



City of Aurora

44 East Downer Place
Aurora, Illinois 60505
www.aurora-il.org

Legistar History Report

File Number: 21-0024

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Type: Ordinance

Status: ATS Review

Version: 2

**General
Ledger #:**

In Control: Building, Zoning,
and Economic
Development
Committee

File Created: 01/11/2021

File Name: 2021 Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines
Text Revisions

Final Action:

Title: An Ordinance Approving a Text Amendment to the Historic Districts and Landmarks Guidelines to modify certain portions being B.2.6 Existing Garages, Carriage Houses and Outbuildings; B. 2.7 Gutters and Downspouts; B.2.14 Satellite Dishes, Antennas, and Solar Panels; B.2.18 Windows; B.2.19 Wood Siding; B.3.3 New Garages and Outbuildings; B.4.1 Fences and Walls; and B.4.5 Parking

Notes:

Agenda Date: 02/24/2021

Agenda Number:

Sponsors:

Enactment Date:

Attachments: Exhibit "A" Text Amendment to Historic Districts and Landmarks Design Guidelines - REDLINE -
2021-02-16 - 2021.005, Legistar History Report -
2021-02-09 - 2021.005

Enactment Number:

Planning Case #: KDWK-21.005-TXT/CODE

Hearing Date:

Drafter: JMorgan@aurora-il.org

Effective Date:

Related Files:

History of Legislative File

Ver- sion:	Acting Body:	Date:	Action:	Sent To:	Due Date:	Return Date:	Result:
1	Historic Preservation Commission	01/14/2021	placed on pending				
	Action Text:	This Petition was placed on pending					
	Notes:	<i>Mrs. Morgan said so just kind of to recall everyone, over the past probably 3 or 4 years, we've kind of been making some clarifications to the guidelines where we felt the wording was ambiguous or that portions really weren't covered, so we've been making those text changes. Staff has put those on the website. Most of the clarifications aren't really changing guidelines, but we have felt that, well we discussed the satellite dishes specifically, and it was kind of a change to the guidelines, as well as allowing window materials other than wood or a wood clad product was really if we allowed other</i>					

materials we would need to change the guidelines. So I am proposing to bring all those clarifications through and to officially have City Council approve them. So I'm starting with the Preservation Commission for you guys to officially altogether kind of approve everything and just to kind of briefly recap for everyone. I know some of these may even date before some of the Commission members. If you also recall, prior to my time actually, we gave numbers to actually all the sections in the hope at one point to completely update the guidelines so we can quote sections and not just quoting titles, so that's where these numbers come from. So Section B.2.6 – Existing Garages, Carriage Houses and Outbuildings. This is where we did the Text Amendment to allow substitute materials on replacing garage doors that aren't real visible and trying to include historic features like raised panels and glass windows. The next one is Gutters and Downspouts. This is to clarify the should portion of when requiring half round gutters and allowing half round gutters, allowing the "K" style gutters if the home has "K" style gutters or if half of the home has "K" style gutters. The next one is the Satellite Dishes. We just discussed this, allowing a little more flexibility and removing shall not be visible to allowing minimally visible. The next one is Windows. This is a Text Amendment for when the windows are beyond repair or the existing material was never really wood, the wood window had been replaced years ago before the District, allowing alternative materials if the original wood window is not present or beyond repair, if the detailing, dimensions, proportions, type, grill pattern, muntin profiles, and styling are consistent with that of other historic windows. If you recall, there are points where it has to go before the Commission and other points where staff can approve it. Wood Siding. This one was to outline when cement board siding can be used in place of wood siding, as the Commission felt it simulated wood siding. The next item is New Garages and Outbuildings. Similar again, to allowing synthetic materials for garage doors on new garages. The next one is Fences and Walls. This was allowing an amendment to allow a 72 inch fence in an interior yard only if that portion that is over 60 inches is more than 50% open. So it is allowing basically a lattice style fence is really kind of the popular style that meets that requirement in the side yard if it doesn't obstruct any historical architectural features. That was kind of consistent on what the Commission had been varying through the years. The next one is Parking. This is to clarify that asphalt parking, while not encouraged, it is not outright prohibited when repaving. Are there any questions for staff?

Mr. Walker said for parking, what do we have for general guidelines? I guess we haven't had too many ones come up. Do we have like a material preference, hierarchy or something?

Mrs. Morgan said concrete, I think, is probably the hierarchy, stamped concrete and like ribbon, to keep the ribbon as well is the preference, but then asphalt is not prohibited is how we worded it. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Walker said yes. I was just curious if somebody who has a gravel driveway and (inaudible).

