

CITY OF YPSILANTI
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES of JUNE 19, 2007

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Jane Schmiedeke Chair 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: City Hall Meeting Room

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

Commissioners Absent: Ed Penet

Staff Present: Richard Murphy, Planner I

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves to approve the agenda as amended with 322 E. Forest added as an action item and 130 N. Huron and 208 Olive added as study items.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None

PUBLIC HEARING - None

OLD BUSINESS

16 N. Washington, Action Item

Applicant: Victor Swanson, Biggie's Fine Foods (Not Present)

Discussion: The application is for installation of an existing awning and sign on the building.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Schultz) moves to deny the application for 16 N. Washington due to the proposed awning being inappropriate for the historic district.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

310 S. Washington, Action Item

Applicant: William Taylor, owner (Present)

Discussion: Application is for six first story replacement windows. Staff provides background information. Previous application was approved for this property to replace four second story windows. It was discovered that four first story

windows were installed instead, and six additional first story windows, which are included in the current application, have already been installed without permits. Nine of these ten new windows are inserts instead of full replacement windows installed in the rough openings as proposed and approved in the first application. Additionally, the inserts are not wide enough to fill the openings in which they were installed and have additional trim covering gaps. Applicant still plans to have the four second story windows replaced when the materials are delivered.

Motion: Overland (Second: Prebys) moves to deny the application for 310 S. Washington because the windows already installed are not approvable because they are neither inserts or full replacements installed in the rough openings. Specifically, at least nine of the windows in question are full replacement windows installed in the existing window frames, not in rough openings as specified in the HDC Window Fact Sheet.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #5 – Preserve distinctive features and #6 – Repair, don't replace. Replacements should match original.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

NEW BUSINESS

32 E. Cross, Action Item

Applicant: Jill Weber, Citizen's Bank (Present)

Discussion: Application is for two ATM signs that have already been installed and have been in place for approximately one year. Commissioners express concern that these signs are quite a bit larger than the previous signs that were in this location and ask staff if the signs comply with zoning requirements. Staff states that the signs appear to be in compliance.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rupert) moves to approve the sign application for 32 E. Cross as submitted.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

200 W. Michigan, Action Item

Applicant: David Curtis, owner (Present)

Discussion: Applicant previously received approval for signs on the building in 2006 but the approval has expired. Applicant would like to renew approval for the same sign installation.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves to re-approve sign application for 200 W. Michigan previously approved Feb. 7, 2006. Signs shall be in the sign board areas of the building; paint scheme and lettering shall be as stated on letter dated Feb. 9, 2006, and as shown on drawing dated Feb. 7, 2006: 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:
#10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

322 E. Forest, Action Item

Applicant: Ann Rentfrow and Naomi Rentfrow, owners (Present)
Craig Shankwiler, contractor (Present)

Discussion: Applicants had previously sought approval for window replacement. At that time, the Commission had suggested applicants look into window repair instead of replacement because the existing windows are original to the house and in some cases repair can be less costly than replacement. Applicant has since found significant rot in the window systems and would like to replace them, but was under the impression that replacement windows would not be allowed. Commissioners state that new windows are acceptable if they are wood. They may be aluminum or vinyl clad on the exterior if desired, but may not be solid vinyl. Commissioner Overland explains that sash kits or full window replacements can be approved. Commissioner Schultz adds that the replacements must match the originals in size and configuration.

Applicants discuss some possible work they are considering for the porch, which may include adding spindlework across the top to match existing spindlework. The porch was added and has been altered in later periods, so there is no clear course for restoration. Commissioners suggest checking the Ypsilanti Museum Archives to see if a historic photo is on file showing how the porch looked originally. Commissioners request specific detailed information on the porch work before it is undertaken. Regarding windows, Commissioners ask if the replacements would be sash packs or full replacements. Contractor indicates that he will replace the entire window since there is significant rot in the existing frames. He will replace the trim with cedar routed to match the existing profile.

Applicant submits paint color options. Commissioners discuss color options.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Rupert) moves to amend the previous approval from October 17, 2006 for work at 322 E. Forest to include window replacement. The new windows shall be from Jeldwen Windows and Doors and shall be wood interior and exterior. Commission allows the option, for maintenance reasons, of having a vinyl or aluminum clad exterior. These windows shall be custom sized to fit the original rough openings and shall not be smaller in size or in glass area than the existing windows. The muntin patterns of the replacement windows shall match existing. The exterior trim shall be replaced with five-quarter inch cedar, shall match the profile of the existing trim, and shall be painted to match the remaining trim. Any attached exterior muntins shall be permanently affixed. Interior muntins and spacer bars are optional. Paint colors for repainting the house shall be Behr Paint brand Soft Lace (WB 110) for the body, Ruby Ring (SG 150) for the trim, and accent colors may include Lovable (160D-5), Victorian Pearl (WB 120) or a brownish camel color. Satin finish is recommended for all paint.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #5 – Preserve distinctive features and #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

416 N. Huron, Action Item

Applicant: Steve Wild, owner (Present)

Discussion: Applicant reports that the previously approved carriage barn is currently being built, but he is unsure about a few details, specifically the door styles. The applicant explains that the garage door is to be installed behind a sliding door on a track and asks what type of door would be appropriate for the sliding door as well as the service door. Commissioners recommend doors constructed of either butt-to-butt or tongue-and-groove planking with a "Z" backing. The service door can also be of this design and have exposed barn door hinges. Applicant asks if skylights can be installed on the east side of the roof for lighting, since there are no other windows in the barn. Commissioners state that low profile skylights could be approved.

