

**CITY OF YPSILANTI**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2018**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Anne Stevenson                      Chair    7:01 PM

Meeting Location:                      City Hall, Council Chambers, 1 S Huron St, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Commissioners Present:                      Anne Stevenson, Mike Davis, Jr., Alex Pettit, Ron Rupert, Jane Schmiedeke

Commissioners Absent:                      Erika Lindsay, Hank Prebys

Staff Present:                              Cynthia Kochanek, Preservation Planner  
   Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Secretary

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Kochanek: Removed 301 W Michigan as the application was withdrawn.

Motion:                      Schmiedeke (second: Davis) moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Approval:                      Unanimous. Motion carries.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none**

**PUBLIC HEARING—none**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**113 Buffalo**

*\*Application is for side and rear porch installation*

Applicant:                      Stewart Beal, owner –Present

Discussion:                      Beal: Stated that changes that were made on the rear and side porch were that the spindles were removed from the top, the gable over the back was removed and the profile of the spindles and the railing were changed.

Davis: Asked if any reinforcing or extra structure is necessary with the hot tub being on there.

Beal: Stated that there may be something underneath the porch but nothing that would be visible.

Davis: Stated that the revisions seem to reflect what was previously discussed and looks more appropriate.

Schmiedeke: Agreed.

Motion: Davis (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the application for work on 113 Buffalo St to include the installation of a wood side and rear wraparound porch as depicted in the architect plans and renderings dated June 21, 2018. Work to include the installation of fir porch decking, a beadboard porch ceiling, and concrete footings with Tamko 3-tab shingles on the roof to match the main house. The porch is to be painted in the existing color scheme of the house: the main color is Valspar Sequoia Glade, the accent color is La Fonda Mirage and the second trim color is to be Cincinnati Hotel Nichols Taupe. K- Style gutters will be installed and painted to match the color scheme. A hot tub will be recessed into the ground at the southeast corner of the rear portion of the porch.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

# 3 - Do not imitate earlier styles.

# 9 - Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

#10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Rupert: Asked if the fir porch decking mentioned by applicant is tongue and groove.

Beal: Confirmed.

## **6 S Washington**

*\*Application is for amendment to the previous application for work on the storefront*

Applicant: Marcela Rubio, owner–Present

Discussion: Stevenson: Stated that, from her review, this is an amendment to the previous application regarding the awning and the non-replacement of the 8-inch canopy, as well as the signboard area in general, in terms of its compatibility with existing colors and scale with the rest of the building.

Davis: Agreed.

Stevenson: Stated that commissioners were to review previous materials and continue an in-depth discussion today. Stated that in 2012, Ms. Rubio

came in as a study item and was going to purchase the property at that time.

Rubio: Confirmed.

Stevenson: Stated that, at that time, a study item type of conversation was had about requirements, the things the applicant was interested in changing or not changing and wanting to get a feel from the Commission what would be allowable. Stated that discussion items were the porcelain tile in the lower façade, the entry door, the metal overhang and that those things needed to be retained. Stated that in 2015, there was an approval for the removal of the awning with the condition that the trim be reused in the replacement. The awning removal was partially because of the lack of stability and the danger to people walking on the sidewalk; that former Commissioner Condon stated at the time that the exterior metal enamel on the outside of the awning was salvageable and that the Commission would like to see it reused. Stated that part of former Commissioner Condon's motion was that the awning could be removed with the provision that the exterior trim be reused in the replacement awning. Stated that in 2016, there was approval for the work on the north storefront which included the metal trim with the 8-inch projection; that that was the compromise with the property owner, Mr. Epstein, and that the architect being used had agreed that that would be acceptable. Stated that the current issues are still regarding the 8-inch awning replacement – that the material was not salvageable, as it had been removed from the awning. Stated that the Commission has to decide whether that is a defining feature of the property which needs to be there and decide about the cohesion on the bottom half of the rest of the building with regards to the sign and the signboard.