Mrs. Ludwig said are we all going back to dirt because of historical accuracy and all?

Mr. Walker said I like gravel just fine, but a lot of municipalities don't like gravel for driveways.

Mrs. Morgan said with gravel in Aurora, as long as you maintain the gravel, you can keep it and I have also applied that to the Historic District since we do allow other materials. I wouldn't (inaudible) to allow gravel. Homeowners do need to make sure they maintain the gravel in order to retain it per the Zoning Ordinance.

Chairman Miller said right, that's city ordinance, not Historic District ordinance.

Mr. Hoffman said this isn't one of the revisions, but I just noticed now reading the driveway section, it says driveways shall not be poured closer than 6 inches to foundation walls because it causes damage. There are a large portion of driveways out there that are.

Mrs. Morgan said there is. I think we unofficially said that one time about how it is all throughout the district. I know I have approved it on one instance where the homeowner was able to (inaudible) that it wouldn't hurt the foundation. So I don't know if that's something we need to enforce more or if that is something we should be more relaxed on.

Mr. Hoffman said so construction practice, from a structural perspective is you should have some type of expansion joint there, but that can be 3/4, or 1/2 to 1 inch expansion joint filler material. Leaving it 6 inches away, that's safe, but I don't see that it would be a shall in there. I think that could be maybe a should have an expansion joint provided or be held back 6 inches or something. It is a minor thing. I'm just thinking some of these driveways are really narrow. If you have a car with mirrors, you can't really get your tire much closer than 6 inches anyway. If I narrowed our driveway 6 inches, I probably couldn't fit both wheels of the car on it.

Mrs. Morgan said that's a good point. We can make approval with conditions to add that change as well if everyone agreed to it. While we are doing it, if there is something else that is easy to change like that.

Chairman Miller said I would be okay with changing it. It is also interesting to me that this is in a Historic District guideline rather than just a city-wide ordinance.

Mrs. Morgan said and someone stated they thought it was an ordinance. It's not something I was aware of. I could check with our Building Department, but again, I don't know if the Preservation Ordinance is the place that we want to try to enforce a regulation that's not being enforced by other city departments where that's in their ordinances.

Mr. Hoffman said I would almost expect that to be. I'm actually doing a quick search to see if it is in the International Residential Code. I believe that's the adopted building codes in Aurora. I don't actually recall seeing something in there about it.

Mrs. Morgan said our Building Department does not review driveway permits.

Mr. Hoffman said unless you have cases where it could cause issues if you have it where it's sloping down toward the house, in which case you have even bigger problems because you are funneling all your water against it. So if the driveway is sloped away from the house, which it should be anyway and the rest of the grade is done appropriately, you don't have a retaining wall. If you have a retaining wall against the outside of the driveway, let's say due to an elevation change to the adjacent lot or yard, that could then put load into driveway and into the foundation of the house. That's probably the only case I can really think it would be an issue. If you have just a slab on grade driveway that's 8 to 10 feet wide, even if it is poured directly up against the house without an expansion joint, it's unlikely to cause a problem unless you have something that's external that's pushing the driveway, either a slope or a retaining wall or some other structure. I just noticed it going through here. There probably are some other little items here in the guidelines that are maybe just kind of helpful tips, and not strictly preservation requirements. I don't think that's a problem, but it just jumped out at me as a shall. At the point where I need to repave my driveway, I need to put it right up against the house or it won't be wide enough.

Mrs. Morgan said and I would agree. I think it is probably good. I would say let's go ahead and change it with having that shall because, like I said before, I have waived it because we've had this discussion that if they do what you were talking about properly, it is not an issue. So I would definitely be up for getting rid of that shall so we are not really going against guidelines when I approve that.

Mr. Hoffman said I would suggest it could be just reworded slightly to say driveways should not be poured closer to 6 inches to the foundation or if poured against the foundation that an expansion joint should be provided.

Mrs. Morgan said okay.

Mrs. Ludwig said or should not be closer than 6 inches without a joint.

Mr. Hoffman said unless an expansion joint is provided. Maybe that's more concise.

Chairman Miller said I don't know how detailed we want to get in this. Do we also have to say and grade away from the house so the water doesn't run against your foundation?

Mr. Hoffman said that should be in the building code about grades around the property sloping away. It is usually a ¼ inch per foot.

Chairman Miller said back to my observation. Like this seems odd in a Preservation Ordinance and why is it is not in just city-wide ordinance. I don't see anything particularly historic about it.

Mrs. Morgan said I will make that change then to the wording that is should not be closer than 6 inches unless an expansion joint is provided.

