

**CITY OF YPSILANTI**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF APRIL 22, 2008**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Jane Schmiedeke                      Chair    7:00 PM

Meeting Location:                      City Council Chambers

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

Commissioners Absent:                None

Staff Present:                            Richard Murphy, Planner II

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion:                      Prebys (Second: Penet) moves approval of the agenda as submitted.

Approval:                      Unanimous. Action carries.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS** - None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**OLD BUSINESS** - None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**103-107 Washtenaw, Action Item**

Applicant:                      Joe Baublis, Contractor (present)

Discussion:                      Work was needed to pass housing inspection and has already been  
done. Mr. Baublis provides the commission with before and after photos  
of the work that has been completed.

He states that the storm door on the east side of the house previously did not hang properly and that the extension jamb and casing on the door were a later addition. He predicts that at some point this will be removed, as it is not necessary for the proper functionality of the door. The original storm door has now been mounted to the jamb. Commissioner Rupert asks if the door opening was part of the original structure, as it is not located symmetrically on the house. Commissioner Prebys states that it is not likely that this was part of the original structure, and it was added when this building, which was originally a carriage barn, was repurposed as a residence. The door appears the same, except it is now recessed. An aluminum-framed, plexiglass storm window was mounted to the interior of the door, so the frames were not visible. The old screening and new aluminum was installed. Two screen doors on the front porch have been replaced. Mr. Baublis states that he was careful to reuse the old trim, so that there is no change in the color. The only thing that has changed is the newer aluminum.

Mr. Baublis states that he replaced a rotten piece of trim above the door, caulking, sealing, and priming a new piece of trim, and painting it white.

He also states that the housing inspector required that new screens be installed on the two-story porch at the rear of the house. Window screens were replaced in six locations with white aluminum-framed screen.

The concrete steps have been replaced with the same type of steps on the porch at the kitchen entry. Commission Overland states that there are open ends on the steps which need to be sealed or screened in accordance with the HDC Porch Fact Sheet. Mr. Baublis asks if he can leave the small space in between the two steps open, as it would be needed for water to run off of the steps. The commission agrees.

Mr. Baublis states that he also needs to put beaded caulk around the outside of the jamb to prevent water infiltration between the brick and the wood. He asks which type of caulk can be used for this. Commissioner Overland states that it must be a paintable acrylic latex caulk.

Motion: Overland (Second: Rupert) moves approval of work that is proposed at 103-107 Washtenaw Avenue. This includes the replacement of the north porch cast concrete steps where Fenton block shall be used to ensure that the endcaps are flush with the ends of the steps. For the purpose of filling in the sides of the steps, in accordance with the HDC Porch Fact Sheet, the Commission is recommending another block to be placed in the opening and mortared in on either side. Work also includes the replacement of the damaged screens on the doors, windows, and porch with new aluminum screens and doors. To ensure that the door can be mounted correctly, the jamb shall be repaired as necessary. The storm doors shall include clear plexiglass panes on the interior. During the east side porch storm door repair, the pre-existing aluminum storm door was recessed in order to mount the storm door on the jamb. The storm door serves as the only door, and the jamb will be repaired as appropriate. Caulk used must be paintable (acrylic latex). All woodwork must be primed and painted to match the existing color scheme.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited: #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

## **226 Pearl, Action Item**

Applicant: Jan Halberg, IT director, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (present)  
Terry Black, Facilities Director (not present)

Discussion: The installation of an antenna on the exterior of the cupola at the Ypsilanti Transit Center is proposed. The purpose is to improve the communication of busses when they reach low-lying areas of Ypsilanti. A repeater will be installed on the inside of the building and an antenna on the outside.

Motion: Overland (Second: Penet) moves to approve the application for 226 Pearl Street for the installation, as specified, of an antenna on the cupola of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority with specified materials as listed.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited: #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

## **212 E. Cross, Action Item**

Applicant: Tyrone Coleman, owner (present)

Discussion: Mr. Coleman states that he would like to install a fence because he lives on a corner and would like to be able keep his four children in the back yard safely away from traffic. Commissioner Prebys asks if the 6 foot proposed height is appropriate for the street side. Mr. Coleman states that he prefers the privacy offered by this height fence from vehicular traffic. Commissioner Rigdon asks about the zoning regulations for this type of fence on a corner lot. Staff states that fences in front yards are limited to a maximum height of 4' and opacity of 50%. On side or rear yards, a 6' fence is allowed, and can be completely opaque.