Davis: Agreed.

Stevenson: Asked if the applicant had anything to add to the Commission's information.

Rubio: Stated that when the removal and the replacement was being done, it turned out that it was not a salvageable frame, having rusted out. Stated that a decision was made at that moment, because the workers were there, to put up something that was similar to what other buildings in the area have.

Rupert: Stated that he looked at the project from day 1, met with Mr. Epstein several different times and realized that the wood structure that was supporting the metal was not durable enough and needed to be replaced but that the aluminum metal would not corrode or rust and that it was salvageable. Stated that at the point applicant realized there was a possible issue, that Commission staff should have been contacted.

Pettit: Stated that both Mr. Epstein and the Commission had agreed and then the agreement changed.

Rupert: Stated that the Commission was left out of the loop.

Rubio: Stated that she understands the Commission's concerns but that when you are in the process of doing the build-out, you sometimes cannot wait two weeks to try to get on the (HDC) schedule and then another two weeks to get on to see the Commission. Stated that she was not aware that there was a phone number that you could call to address these issues.

Rupert: Stated that staff is available for any type of discussion.

Rubio: Stated that she was not made aware of that. Asked to move forward and find a solution.

Stevenson: Stated that the awning and the line that that gives with the metal trim is a character-defining feature of the property and needs to be replicated.

Pettit: Stated that they briefly discussed at the last meeting was that the agreement about the 8-inch canopy - that there would be some of the original material brought into it. Asked if, with the original material not being available, if it is still possible to build the structure per the agreement.

Davis: Asked staff to locate the photo of the September rendering in order to view what the owners and architect had worked up. Stated that it shows an 8-inch projection with a metal cap on the end and space above for signage. Stated that that had previously been discussed in 2015 where a sign might be placed above the cornice. Stated that in looking at a motion that former Commissioner Condon had on October 27, 2015, a time before the Commission realized that the whole awning had to come down, that that was the only time that signage had been discussed; that it was agreed that there would be an installation of a cornice above the signboard with some LED gooseneck light fixtures coming down from the top and lighting as shown in some of the drawings.

Rubio: Stated that she does not recall and would like to see it.

Davis: [*referencing the overhead*] Stated that that was what the Commission agreed to in 2015.

Rubio: Asked if this one [*referencing the overhead*] is with the original awning.

Davis: Confirmed.

Rubio: Stated that this was the application for the storefront and that the signage was not addressed.

Davis: Agreed. Stated that signage was not discussed at all.

Rubio: Stated that applicants have not done anything with signage.

Davis: Stated that what has happened with the building is that a flat signboard was installed as is seen on some other buildings in the District.

Rubio: Stated that the reason a flat signboard was installed is because it is seen on many other buildings in the District.

Davis: Stated that this building is unique and is not like other buildings. Stated that corrections that are needed are, at minimum, an 8-inch awning projection extending out from the building, that some sort of metal needs to be discussed and a new more appropriate signboard needs to be installed; that the current signboard is not appropriate for the building.

Rubio: Asked to know more as to what makes it inappropriate.

Davis: Stated that the framing is inappropriate – that the gray portion is just a flat wood on the entire length and that it does not respect any of the other parts of the building. Stated that there is symmetry in the square tiles, the square glass block, the square Xs and that the signboard takes away the symmetry and cuts the building apart. Stated that what would have been appropriate is a sign located on the top of the 8-inch awning, which could have been affixed to the building, as shown in the previous rendering, with lettering that could have been flush. Stated that it should be in that space [*referencing overhead*] and the signboard behind it should look more like this [*overhead*] than this [*current*], which is what you have right here and which is what you have right now.

Rubio: Asked if it needs to look like it has tiles.

Rupert/Davis: Confirmed.

Davis: Stated that it is just a suggestion as to what would be more appropriate as related to applicant's request for information to move forward.