Mr. Hoffman said that sounds good to me. Somebody cared enough to put it in here when it was originally drafted, so we can carry on their legacy.

Chairman Miller said so does that mean if it is 5 inches you need like to put a joint in?

Mr. Hoffman said if you were within 5 inches, I don't know why you would leave a 5 inch gap instead of 6.

Chairman Miller said that's a good change, I think. We covered several things here. Does anyone have any questions or comments about any of the others or need a few minutes to review them? That's fair too.

Mr. Hoffman said for cement board siding, where does the 68% cement come from?

Mrs. Morgan said a colleague had done a lot of research on that. I believe it was the quality that it seemed to be the best product. Hardi board siding meets that requirement.

Mr. Hoffman said okay.

Mrs. Morgan said I think it was to make sure you have a quality actual cement board product and not like something that kind of doesn't quite meet actual...

Mr. Hoffman said a more disposable engineered wood product. I have worked with some of that Masonite soffit board that our previous petitioner talked about and you do wonder if it is really a building material. The plus side is it easy to work with because you can cut it with a utility knife. You don't need a saw.

Chairman Miller said I don't know if it is the same thing or not, but I've seen some soffit material that I would personally call cardboard.

Mr. Hoffman said it doesn't hold up to water that well. I suspect the issue on that property is there was water from failing roof or flashing that allowed it to become wet and at that point it is soft enough that a squirrel could get through it.

Chairman Miller said I remember some of the discussion on the cement board was you don't want to specify a brand, like Hardi board, that there was some concern that a manufacturer might come up with something that's 40% cement and the other 60% is whatever scrap material was cheapest that day and we might want to keep that material out of the district.

Mr. Hoffman said I think that's a good way to go. I agree, we shouldn't be referring to brand or specific product names. That will eliminate the more short-lived products.

Chairman Miller said it does potentially allow for trim pieces to be made of cement board also if it meets the criteria.

Mr. Hoffman said do we otherwise have language that requires replacement trim to match the shape, dimensions and profiles of existing?

Mrs. Morgan said I would think somewhere.

Mr. Hoffman said that would go if you are replacing it with original wood with replacement wood.

Chairman Miller said under Section A, if replacement is necessary, wood siding and shingles shall be replaced with new to match the original in size, placement and design.

Mr. Hoffman said I guess I would need to check the old guidelines.

Chairman Miller said then there would be different sections like for windows and soffits and things like that.

Mr. Hoffman said I just want to double check to make sure that we don't have a gap there when we refer to cement fiber trim. It should go without saying, of course.

Mrs. Morgan said it does say in soffits and fascia, original soffit, fascia and trim boards and details shall not be removed and those deteriorate beyond repair should be replaced with boards that match the originals. That covers like that part. There is no rush on this, so if the Commission, if you guys feel like you want to take a little more time to see if there any other changes while we are doing it, we don't have to approve it tonight.

Chairman Miller said how does everyone feel about that. If it is not a rush, a lot of these changes are current practice.

Mrs. Morgan said they are because most of them we consider clarifications and not really changes. The only other really changes would be the windows and satellite dishes, which requires Preservation Commission approval anyway. You are basically giving a variation to the guidelines, which you are permitted to do.

Mr. Hoffman said would these changes go through City Council to be approved?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Mr. Hoffman said so do we want to do this kind of in one big clean shot.

Mrs. Morgan said to like opening it up. I would say probably clean up what we can.

Mr. Hoffman said but we're not on an agenda that we are trying to meet a deadline to get this through?

Mrs. Morgan said we are not, no. They are not aware this is coming or anything like that. Does everyone feel that maybe we should just wait until next month to give everyone a chance to really kind of look at it and see if there is anything else you want to change before sending it forward to Council?

Chairman Miller said I'm good with that. What does everyone else think?

Mr. Castrejon said maybe have Al and the rest get a chance to have an opinion.

Mrs. Ludwig said do you want comments back before the next meeting Jill? Does that help you with your timeline though?

Mrs. Morgan said yes, maybe if you can give me your specific comments, your thinking, if you could send that to me in an email, that way I can go ahead and make those changes and we can have the actual exact wording.

Mrs. Ludwig said does it hurt your timing to let it go another month?

Mrs. Morgan said no.

Chairman Miller said so we can table this.

1	Historic Preservation Commission	02/11/2021	Forwarded	Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee	02/24/2021	Pass
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Action Text: A motion was made by Mr. Signorelli, seconded by Mr. Munoz, that this agenda item be Forwarded to the Building, Zoning, and Economic Development Committee, on the agenda for 2/24/2021. The motion carried.

