

**WATERLOO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING –NOVEMBER 19, 2002 – 4:30 P.M.  
FRANK MOLLENHOFF CONFERENCE ROOM – 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR CITY HALL**

Chairperson Levi called the regular meeting of the City of Waterloo Historic Preservation meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

Those in attendance were Aronson, Etheredge, Pearson, and Levi. Applicants Mr. & Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Andy Mills, and Mr. Pat Price were present at the meeting. Also in attendance was staff members Noel Anderson and Melissa Edsill and Tim Jamison of the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier.

It was moved by Etheredge to approve the minutes as submitted. Aronson seconded the motion. The motion passed and carried unanimously.

Pearson moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Etheredge seconded the motion. The motion to approve the agenda passed and carried unanimously.

There was not a monthly report submitted by Silos and Smokestacks.

Etheredge briefly spoke that Main Street was reviewing the addition to the new Chamber building and new art in the Main Street parking lot.

The first agenda item was a request by Mr. & Mrs. Douglas for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 126 Prospect Avenue. Edsill gave the staff report. It was noted there were two requests to be reviewed for the same address. One request was to replace two exterior doors and one request to replace the existing aluminum siding. Edsill pointed out the picture in the packet and also the color pictures that were passed around prior to the meeting.

To start the discussion process, Etheredge made the motion to deny the request. Levi went on to discuss this was a similar discussion the Commission had had at the previous meeting hearing the same request. Levi also noted that the Commission did broach the subject of vinyl and aluminum siding at the previous meeting, however it was too drastic of a deviation from the original request. The topic of the cement siding also was mentioned at the previous meeting as it was currently being used by as test case in Dubuque in their Historic District. Levi invited the applicants to discuss some of the possible alternatives.

Mr. Price questioned what would happen with a house that was too far deteriorated to put wood shingles back on the house. Levi stated that wood shingles could be replaced, even though that is not generally a concern in this climate.

Mr. Douglas questioned whether any of the Commission had researched any of the information on the cement siding. He further went on to say that the siding is mostly used in areas where fires are a concern. Douglas also noted that the cement siding is much heavier product, so some concern was being raised to this fact. Douglas went on to mention that the Association told him that the siding was grand fathered in and what they

are just asking to do is just redo the siding without changing the exterior appearance. Douglas also stated they had researched many products, with the vinyl siding looking better than the aluminum due to the 4" lap design. Douglas noted that they were back to discuss their options with the Commission as the City Council had asked them to do at their appeal hearing. Douglas did state he had met with the Mayor on the subject matter. Levi asked Douglas to clarify if he was asking the Commission to present other possible ideas on material uses. Douglas replied they were asking for options for their house as was requested by the City Council at their hearing.

Levi asked if the Douglass', in addition to the aluminum, would be willing to look at other material options.

Mrs. Douglas stated the City Council told them they would come to the Commission and the Commission would help them with other options. Mrs. Douglas asked for those other suggestions.

Levi noted he was trying to clarify the question to determine if the research that was completed, found products they would like to discuss.

Mr. & Mrs. Douglas both stated they had done research on the topics. Mr. Douglas went further to state if vinyl wasn't acceptable, and it didn't seem as though aluminum would be acceptable, what material would be acceptable to do to their house.

Levi simply stated that the Commission didn't want to start a discussion about products the Douglass' were not familiar with. Levi questioned whether the applicants had a specific material in mind to use. Mr. Douglas then asked for the product description.

Levi started the discussion of the cement siding. Douglas asked the commission why they would approve the cement siding, which is a synthetic siding and not approve the aluminum or vinyl siding, which are also synthetic siding materials. Levi indicated the Commission would be willing to try this siding as a test case because of this material's ability to mimic true lap siding far better than vinyl or aluminum. Douglas reiterated that the cement siding is still a synthetic siding and is far heavier than other sidings and would put stress on the frame of their house. Douglas told the commission cement siding is 20 times heavier than the vinyl or aluminum siding. Douglas indicated that the weight of the siding would put extra strain on his house. Staff passed around a sample piece of the cement siding. Levi indicated the Commission would recommend a flat, smooth surface instead of the grained surface siding. Levi stated if the applicants did not wish for the Commission to discuss the synthetic siding, then the next alternative would be cedar siding. Pearson noted, referencing the Guidelines that clapboard is recommended.