Commissioner Penet asks the height of the proposed concrete retaining wall. Mr. Coleman states that it will be 3 or 4 inches above grade and the top will be capped. The purpose of this is to maintain a level yard, and stop current erosion. Commissioner Rupert suggests that a natural stone be tipped into the slope, which would allow drainage through the wall. If concrete blocks were mortared together, the installation would require provision for drainage. Commissioner Rigdon states that the Commission recommends unilock blocks to generic concrete, as they have drainage ability.

Commissioner Prebys informs Mr. Coleman that paint or stain for the fence must be opaque. The commissioners suggest that light beige to match the trim on the house is an acceptable color.

Commissioner Rupert asks if Mr. Coleman has considered a shadow box fence design which would allow air to flow through the fence. The wind would be constantly working against a solid fence and eventually work the fence loose. Commissioner Schmiedeke states that the solid fence will block the breeze from the river and increase the temperature of the yard. Commissioner Schultz suggests that anything to break up the visual impact of the solid fence on the street side would be helpful (such as a shadow box design). Commissioner Rigdon suggests a 4' solid fence with 2' of lattice on top. Staff informs the applicant that zoning requires a corner triangle of the fence to provide visibility at the driveway measured at the intersection of the lot line and the driveway (10' along the lot line and 10' along the driveway). The fence would need to be angled or set back from the driveway for visibility.

Staff advises Mr. Coleman that he will need a building permit for the retaining wall as well as a fence permit.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves approval of the application for a fence at 212 E. Cross. The fence shall follow the outline of the boundary

information taken from the mortgage survey, file number 1030801, with the understanding that the fence along Park Street shall be a 4' solid fence with a 2' lattice top; the fence shall be made of wood; and the zoning requirement for a setback at the point where the fence meets the concrete driveway (which can be dealt with at an angle, or installing the fence at 10' from the concrete driveway shall be met. The fence shall be stained with an opaque stain, colored to match the body of the house. Also approved is the installation of a concrete block retaining wall on the northwest side of the property. The concrete blocks shall be similar to the unilock system, and the wall shall be of a height required to stop the continuing erosion on that bank.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited: #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

### **100 W. Michigan, Action Item**

Applicant: Hoanh Van Le, owner (not present)

Discussion: Commissioner Schultz explains the issue with the rear windows on the two adjacent buildings. At the western building of the two, one window was previously covered over, and a small opening was created for the insertion of a vinyl window. On the eastern building of the two, on the second floor, an aluminum-framed window has been installed which is improperly sized to replace the previous window, being too short and too wide for the original frame. Commissioner Rigdon suggests that the Building Department be contacted regarding this issue.

Motion: Overland (Second: Rupert) moves to table the application to allow time for further investigation with the Building Department.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited: #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

## **STUDY ITEMS**

### **47 N. Huron, Study Item**

Applicant: Mary Theifels, artist (present)  
Joan Chesler, Executive Director, Corner Health Center (present)

Discussion: The Corner Health Center will be contracting with Bill Kinley of Phoenix Construction to do the previously approved work on the exterior of the building. Mr. Kinley has stated that the bricks on the lower portion of the building at 57 N. Huron are plastered on, and are not real brick. Ms. Chesler asks that the Commissioners inspect the building and give suggestions on dealing with this brick. Ms. Chesler would like to paint the brick, if that is acceptable to the commission, the same mustard color as 47 N. Huron. Commissioners Rigdon and Rupert will examine it. Commissioner Prebys asks what should be done with the stone keystones, and is concerned that painting the brick will create some issues.