Notes: *Mrs. Morgan said if you recall, we held this at the last meeting just so everyone had a little more opportunity to review it and see if there were any other like minor changes that we wanted to take forward while we were doing this. So just kind of as a reminder, over the past several years, we have been doing clarifications to the guidelines trying to fix any areas where there was an ambiguity to kind of codify some of the practices that we've been doing and things we have been approving that wasn't against the guidelines, but wasn't really spelled out in the guidelines either, to make it very clear moving forward anyone who reads it, what is or is not permitted. The only thing that we have changed is, and Seth made the change that we were talking about at the end of last meeting about the driveways, allowing them not to have to have that 6 inches as long as it is done in a manner that it won't hurt the foundation. He put in some good verbiage for that. Then solar panels, just clarifying when staff can approve it when it is obscured completely, I think was the wording, from the public way. Were there any other comments or thoughts on it? Once you guys approve it, if you do approve, it will go forward to BZE and then eventually to City Council, so they will become official parts of the guidelines. At the moment, we haven't thought about actually trying to reprint them in all one document, but at least they will be on the website altogether so that people can access them and see that there are some changes to sections.*

Mr. Signorelli said I was really pleased. There are so many things that have come up that I can remember in the past where things weren't clear in the guidelines. Even though I wasn't privy to that meeting, having read everything I think everything seems to be fairly clear. I wasn't knowledgeable on the issue that Seth was talking about, but I educated myself with your discussion. I think everything is pretty clear. I think I wouldn't have any trouble going along with all of the proposed changes.

Chairman Miller said thank you Al. Does anyone else have any further reaction to these changes?

Mr. Signorelli said the only other is I was kind of surprised. I probably should have known, but I had no idea the gravel driveways were even allowed any more. I guess it is mostly because mostly people just simply don't do it anymore. I didn't even know it was allowed.

Mrs. Morgan said they are technically, from a zoning standpoint, they are allowed as long as they are maintained. If anyone does have a gravel driveway, if you want to keep it, you need to maintain it. If you get to the point that it is not maintained and get cited, since the guidelines allow for other materials, I say enforce the Zoning Ordinance at that point and they need to come through with an approved zoning material.

Chairman Miller said I can think of at least one or two that are maintained.

Mr. Walker said I hope my house is at least decently maintained in terms of its driveway.

Mr. Signorelli said there's one.

Mrs. Del Debbio said I'm on that list too.

Mr. Hoffman said In Omaha where we lived, there were some city streets that had been built when it was unincorporated, in unincorporated areas, and the developers hadn't built curbs to the city standards, so when the city annexed it, it was in the condition that they were not on the hook for rebuilding the street and so some of them then when they got bad enough and the homeowners weren't pulling together to chip in for the reconstruction, they just ground them up and turned them

into gravel. I think they are slowing going through and actually rebuilding now that the taxpayers are assigned. For a while, they were gravel streets in the middle of the city there in these obscure little 50's subdivisions, so they would pave a little asphalt with no curb or drainage.

Chairman Miller said I agree with all the edits and thank you for that. My only further question would be on page 77 with gutters. Perhaps it doesn't matter, and I should have mentioned this before, it does say if the gutters, this is pre-existing language under point C, if the gutters are not readily visible, Ogee gutters of aluminum or vinyl are acceptable. I've wondered before why vinyl is mentioned. I haven't heard of vinyl being used in this climate.

Mrs. Morgan said I would have to say I don't know. It mentions them together in other places.

Mr. Hoffman said they are available here. I see people putting them up. They don't hold up real well over the big temperature fluctuations. When it gets real hot, they get saggy.

Mr. Signorelli said you mean Seth they are vinyl? I was thinking when he said vinyl, it would be like aluminum coated vinyl.

Mr. Hoffman said just like the vinyl fencing. I think it is extruded. It is a solid vinyl.

Mr. Signorelli said that doesn't sound like a good idea at all.

Mr. Hoffman said just like those vinyl patio chairs that get brittle in the sun.

Mr. Signorelli said I thought it was only because I sat in them. I had no idea there were gutters (inaudible).

Mr. Hoffman said I wouldn't recommend them.

Mr. Signorelli said it sounds like a very bad idea.

Chairman Miller said would anyone be up for just striking the words "or vinyl" from this text?

Mr. Signorelli said yes, I would be in favor of that.

Mr. Hoffman said so this would be in areas that are not visible if I read that correctly, right? So it would be like a rear elevation or somewhere that they would be permitted, vinyl windows and so on?

Mrs. Morgan said yes.

Mr. Signorelli said it is just that I'm not comfortable saying something is okay that is a product that really isn't going to work that well and we're saying well this okay for you to use. It doesn't sound that this necessarily is a good product to use. I would be in favor of striking it.

