

Good evening, my name is Erin O'Rourke-Meadors and I live at 5261 Coventry Court, in Lake Oswego. As a concerned community member, and as a local historian, one who over the past several months has dedicated significant archival and field study to architect, Richard Wilhelm Sundeleaf, and his body of work here in our community, I come forth to oppose the current proposal.

Rather than being simply "one of the many" Sundeleaf designed homes in Lake Oswego, this property is both rare and unique; primarily so, as the Dr. Walter Black House is the only Sundeleaf-designed property in Lake Oswego which has merited placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

The historic Black House was designed more than eighty years ago-originally designed for a doctor, his wife, and their family. And, for almost eighty years, this property has accommodated the needs of the numerous owners who have chosen to make it their home-until now. Today, its historic use as a single family dwelling continues; yet, the current property owners seek to significantly alter, through a questionable addition, this landmark property.

Mr. Olson appears to be a fine architect. And, it appears he has created for his clients a plan which fulfills all the desires one might have for a contemporary dream home. However, review of this Application indicates repeated failure to meet the standards of Code Section 58 as it applies to alterations of historic properties.

I will share in my testimony some examples....*Please refer to: Lake Oswego Code 58 Attachment, 5 pages.*

For you to approve this Application, you must find the proposed alterations will not diminish the historical or architectural significance of the landmark. My review of the proposed plan found that the current proposal is not reasonable, that it does not meet our Code requirements; and, at minimum, needs to be modified through a revised plan which seeks to accommodate perceived needs-as well as perhaps, some desires-while retaining the architectural integrity of this historic property.

And, as you render your decision, please be mindful that there is a mere handful-yes, only five-Sundeleaf-designed houses-which are afforded any form of protection... *Only five homes for which your judgment, your decision, will impact for better or for worse, their historic architectural significance and integrity.*

In conclusion, I urge your decision to be one which either denies this Application or appropriately modifies this proposal to ensure the architectural integrity and significance of the historic home is not diminished.

EXHIBIT G-204
LU 12-0005

Lake Oswego Code 58.02.135(3)

In order to approve a major alteration of a landmark, the Development Review Commission, for a major development...shall find that:

- a. The proposed alteration will not diminish the historical or architectural significance of the landmark.

Response: The proposed alteration and addition will diminish the architectural significance of this locally designated landmark and National Historic Register of Historic Places house.

Although, it has been asserted by the Applicant that the existence of later plans for an addition provide justification for the approval of the proposed plan before you; and, that such plans are a reflection of Sundeleaf's view regarding his intentions for the use and expected evolution of this historic property, such assertions are questionable.

As found in the Richard W. Sundeleaf Archives, housed in the Special Collections Library, at the University of Oregon, it was in 1984, in Sundeleaf's 84th year-at a time when the property had yet to receive either Local Landmark status or placement on the National Register of Historic Places-when a job was undertaken for then owners, Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth Rhodes, to develop a plan for possible expansion.

And, in regard to Sundeleaf's view of his role, I share the following...

From The National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, this statement, found in Section 8, page 5:

“Throughout his career he held the populist belief that architecture is a service profession and should coordinate as much as possible with the client's wishes. (Bosker 1985:1963-1965)

And, two verbatim quotes from a 1982 Oregonian article/interview with Sundeleaf, two years before he accepted this assignment:

“People call me up, and if they can pronounce ‘architect’, I won't say no. I've never turned down a job.”

“I always gave my clients exactly the kind of house they wanted.”

Further, one finds among the proposed plans for alteration/addition, the following which diminish the architectural significance of this historic house:

The proposed addition “mimics”, rather than simply being complementary to, the original house, failing to adequately differentiate the new from the old; thereby diminishing its architectural integrity.

The proposed addition impacts and alters three elevations- including, its street-facing front elevation and its conspicuous lake-facing elevation; thereby diminishing its architectural integrity.

The proposed addition, as reflected in Exhibit E-5, adversely impacts the “asymmetrical” design of the dwelling, destroying the original distinguishing qualities of a “steeply pitched intersecting gabled roofs in wood shingles, small gabled dormers piercing the roof”; thereby, diminishing its architectural integrity.

The proposed addition, as reflected in Exhibit E-5, adversely impacts the original distinguishing qualities of fenestration consisting “primarily of small, multi-light casement windows arranged in groups of twos and threes”; thereby, diminishing its architectural integrity.