Asbestos, aluminum, fake stone, and grained vinyl are not recommended materials.

Another option would be wood siding, which is the material that has been used before in the district. Pearson also noted that previous new houses built in the district have used wood siding and there is a long-set precedent and the guidelines have made this a fairly direct argument that aluminum is not recommended and has not been approved and has been a number of years since the commission has been addressed with the issue of replacement. Douglas stated that if aluminum siding is not a recommended material the house should not have been included in the district in the first place. He indicated that there are houses in the district that do have siding on them and if that was a problem the house should not have been included in the district. Pearson wished to clarify that the Commission did not make the boundaries of the Highland Historic District; the State Historic Society drew the boundaries in 1984. Douglas pointed out that in the 1987

inventory the house was included even though it had the (aluminum) siding on it. Douglas indicated that if the Commission wants them to replace with wood siding, they would have to replace the wood underneath because some of the house does not have wood underneath the siding, just lining. Douglas noted that this would cause them to essentially rebuild the house. Mrs. Douglas asked the Commission to clarify when the topic of wood comes up are they discussing Cedar siding or any type of wood. Levi replied that the reason cedar was being brought up by the Commission was because it was a typical material used in the era. He also noted they could use other types of wood; cedar was mentioned due to its durability. Mrs. Douglas asked the Commission if they brought a request back to this commission if they would specify the type of wood to be used or not. Levi indicated that the material should be a solid wood. Pearson replied that generally the homeowner has specifically noted the type of material on the application. Pearson also noted that the Commission did not want to dictate to the applicants what type of wood, just work with the applicants to come to an agreement. Mrs. Douglas asked whether any other wood material (other than cedar) ever been approved by the Commission. Levi & Pearson replied that, as a request, no other wood material had been approved, but to their knowledge no other wood material had been requested. Mrs. Douglas requested to clarify that any solid wood would be acceptable to the Commission. The Commission replied it could be. Mrs. Douglas continued that the cost of cedar siding is approximately two times the cost of vinyl. Levi noted that as a registered Architect, he had not used any other material for siding other than cedar, but others could be used. Douglas asked that outside of wood no other material would be acceptable, replacing the aluminum with aluminum would not be accepted. Levi replied that replacement with solid wood or even the cement siding (speaking for himself) could be approved. If the applicants would like to amend the request, the Commission has previously, in other cases, had a fax vote if the information that is provided on the application is clear and concise enough for the commission to make a decision. Levi stated Staff would be willing to work with the applicants in order to make sure this was completed. Douglas asked to clarify that they could not replace aluminum which has been there for over 30 years and was approved with the District and cannot do vinyl siding, but could do wood which would take a lot of money to rebuild the house or concrete siding, which is also a synthetic material. Douglas explained that the concrete siding would have effects on the underlying material on the house as the aluminum or vinyl and would also have a greater stress factor on the house. Douglas then discussed that their house was not built to support the weight of the concrete siding, which could harm their structure and some reinforcement would have to be done. Douglas reiterated that their option was to not do anything or rebuild the house with wood. Levi addressed the stress factor; he stated that if he were to replace siding with the concrete siding, he would make no structural changes. The weight would be insignificant to the load of the roof and snow on top of the roof, and the wood, not matter when the house was built, would be able to support the added weight. Douglas replied the wood under the siding is very dried out. Douglas again pointed out that the house was put into the District with the siding on it; they are trying to work to beautify their house. Douglas stated people in Highland Park are basically sick of being worked against and not worked with. He continued that they are not trying to change the house, just trying to clean up the property. Douglas noted the Commission was created to work with the property owners