Chairman Miller said the way we've applied this Seth is the gutters may be visible. They are not a striking architectural feature of the house. So like a front gable house, you don't notice the gutters that much. My house is a Four Square with a hipped roof and a half hipped front porch, so you look at my house and you see my half round gutters all around my house, so they probably are an architectural feature.

Mr. Hoffman said, at least around here, there are two profiles, there is a regular K style, Ogee and then a thin sort of thin U shaped. It is not a half round. It is a segmented...

Mr. Munoz said is that a half a moon?

Mr. Hoffman said yes, only it's got straight, it's got angled sides. I think the appeal for like do it yourselfers is it snaps together. You don't have to do quite as much fabrication as you do with aluminum. I don't have a strong opinion on prohibiting them. People can choose poor quality paint

all they want and that's something that we're not weighing in on.

Mrs. Morgan said it is not necessarily hurting the look or character of the house. I guess it could lead to water damage if they fell and they are not replaced.

Mr. Hoffman said I think the worst that happens is they'll remove themselves from the house and take care of itself.

Chairman Miller said they self-uninstall.

Mr. Hoffman said I believe they make vinyl mounting brackets for them too.

Chairman Miller said to me this sounds like a bad idea. We do essentially regulate product quality in other ways. I think with our allowing the concrete siding we specify the percentage of concrete in the siding just to get the higher end product, or a more durable product, and head off maybe a manufacturer making a "concrete siding" that is composed mostly of sawdust and chicken feathers. So that's what I suggested. What does everyone think about striking vinyl from the description of gutters?

Mr. Signorelli said I would be for it.

Chairman Miller said Simon, what's your opinion?

Mr. Munoz said I would say strike it too.

Chairman Miller said Mike, what would you think of that?

Mr. Walker said it sounds fine. It seems like the sort of thing where if later someone gives us a good reason why maybe we should reconsider, we could change it again.

Chairman Miller said it isn't explicitly prohibiting vinyl, it's just not explicitly writing it in the guidelines that you can use it.

Mr. Hoffman said that's a fair point. I was looking at the angle what the guidelines allow or prohibit, but if we are just removing the suggestion of it, but not trying to codify a prohibition on it, I'm on board with that.

Chairman Miller said Amber, what would your opinion be on striking vinyl?

Mrs. Foster said I would be okay with it. It's something that I think that as long as they can come back and discuss, it would be fine.

Chairman Miller said Kristin, do you have an opinion on striking vinyl?

Mrs. Ludwig said I think whatever the group consensus is on that. I don't really feel like for that I have a strong opinion. I tend toward leaning towards striking it if it is a material that we wouldn't want to recommend in the first place, but whatever the group consensus is I'm okay with that.

Chairman Miller said and Justyn, what is your opinion?

Mr. Arnold said I agree. It wouldn't be something that we would want to encourage at all. I'd say leave it off there. It is not going to stand up to ice. I don't know why they even made it honestly. I've seen it because I thought about putting it on my rental house out in Big Rock, but there's no way. It is a quick fix, but the amount of ice buildup, like right now, they wouldn't hold. I looked at how they were constructed and how they hold up there. I think it would protect the homeowners just not to ever even think of it.

Chairman Miller said that's what I was thinking too. I prefer to not suggest it or have it in the

guidelines where we are bound to allow it because it is written there. That was my only suggestion. Jill, I'm sorry that I didn't present that to you earlier. I should have.

Mrs. Morgan said that's fine. I can make that change. It is pretty easy.

Chairman Miller said where I'm at is I would be perfectly comfortable to recommend approving all these changes that are outlined here. In addition, under Section B.2.7 under point C and the sentence "if the gutters are not readily visible, Ogee gutters of aluminum are acceptable", and strike the words "or vinyl". If someone comes in with a vinyl product that looks like it can hold up, we could do that. Do we have a motion of approval on all these changes to the guidelines and with the additional edit of removing the words "or vinyl" as mentioned under Section B.2.7 Gutters and Downspouts?

MOTION OF APPROVAL WAS MADE BY: Al Signorelli

MOTION SECONED BY: Simon Munoz

AYES: Justyn Arnold, Jen Del Debbio, Amber Foster, Seth Hoffman, Kristin Ludwig, Dan Miller, Simon Munoz, Al Signorelli, Mike Walker.

NAYS: None

Aye: 9 Member Del Debbio, Member Hoffman, Member Arnold, Member Munoz, Member Foster, Member Ludwig, Member Signorelli, Member Miller and Member Walker