Pettit: Stated that there was no signboard on the building and one has been added; that a suggestion would be to remove the signboard.

Rubio: Stated that there is nothing behind the signboard.

Pettit: Stated that in the prior iteration of the building, what was there was that enameled metal panel which looked like that one section that is still

there, that remains right at the windows, that beige color [*referencing overhead*]. Stated that it could be something along the lines of like that with that cornice there and then the sign above it. Stated that what is currently there is a signboard that looks like the signboard on the new piece next to it, which is not what was discussed.

Davis: Stated that it is not appropriate.

Pettit: Stated that there was discussion and agreement that this direction was appropriate and that what is currently there went in a different direction.

Schmiedeke/Rupert: Agreed.

Pettit: Stated that the Commission is here to guide the process, not here to design the building that fits the guidelines. Stated that there was something on the table which was pretty close that the architect designed.

Rupert: Agreed.

Pettit: Stated that it would help to try to get something closer to that (previous design); to, perhaps, as an example, have the architect, given what is there now, design something more like what was already envisioned.

Rupert: Stated, with the colors, to duplicate the lower section of the porcelain enameled panels, the red and the sand; to keep gray out of it.

Motion: Davis (second: Rupert) moved to deny the work already completed at 6 S Washington on the top portion of the northern storefront with the finding that this work is inappropriate and incompatible with the existing lower half of the storefront and this work does not preserve significant changes that were acquired over time.

This work does not meet the following Secretary of the Interior Standards:

- #5 - Preserve distinctive features.
- #6 - Repair, don't replace. Replacements shall match original.
- #9 - Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.
- #10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Davis: Asked staff to give some advisement to applicant on what the next steps would be.

Kochanek: Stated that applicant will receive a letter that will have all the information on the appeal process if there is interest in pursuing that; that applicant would need to pull an application for any corrections to be made.

If correction does not happen, the Commission has a right to pursue enforcement action after the 60 days for the appeal process has expired.

Davis: Stated that the way the application process works is if an application cannot be approved because of one portion, it has to be tabled and revisions done, which causes further delay. Stated that the applicant could come in as a study item and discuss any potential remedies before paying any more application fees. Stated that the Commission wants to work towards finding a solution that works for all concerned.

### **301 W Michigan**

*\*Application was removed from the agenda. Staff received a request for the application to be withdrawn.*

### **216 N Washington**

*\*Application was moved to the end of the agenda.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **304 N Hamilton**

*\*Application is for painting*

Applicant: Raymond Scherer, owner–Present

Discussion: Stevenson: Stated that the application is for painting -- a color change to blue for the main color on the body of the house and white trim.

Scherer: Stated that the house is currently platinum gray with white trim and that he would like to use a High Reflective White [*referencing paint sample*] on the trim, either Blue Chip or Dynamic Blue for the main body of the house and then either Jade Blue or Dignity Blue, which is a darker blue, for the two entry doors.

Schmiedeke: Asked if the house is currently painted.

Scherer: Stated that it was painted years ago.

Davis: Asked applicant about his thoughts on using the darker blue for the house, especially this color [*referencing paint sample*] and then the lighter blue for the doors.

Scherer: Stated that he was thinking the opposite.

Davis: Stated that the Dynamic Blue is very bold.

Scherer: Stated that he just used the Dynamic Blue on a customer's house and it was not that bad. Stated that he is looking to do the lighter blue for the body of the house and then the darker blue for the doors.

Rupert: Stated that these are too strong with that [*referencing paint sample*].

Scherer: Stated that he is leaning towards the Blue Chip and Jade Blue with the white.

Pettit: Stated that Jade Blue is one of the darker of the two.

Stevenson: Stated that as you are looking down the street, that the Dynamic Blue is going to be glaring; that there are much more muted colors on the houses on either side. Stated that *The National Trust for Historic Preservation* makes a whole palette full of colors that are more appropriate for historic homes.

Schmiedeke: Asked if applicant would like to bring in another color.

