

**CITY OF YPSILANTI
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES of FEBRUARY 7, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Jane Schmiedeke Chair 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: City Hall Meeting Room

Commissioners Present: Jane Schmiedeke, Ron Rupert, Joe Schultz,
Christian Overland, Brenda Rigdon

Commissioners Absent: Hank Prebys, Ed Penet

Staff Present: Karen Wieber, Planner I
Jonathan Ringel, HDC/Planning Assistant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Overland) moved to approve the agenda as amended with the removal of 14 N. River, as requested by the applicant in a letter dated February 3, 2006, and the addition of 629 N. River as a Study Item.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None

PUBLIC HEARING - None

OLD BUSINESS

310 N. Park, Action Item

Applicant: Gary Turner, architect (not present)
Mike Marino, owner (not present)

Application: Home Remodel/Addition

Discussion: None

Motion: Overland (Second: Rigdon) moved to table the application for 310 Park pending receipt of further requested information.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

NEW BUSINESS

203 S. Huron, Action Item

Applicant: Robert King, Lindhout Associates (present)
Gilbert Residence, owners (not present)

Application: Fence Installation

Discussion: As part of an ongoing interior renovation project at the Gilbert Residence, the north wing is being converted into a dementia care unit. Therefore, a gated fence will be required before allowing residents access to the courtyard. The fence shall be pressure treated wood, board on board, will line up with the window heads, and be painted or opaque stained to match the existing trim color on the building.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Overland) moved to approve the application for 203 S. Huron to include the installation of a new section of fencing between two existing walls of the structure, thus enclosing a courtyard. The fence/gate will be treated board on board wood, painted or stained opaque. Drawings provided by Lindhout Associate Architects and dated January 5, 2006 are referenced.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

120 N. Adams, Action Item

Applicant: Michael Condon, Ypsilanti Restoration LLC. (present)

Application: Amendment to Previous Approval – Rear Window Configuration

Discussion: The property owner is requesting an amendment to the previous approval. The applicant is requesting one single larger storm window, one over one, instead of the previously approved two smaller storm windows, in an attempt to improve energy efficiency on the rear porch. This window would fill existing openings on both the south and east sides of the porch. The window on the east facade would be about 45" wide and double hung. The location for these windows is on a rear addition to the home that was once an open air porch. The Commission notes that these large storm windows would not be appropriate for the character and fenestration of the home. Precedent has been set to have such windows conform to the existing house. Commissioner Rigdon questions if it would be appropriate to have two wide windows versus having the previously approved four smaller windows.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Overland) move to deny the request for an amendment to the previous application for 120 N. Adams. The Commission finds the proposed storm windows not in keeping of the proportions

and style of the house. The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #5 Preserve distinctive features.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried

200-208 W. Michigan, Action Item

Applicant: David Curtis, (present)

Application: Amendment to Previous Approval -Color Scheme/Location for Sign

Discussion: The applicant proposes leaving the sign board, framework, cornice, and corbelling in their current maroon color. The frame of the sign panel will be painted a silver metallic. The background will be painted either a copper or rose copper. The letters, mounted on the signboard, will stand out from the building and will contain interior red neon lights. A white neon strip will be located behind the letters to backlight the letters and this will eliminate the need for goosenecks. The signage will be on both the south and east façade at the corner of W. Michigan and Washington. The window closest to the main entrance will contain the business name and address etched into the glass.

Motion: Overland (Second: Schultz) move to approve the application for 200-208 W. Michigan for the proposed paint scheme, lettering and lighting for the sign board. The sign will contain raised letters inset with red neon lighting and white neon lights for backlighting as displayed on drawing #2/7/06.

The colors are Ralph Lauren Clifdon Grey #RN08 for the frame and lettering. The background will be one of two proposed Earth Element colors by Lowe's; Rose of Copper #EE2035 or Oriental Silk #EE2098.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #9 Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material & #10 New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried. Commissioner Ron Rupert abstained.

STUDY ITEMS

105 W. Cross

Applicant: Larry Lake, owner (present)
Jack Howard, (present)

Application: Demolition of Existing House

Discussion: The property owners are concerned about the current state of the building and believe it to be a safety hazard. The building has been condemned by the City and the applicants feel its demolition would be an improvement to the city. Commissioner Schmiedeke notes that the Commission must know what will stand in the place of the structure proposed for demolition

before it can even consider such an option. Commissioner Overland states that the applicant will have to meet one of the four ordinance requirements to be considered for demolition, including; the resource is a hazard to public health and safety, the resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program, the retention of the resource would cause undue financial hardship, and the retention of the resource is not in the interest of the majority of the community. The Commission would prefer to see the structure moved, but Mr. Lake insists the building is in extremely poor shape and cannot be moved. Commission notes that if Mr. Lake is serious about having the structure demolished, he should include in his application a structural engineer's report, the letter of condemnation issued by the City of Ypsilanti, and the future use of the site. The applicants ask if additional parking would be an improvement for the site. Commissioner Schmiedeke states that parking would not likely be a reason for the Commission to approve demolition. The Commission strongly supports having the structure moved to a new lot rather than be demolished.

