prospect Avenue. She said she was trying to understand the precedent for land divisions in this historic district, and Bailey said that it doesn't happen often in University Heights.

Harris said that if they look at the general lot size pattern of the historic district, she thought the district had plenty of varying lots of varying sizes, and if these lots were to be divided, they would fit with the general pattern of the historic district. In terms of adjacent lot sizes, she said that it was compatible with lots on Kendall Avenue, which are considered adjacent. She asked if the standards taken into account some of the factors brought up in public comment such as whether this is part of the front yard. Bailey said that was not a standard. There are interesting lot patterns in University Heights and sometimes peculiar ways of how buildings are oriented. She said they wrote the ordinance in order to accommodate those unique situations, and we need to consider the ordinance and what the words say.

Morrison said that most public comments dwell on lot size and the orientation of the house. He said that after seeing the map of the historic district, it clarified that neither lot would end up being an oddball; not only does the new lot meet zoning criteria and would be a similar size to other lots, but it leaves the old lot as a similar size and meeting zoning criteria. It seems clear cut that it meets the sizes consistently seen in this block and the overall historic district. The orientation of the house is odd and it seems they didn't anticipate building another house there, but there are other houses in the neighborhood with doors that are not directly on the street, notably the Airplane House. He pointed out that whatever is proposed for this lot later on will need to meet zoning criteria and Landmarks Commission criteria. He agreed with staff's recommendation that the proposal meets the criteria.

Arnesen agreed with Morrison's conclusion.

Latimer Burris said that she was stuck on the adjacency and requested they look at adjacent lot sizes. Bailey showed the map from her presentation and went over adjacent sizes. Latimer Burris asked about the purpose of Sanborn maps, and Bailey said they were historic maps used to look at how things have changed over time.

Action

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Harris, to Approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: 5 - Jacob Morrison, Molly Harris, Maurice Taylor, Edna Ely-Ledesma, and Richard Arnesen

Noes: 1 - Amani Latimer Burris

Non Voting: 1 - Katie Kaliszewski