Scherer: Answered in the negative, stated that he is set on the blue color; that it will be a unique looking house and that it will look really nice.

Stevenson: Asked applicant to see if there is a blue that feels more appropriate for the District.

Scherer: Stated that Jade Blue is one of the historic colors (by the paint manufacturer).

Davis: Stated that Commissioner Pettit has picked out Jade Blue with the white.

Stevenson: Stated that those two would be okay but that the super bright colors are not appropriate for the house.

Scherer: Asked if the Commission is leaning towards the Dignity Blue, the Jade Blue and the High Reflective White combo.

Stevenson/Davis: Confirmed.

Scherer: Stated he is fine with that.

Rupert: Asked what the siding is on the house.

Scherer: Stated that it is asphalt siding.

Rupert: Asked if it is asbestos.

Scherer: Answered in the negative.

Motion: Davis (second: Pettit) moved to approve the work at 304 N Hamilton. Work to include the painting of the structure in the three paint combination palette; Sherwin Williams #6797-Jade Blue, #6804-Dignity Blue and for trim #7757-High Reflective White.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:  
#7 - Clean building gently—no sandblasting.  
#10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

**STUDY ITEM**  
**621 Norris**

Discussion: Stevenson: Stated that the Commission received a picture of the property and asked Mr. Fensch to discuss his thoughts.

Fensch: Stated that the picture is basically what it is and that the house is a mid-century brick ranch.

Fensch: Stated that the back windows are very small, like the one on the left [*referencing overhead*] and that those are all the way around the house; that all the windows through all the bedrooms and the bathroom are that size and that there is a front picture window. Stated that he would like to install Wallside vinyl windows.

Stevenson: Asked if the current windows are wood.

Fensch: Confirmed.

Stevenson: Asked the reason for wanting to replace the wood windows.

Fensch: Stated that the current windows are not energy efficient, that there are aluminum storms on the windows that do not look appealing, and that the windows are thin and not sound efficient. Stated that the Wallside vinyl windows are more energy efficient and more secure than the current windows.

Stevenson: Stated that Standard #6 of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Structures* requires that materials be replaced with like materials. Stated that vinyl windows are not permitted in the District and that the Commission would expect that the replacement of a wood window would be with a wood window if repair is not possible.

Fensch: Stated that there is not really anything to repair because they are single pane windows.

Stevenson: Stated that there are opportunities for possibly better storms or repair. Advised Mr. Fensch to bring photos of the windows which show their condition when he returns with the actual application. Reiterated that vinyl windows are not permitted in the District. Stated that applicant might possibly look into wood storms, which might be better than the aluminum storms and that repairing the wood window may also be an option. Stated that with the size of the window, the energy efficiency (of the whole house) is probably only affected very little; that an idea might be to look at the attic and around the base of the basement which is where a lot of the energy is lost.

Fensch: Stated that the attic has been redone with all new insulation and that the basement is insulated and that his typical energy bill for gas and electric is currently about \$50.

Rupert: Stated that Wallside should have told applicant that they are not permitted to install vinyl windows in the District.

Kochanek: Stated that that is the reason Mr. Fensch made the call to staff.

Fensch: Confirmed that Wallside told him he had to talk to the Commission and first get approval (for them to come out).

Rupert: Stated that Mr. Fensch may want to look at the windows that maybe some of them need reglazing and then put a heavier storm on it, perhaps a wood instead of the aluminum storm. Stated that a properly installed storm and glazed windows will reduce outside sound.

Fensch: Asked if he has to go through an application process if he decides to install wood windows.

Stevenson: Confirmed. Stated that the Commission would still want to see the type of wood windows that would be installed.

Fensch: Asked what type of wood windows are allowed.

Stevenson: Stated that what the Commission primarily looks at is that there is no glass reduction and the size; that aluminum clad windows are allowed, not vinyl clad. Stated that the Commission would want to see a spec sheet of what kind of windows would be installed.