629 N. River

Applicant: Carl Babcock, CB Custom Homes, (present)
Juanita Solano, owner, (present)

Discussion: The rear porch plans were altered since the original approval and the applicant is seeking to have these changes approved. The rear porch constructed of 2x2 cedar spindles with a beveled cedar top rail and 2x4 cedar bottom rails with fir decking now has the steps coming off the side of the porch instead of the rear. The applicants would like to revise the front porch by removing the concrete blocks, adding square posts and a railing around the front porch in the same style as the rear porch. The Commission feels that a decorative railing would be out of proportion for this very small structure. The railing is unnecessary since the porch is a concrete slab elevated only a few inches above grade.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Rupert) moves to amend the previous approval for 629 N. River Street to include changes to the front and back porches. The back porch steps will no longer exit off the rear of the porch but will exit off the south due to the steep slope. The front porch has been modified from the originally approved concrete block screening to an open porch with square columns which contain detailed moldings at the crown and base. The porch is set on a new concrete slab. The motion references drawings/elevations dated 2/7/06 and presented by Kensington Design Group for the Solano Residence.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #5 Preserve distinctive features & #9 Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

720 Norris

Applicant: Matt and Renee Greff (not present)

Application: Demolition of Existing Chimney

Discussion: The contractor has suggested that the chimney be removed since it is no longer in operation. The chimney cannot serve as an interior decorative element since it will be located in the restaurant kitchen. The Commission states the chimney will have to remain since it is an important historic feature on the structure.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

None

OTHER BUSINESS

PROPERTY MONITORING

Depot – The Commission had requested that the City Attorney determine procedurally whether, in the case that demolition by neglect occurs on this property, if a receiver could be appointed to do the necessary repairs. Karl Barr concluded that a court could choose to appoint a receiver, thought that option is not explicitly stated in the ordinance. It would depend on the severity of the situation and the interpretation made by the judge.

1266 Huron River Drive – Staff has drafted a letter to inform Mr. Campbell of the importance of maintaining the corners in order to stabilize the building. Staff has communicated with Mr. Campbell's realtor, Ms. Yeh, regarding this information. She has unfortunately discontinued her contract with Mr. Campbell, but offered to speak to him further about the City's concerns.

107 E. Cross – An evidentiary hearing is scheduled for March 8th regarding this property. As this hearing, the City is required to provide evidence as to why the building should be demolished, and/or under what conditions the City would agree with repair of the structure. Mr. Kircher in turn will present his evidence to show under what conditions he believes repairs to the structure should be made. These partial conditions could involve various Building Code, HDC, and Zoning issues.

314 E. Forest – Reconstruction of the garage is continuing; Staff has taken some recent photos and will continue to monitor.

417 N. Adams – The work to stabilize the garage has been completed to both the satisfaction of the HDC and the Building Department. Staff expects that the property owner will be required to pay the \$50 ticket at the February 7th hearing, and the matter will be closed.

402 S. Huron – Karl Barr, Charles Boulard, and HDC staff continue to monitor the situation at this property. The mortgage company in possession of the home recently inquired as to what repairs were necessary to remove the property from the Vacant and Dangerous Buildings list, and the information was provided to them.

108 S. Huron – Karl Barr requested that staff provide him a timeline of events on the property which has already been completed. If Mr. Barr concurs with the staff recommendation, a ticket will be issued.

416 N. Huron – The mayor has scheduled a meeting with City staff, Mr. Wild, and Jane Schmiedeke on February 16th regarding the reconstruction of the garage. Staff is hoping to obtain a commitment from Mr. Wild to pursue reconstruction, and a plan from the City's perspective if Mr. Wild does not follow through.

400 N. River – The hearing for Mr. Beal's request for approximately \$600,000 worth of work on the Thompson continued January 26th, with closing arguments concluding on February 1st. The hearing was to conclude opportunities for requests. The judge is now deliberating and will make a decision within the next 7 days as to whether Mr. Beal's request can go forward. In the meantime, Mr. Beal has filed two requests; one to increase the lien on the property due to increased costs, and a second to begin the foreclosure process.

309 Maple – The residents of this address completed work to the soffits and fascia without a permit. They applied for and obtained a permit to correct their previous taken actions but did not complete all of the work. Staff will continue to monitor.

218 Ferris – The property owners have responded to the recently sent letter requesting an application for approval of their illegally constructed steps. The owner stated that the steps are temporary in nature and a contractor will soon be hired to reconstruct the steps in compliance with the HDC Porch fact sheet.

304 E. Forest – Staff will look into issuing a ticket for this property.

302 N. Hamilton – Ron Rupert will inspect the site for the Commission and bring back a report.

305 S. Huron – The skirting for the porch has been installed and framed. The property owner is now waiting for warmer weather to paint the wood.

301 N. Huron - Commissioner Schmiedeke requests that staff monitor and follow up on temporary sign which has been nailed to the Towner House.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - None

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes from the January 17, 2006 meeting.

Motion: Overland (Second: Rupert) moved to approve the minutes for the January 17, 2006 meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Overland) moved to adjourn the meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15 PM

Signature _____ Date