not against or be detrimental to them. Douglas pointed out the application is very simple; just replace siding with siding. He added, the 4" siding would look better because it is closer to what is accepted in a historic district. Douglas thanked the Commission for the alternative of concrete siding and indicated that to replace with wood would be more costly and he couldn't afford it nor would he rebuild the house at this time. The discussion then turned to the letter written by Randy Pilkington presented at the appeal hearing. Douglas indicated he did not wish to change the ordinance. Douglas explained to the Commission that they don't understand that because they don't give a little, people in the District are doing things to their house without the review of the Commission (meaning also without a permit). Douglas indicated that he was told that the Neighborhood Association is supposed to have as much right as the Commission in working with the residents of Highland. Douglas indicated that he was to work with the Commission, not argue with them, but the Commission is going to have to open up and be more considerate to the people that have their monies, their work effort and their lives involved in these houses. Douglas stated that few houses in Highland that could stand anywhere and be considered a historic house, however, there are some that could not. Douglas again stated that they are just trying to clean up what is already there. Douglas noted that he could see the point of the Commission if he were trying to add an addition to the house, but he is not or cover up wood with siding, but he is not. Douglas said he had looked at the wood underneath, he did bring samples of it to the council hearing and in some areas of the home there is not wood underneath and it was like that when the house was adopted into the District. Douglas asked to clarify that wood or the cement siding are the only options, Levi replied that was correct. Douglas questioned why the use of cement siding. Levi stated this would be a test case to see how this material would endure time and looks like a true lap siding. Douglas disagreed, stating that the concrete siding doesn't appear any more like true lap siding than the vinyl. Levi stated that if there were no wood underneath, a contractor would probably need to replace the sheathing. Mrs. Douglas asked if they would not need to replace the sheathing with the cedar siding, Levi replied with any replacement the sheathing would probably need to be replaced. Pearson noted that clapboard is recommended, however the cement board would be a test case, it would not be the first choice of the Commission. Mr. Price questioned whether Mr. Douglas had to follow the rules of the Commission no matter what; Levi replied that there was an appeal process. Price continued to say that people in Highland

Douglas stated again that the house was like this when the District was formed, he didn't know why it is not good enough now. Douglas stated that in talking to people about moving to Highland, they don't want to live there because "you can't do anything". Highland is supposed to be a place of beauty and not a place where the Commission acts like "god" and says the homeowner can't do anything. Douglas noted that this activity hurts the value of the property and it is hurting the values right now. People are trying to bring that area back up and work with the Commission, but if the Commission keeps turning people down, it makes it hard to bring in new people. Douglas told the Commission that one of the main reasons that some of the houses are sitting vacant is because the Commission is unwilling to work with the residents and "give us a break". Douglas stated that Highland is the one place that gets 500 kids trick-or-treating, or you can still talk to you neighbor over the fence. People perceive Highland Park as being a