The proposed addition appears to destroy a brick terrace with half-brick wall noted , in the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, as a feature of the property’s integrity of design, “a smaller brick deck is located off the kitchen on the east side of the house”; thereby diminishing its architectural integrity.

The proposed addition, as reflected in Exhibit E-8, while providing for two walk-in closets, of approximately 160 square feet, and a mudroom of 108 square feet, rather than stepping back, protrudes beyond the existing, front wall elevation; thereby, diminishing its architectural integrity.

Therefore, the current proposed alteration of this landmark fails to meet the standards of LOC 58.02.135(c)

LOC 58.025(5) (a)

The following considerations are to be used as a guide in the granting authority's deliberations.

- a. The use of the resource, the reasonableness of the proposed alteration, and the relationship of these factors to the public interest in the preservation of the resource;
Response: The use of the resource continues, as it has since 1933, as a single family dwelling. The Black House was designed more than eighty years ago; and, for almost eighty years, it has accommodated the needs of the numerous owners who have chosen to make it their home-until now.

Response: The reasonableness of this Application is questionable.

Currently, as reflected in Exhibits 8-10, there appears 3485 square feet of usable space on the home's three levels. On the main and upper levels, 2494 square feet. Existing rooms include, on the Lower Level, a: Den, Hobby Room, Bathroom, and Furnace Room. On the Main Level a: Living Room, Dining Room, Foyer, Half Bath, Kitchen and Nook. And, on the Upper Level, Master Bedroom, Bedroom 2, Bedroom 3, and a Bathroom.

Proposed is an addition of 1356 square feet-and increase of 54%-to the main and upper levels. These increases include, as part of the Master Suite, a Master Bath of approximately 200 square feet, and two Walk-in Closets of approximately 160 square feet. And, as part of the Main Floor addition, a Mud Room of approximately 108 square feet, and a covered Terrace of 270 square feet.

Especially as this is a National Register of Historic Places property, it seems appropriate to reflect on the Secretary of the Interior's document "New Additions to Historic Buildings" for guidance in determining reasonableness. The Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation assume "that at least some repair or alteration of the historic building will be needed in order to provide for an efficient contemporary use." Though, it's worthy to note their primary recommended guideline, "Placing functions and services required for new use in non-character defining interior spaces rather than constructing a new addition."

Although, the use remains unchanged, there are new functions and services desired by the Applicant's client. Some may conclude what is reasonable is the re-purposing, within the existing 3485 square feet, to better accommodate their needs. Others may conclude some addition of square footage is reasonable. *However*, what appears unreasonable is the contemporary dream home proposal.

Therefore, the current proposed alteration of this landmark property fails to meet the standards of LOC 58.02.135 (a).

LOC 58.025(5) (b-c)

- b. The significance of the resource and the community benefit to preserving it;

Response: The significance of this resource, the historic, and architecturally significant, Dr. Walter Black House, is initially demonstrated by its inclusion on our Local Landmark Designation List. It is one of only five Sundeleaf-designed homes on our List; two other properties-the Harris House and the Mulder House- have since been found to be the work of other architects.

And, rather than being simply “one of many” Sundeleaf-designed homes in Lake Oswego, as stated in the Applicants narrative, this property is both rare and unique. It is the only Sundeleaf –designed property in our community which has received placement on the National Register of Historic Places; recognition given more than twenty years ago.

The community benefits of preserving this property are, as noted in the purpose of Chapter 58, multi-fold and include educational, cultural, economic and general welfare elements, as well as fostering community and neighborhood pride, and a sense of identity.

Therefore, the significance of the resource-its rarity and designations- and the multi-fold community benefit to preserving it are demonstrated.

- c. The physical condition of the resource.

Response: It appears this historic home is in very good condition.

d. The effect of requested changes related to the original exterior design, arrangement, proportion, scale, texture, and/or materials, including the following:

(1) Retention of Original Construction:

Distinguishing original qualities defining a structure's character shall not be destroyed. Removal or alteration of historic materials or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.

Response: Rather than retaining the original construction, the Applicant proposes, as reflected in Exhibit E-5, to remove historic materials and destroy distinctive architectural.

Therefore, the proposed alteration of this landmark property fails to meet the standards of LOC 58.02.135(d)(1)

(2) Time Period Consistency: Structures shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis or which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be avoided.

Response: The proposed addition appears to "mimic" the design of the existing landmark, thereby clouding its distinctiveness as a product of its own time.

Therefore, the proposed alteration of this landmark property fails to meet the standards of LOC 58.02.135(d)(2)