Davis: Stated that there are all sorts of brands for the wood windows.

Rupert: Stated not to buy the Fiberglas ones.

Pettit: Stated that as long as the criteria is met -- the size of the glass is not changing and the windows are wood or aluminum clad, that there are a lot of options.

Fensch: Asked if he would just need to get a building permit to replace his cracked and broken concrete driveway using the same type of materials.

Davis: Advised not to allow the contractor to use a whitener, just the natural concrete.

Kochanek: Stated that it could be considered a repair.

Pettit: Advised that if Mr. Fensch is not changing the size or the color or the footprint of anything, that it could fall under repair in which case it would just be a building permit needed.

Kochanek: Confirmed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **216 N Washington**

*\*Application is for the installation of a concrete apron and gravel*

*\*\*Commissioner Rupert recused himself as a commissioner and moved from his position as a commissioner at the table to the applicant seat.*

Applicant: Ron Rupert, Home Services, LTD, contractor –Present

Discussion: Stevenson: Asked applicant to walk the Commission through his application.

Rupert: Stated that over on the tarp side [*referencing overhead*], is where the drain, pea gravel and sloping is going to go. Stated that if you go to your right, down at the bottom, right in there, there will be the aprons; that the approach is for the two doors. Stated that it is going to be tapered back six feet and then the drain is going to be out three feet.

Kochanek: Asked if, direction-wise, the pea gravel is on the north side and the aprons are on the west.

Rupert: Confirmed. Stated that no white curing compound would be used.

*\*\*Commissioner Rupert excused himself from the meeting and left the room for deliberation by the commission.*

Motion: Davis (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the work at 216 N Washington on the outbuilding to include the installation of two aprons and pea gravel as depicted in the submitted drawing with the condition that a bright white curing compound will not be used on the concrete.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9 - Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

### **216 N Hamilton**

*\*Application is for reroofing*

### **310 E Cross**

*\*Application is for fence installation*

### **405 Maple**

*\*Application is for painting*

Motion: Schmiedeke (second: Pettit) moved acceptance of the administrative approvals for 216 N Hamilton, 310 E Cross, and 405 Maple.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Administrative Approvals Discussion**

The Commission and staff discussed creating a list of allowable items for full-time staff to administratively approve applications and to create a second list in the event of an inexperienced intern of what can and cannot be approved. Any questionable issues regarding an application would be moved to the Commission for review and approval.

### **Demolition Process/application discussion**

Commissioner Lindsay was not present to report on this item.

### **Property Monitoring**

#### **305 Maple**

Kochanek: Stated [*referencing overhead*] that the installed fence has not been approved. A notice letter was mailed to owner that permits need to be pulled.

#### **15 W Michigan**

Kochanek: Stated that the door is different from what the Commission approved and no amended application was submitted.

Stevenson: Asked that a letter be sent to 15 W Michigan for owner to come in with an amended application.

#### **120 W Michigan**

Kochanek: Stated that 120 W Michigan has added lights without a permit, that staff has recently taken photos and that a letter will be sent.

**LED lighting strips resolution/policy**

Davis: Asked staff to look into the feasibility of light meters and how they might work.

**Paint Fact Sheet**

The Commission discussed creating an easily accessible paint fact sheet that would give guidance to property owners and allow a wide range of paint colors to choose from that would be appropriate for use in the Historic District.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –none**

**HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS**

**Approval of the minutes of June 12, 2018**

Motion: Pettit (second: Davis) moved to approve the minutes as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**New Materials**

Commissioner Rupert brought to the attention of the Commission a new composite type board material for the Commission to consider. A discussion was had regarding the material, with no decision made on its appropriateness.

**Chair Resignation**

Chairperson Stevenson announced that she would be stepping down as chair of the HDC but would still remain as a HDC member.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: Schmiedeke (second: Davis) moved to adjourn the meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

**MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:26 p.m.**