rich neighborhood, but the Commission needs to give a little. Douglas indicated he could power wash his house; he just wants to brighten it up. Mrs. Douglas took a moment to clarify a couple of areas in the minutes of the work session minutes from City Council. The topic of the commission meeting at the Douglas's home, Mrs. Douglas wanted to clarify that they were not given the 24 hours required notice of the meeting. She did not want that to have that imply that they did not take the time for this matter. Mrs. Douglas also pointed out that the minutes stated that Pearson said that a precedent had been made by allowing aluminum siding and noting that the house already had alum siding when it was allowed into the District so the precedent had already been set. Mrs. Douglas pointed out that the Department of Interior Standards are merely guidelines. Mrs. Douglas also asked the Commission if there were currently any building guidelines that addressed Historic structures. Levi stated the City of Waterloo uses the 2000 International building code. Pearson stated that the City Attorney should address these concerns. Levi did also state that the City adopted the guidelines. Again, Pearson suggested the City Attorney handle this. Mrs. Douglas asked to receive copies of this information. Mrs. Douglas asked what ordinance the Commission was working to revise. Levi indicated that some of the nomenclature was being changed in the Historic Preservation ordinance. Mrs. Douglas asked to know the members of that committee. Levi indicated that the group was a subcommittee of this Commission and any changes would have to go through a public hearing. Mr. Douglas questioned if there were others on the committee outside of the Commission, Levi replied that those changes would be presented to citizens. Pearson noted that the council would review the amendments and could make changes prior to the adoption. Responding to the question about the members of the subcommittee not on the commission, Levi stated that the subcommittee would meet a couple times and then take their ideas to the Highland District. Pearson pointed out the subcommittee was just recently formed and has only met once. Pearson indicated the process is in the very preliminary stages. Mrs. Douglas asked for the members of the subcommittee. Levi stated they were Sue Pearson, Julie Etheredge, and David Leonhart and himself as an alternate. Levi stated that once the information gathering is done, the ordinance would be presented to Highland Board. Pearson said that subcommittee's intent is to take their findings to the Highland Board. Mr. Douglas wondered if the Commission had discussed this re-writing to the Mayor. Pearson suggested that, as a courtesy to the other applicant that was waiting, to discuss this as a later point and move on with the agenda. Mrs. Douglas noted that they wanted to discuss this at this time as they were supposed to have a special meeting, but decided to be at today's meeting to discuss the topics at hand. Levi indicated that the Commission was not denying Mrs. Douglas the opportunity to have her points heard, just that the Commission needed to address the rest of their agenda before they addressed items that were not on the agenda (i.e. ordinance amendments). Mr. Douglas stated he just wanted a yes or no question to his question and they could move on. Mrs. Douglas noted she would not like to have their place given to someone else, she would like to have their request heard now. Levi asked if there was any further discussion as related to the request on the table. With no other discussion, Levi called for a vote. The motion was seconded by Aronson. Passed and carried unanimously.

Levi then moved on to the request by Mr. & Mrs. Douglas for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of exterior doors on their home at 126 Prospect Avenue. To begin the discussion, Pearson moved to deny the request, it was seconded by the Etheredge. Levi stated that the staff report already addressed the doors. The City took note of this and the applicant was asked to submit a building permit. Mr. Douglas stated he did come down to the City and submit a permit for the doors. Mr. Douglas noted that he replaced solid steel doors with steel cap doors with decorative cut glass. Mr. Douglas indicated that the doors had to be altered when installed and looked better now. Levi questioned where the original doors were and if they were original. Mr. Douglas indicated these were not the original doors. Mrs. Douglas indicated that the doors will be painted the same color as the siding. Mr. Douglas indicated they tried to keep the storm door open so that the door would be seen. Pearson questioned if the Douglas's had any earlier pictures, etc. Mr. Douglas replied they did not have anything original. Levi asked if there was any other discussion. Hearing none, Levi noted that denying the motion the doors would remain. Motion to deny the request failed, with Pearson being the lone vote in favor. The Certificate of Appropriateness was approved.

The second agenda item was the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness by Andy Mills of Mills Construction on behalf of Ray Richardson of 224 Highland Blvd to re-roof a portion of the home. Edsill gave a brief staff report on the request. Mills showed the Commission a video he had taken specifically pointing out the parts of the roof and porch that would need to be replaced. Mills noted that they would replace what is currently on the house with the same. During his presentation, Mills questioned the Commission whether the trim for the roof had to be replaced and if so, right away. The Commission stated the trim could be replaced in the spring. Pearson moved to approve the request as discussed in detail, Etheredge seconded the motion. Levi and the Commission took the opportunity to commend Mills on a very good presentation. Some of the points that were mentioned were: replace 1" x 4" tongue & groove with the same (treated or fur okay), any trim will need to be replaced as was, detail in rafter changes- shorter profile that will not be visible from perpendicular view and that are necessary for rafter structure, ridge vents, shingles – chateau green, infill of overhand on 3<sup>rd</sup> story, set back as far as practical with dark material, trim may be replaced, weather permitting, no later than July 2003 and a letter from the Commission will be sent informing the homeowner of this detail. The motion passed and carried unanimously.

Pearson motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Etheredge. Hearing no further discussion, Chairperson Levi adjourned the meeting at 6:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Edsill  
Associate Planner  
Staff to the Commission