Motion: Rupert (Second: Rigdon) moves to amend the previous approval from August 15, 2006 for work at 416 N. Huron to include construction of a hayloft door and sliding door on the carriage barn of either tongue-and-groove or butt-to-butt planking with a "Z" backing and a service door that is butt-to-butt or tongue-and-groove planking with barn door hinges. Additionally, one or two low profile skylights may be installed on the east side of the roof.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #5 – Preserve distinctive features and #10 – New work shall be removable.

Motion: Unanimous. Action carried.

STUDY ITEMS

130 N. Huron, Study Item

Applicant: Mike Condon, contractor (Present)

Discussion: Applicant submits paint colors for consideration. Three different colors are proposed for the architectural features including the windows, shutters and cornice. Commissioners advise that it would be appropriate to use the window sash color on the sashes only. Contrasting colors can be used on the cornice and dentils. Applicant asks about window sash replacement and states that he is looking at replacing all of the non-original, rectangular sashes on the north, south and east elevations of this building. Commissioners indicate that sash replacements are approved as long as they are the same size and configuration as existing windows, including muntin patterns.

208 Olive, Study Item

Applicant: Mike Condon, contractor (Present)

Discussion: Owner would like to install three casement windows in the north gable. Currently, there is a small window in that location. Commissioner Ridgon points out that if the interior space is or will be a bedroom, there may be egress issues to consider. Applicant states that the owner wants more light on the interior and maximum air flow. Commissioners note that three windows as drawn on photograph are out of proportion and suggest two windows and a skylight.

OTHER BUSINESS

Administrative Approvals

- **211 E. Forest** Reroofing
- **623 N. River** Reroofing

Motion: Rupert (Second: Overland) moves to approve the administrative approvals.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

Property Monitoring

- **301 W. Cross** – Latest owners have installed new faces on pole sign without seeking HDC review. Planning staff reminded owner of HDC review requirement during site inspection.
- **314 Park** – Progress reported on interior work ordered by Building Department. Contractor has discussed exterior work needed with staff and expects to submit an application, but is awaiting payment from owner.
- **400 N. River** – State Tax Commission granted OPRA tax incentive application for proposed rehabilitation work. Owner reports progress in pre-leasing and hopes to meet financing targets soon.
- **220 N. Huron** – Commissioner Rupert had reported problems with basement entry addition as-built to staff. Staff reminded Commission that individual Commissioners should not conduct on-site inspections of work without having previously been tasked with property monitoring by the Commission. Issues noted include vinyl soffit and aluminum fascia; solid vinyl windows; and metal-clad door, rather than wood. Owners have agreed to replace soffit and fascia, but had asked Commission to consider that materials had not been specified in initial approval. Commissioner Rigdon notes that the brand of windows specified on the plans submitted and referenced in approval does not include a solid vinyl option. Wood was therefore thought to be specified in the approval of brand. Door had been specified as wood on City's copy of plans during the meeting. Staff asks Commission to take care in future such cases to state in motion all changes marked on plans, and to consider stating in motions key information even if included or assumed on the plans.
- **534 N. Huron** – Owner brought sample of proposed baffle to staff with apparent expectation that staff approval of previously denied application was possible. Owner was reminded of need to submit fresh application with appropriate work proposal, or else return property to former state. Commission Penet noted that the street lighting, of which owner had previously complained has been fixed.
- **1266 Huron River Drive** – Owner has offered to gift house to City, and offer is before Council tonight. Owner's offer includes request to demolish existing garage, believed constructed c. 1940, and retain rear portion of lot; the demolition of the garage and the splitting of the lot would have to be completed before transaction can take place. Owner is expected to submit application for demolition of garage to HDC at July 3 meeting.

Alternative Energy Fact Sheet

Discussion: Commissioners continue previous discussions of alternative energy installations and the proposed Alternate Energy Systems Fact Sheet. Commissioners further refine the goals and purpose of this particular policy. Commissioner Schultz discusses the idea that administrative decisions are not precedent setting, but that administrative bodies need to avoid making decisions arbitrarily. Commissioner Schmiedeke agrees that the Commission will not use one decision as a rule to follow in other cases. Commissioners agree on the importance of dealing with each application as an individual case and in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards. Commissioner Schmiedeke notes that the resources in the District are each unique and individual. Discussion turns to the idea of balancing historic preservation issues with alternative energy concerns. Commissioners indicate that their obligation is to focus on preserving buildings. Applicants should bear the burden of balancing and integrating solar panels with the restrictions necessary for preservation of architectural character and materials. Commissioner Overland comments that the proposed City Hall solar panel installation seems to be a one-sided demonstration project that only demonstrates solar panels, without regard to their context. Commissioners agree that it would be much better to demonstrate how solar panels can be integrated into the landscape in an appropriate way. This could move the idea forward in a constructive manner with an installation project that inspires people rather than demonstrate something for which they would likely never receive approval.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes from the June 5, 2007 meeting.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves to approve the minutes of June 5, 2007 as presented.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves to adjourn the meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:00 PM