Ms. Theifels states that the proposed mural project is designed to involve Ypsilanti High School students. The teens pictured in the mural are those who will be painting it. The intent is also to increase the visibility of the Corner Health Center which will be tied directly into the theme of the design. Ms. Theifels feels that one of the benefits will be that the mural creates a new and inspiring piece of public art for the people of Ypsilanti. The concept design is 'empowering today's youth to become leaders of tomorrow'. Picture shows young adults holding puzzle pieces that will be fitted onto a globe. Colors are to be vibrant, expressive and fun. The mural will be 8' x 48' and will be installed directly below the windows on the south facade.

Commissioners approve of the proposed hanging system. The mural will be painted on a lightweight Diabond surface (aluminum composite with a Thermoplastic synthetic core) which will be attached to the building. It will be purchased in 4'x8' sheets. The panels will be mounted on J-frame brackets. There will be a total of 44 expansion bolts sunk into the mortar joints. Commissioner Schmiedeke asks what type of paint will be used. Ms. Theifels states that she will be using basic latex exterior paint with a DTM bond primer (non-toxic, low-VOC). The panels will be created indoors and then hung on the exterior of the building. The Riverside Arts Center is providing a workspace for this project in their loading dock.

Commissioner Overland asks about the review process beyond the concept. Commissioner Rigdon asks what types of permits would be required by the City. Staff states that this question was raised as part of a discussion on the graffiti issue and painting of the façade of Andrew's Bar and Grill. The City is currently working on a process for reviewing such work on public property, such as the fire department retaining wall.

Ms. Theifels states that she will provide a scale model of the mural before work begins on the actual mural. She would like to know tonight that she can order materials, and states that she would like to come to the next meeting with her model. An HDC work permit application would need to be submitted if the HDC is to take formal action, and Ms. Theifels is asked to attach to the application the information she provided to the commissioners this evening. Commissioner Schultz advises Ms. Theifels that although the HDC views the mural favorably, she should still inquire about any relevant City requirements. Staff should let Ms. Theifels know, in writing, whether any approvals are needed other than that of the HDC.

Commissioner Rigdon informs Ms. Theifels that the installation of the panels must not include drilling directly into the brick, but into mortar joints only. Commissioner Rupert states that the drilled holes should be filled with caulk to prevent water infiltration. There is to be a ¼ inch gap between the Diabond and the wall. Commissioner Rupert states that the top edge of the J-frame should be sealed to the wall with clear silicone to prevent water infiltration.

## **Frog Island Park Community Garden, Study Item**

Applicant: Richard Murphy, Representative from Riverside Neighborhood Association (present)

Discussion: Site plans were presented to the commission last year which included a shed with exterior surface to be determined. The structure of the shed is now complete, and a thousand gallon water tank is currently inside. Mr. Murphy is seeking advice as to an acceptable surface for the shed. One suggestion is to use overturned road signs, another is a lap siding using disassembled shipping palettes. Commissioner Rupert suggests making it "earthy" and installing scabs or sticks, stockade

fencing, or similar. The goal is to cover the plywood, and to avoid painting it. Mr. Murphy suggests painting murals on the four sides of the shed. Commissioner Rigdon suggests rusted corrugated metal. Commissioner Prebys states that he doesn't like the idea of faking siding out of natural materials. He prefers metal or trim and paint. Commissioner Rigdon suggests dyed MDO with sealed edges. Commissioner Schultz suggests that materials from real pole barns be used (recycled).

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Administrative Approvals – None**

### **Property Monitoring**

**6 S. Washington** – Work has been completed on the façade.

**306 Maple** – Second letter sent and received.

**133 W. Michigan** – No new information.

**309 Maple** - A large amount of the aluminum soffit and fascia has been removed and painting has begun. Will return to court in early June.

**631 N. River** – Jane Brown, applicant, has been out of the country and therefore has not submitted any further materials. Now that she has returned, she will begin working on the necessary materials for demolition application.

**310 S. Washington** – Staff was contacted by Home Depot last week. The contractor who performed the unsatisfactory work was let go, and the company is now seeking information from the minutes of the HDC meeting that the contractor attended to learn what transpired. Commissioner Overland suggests that a letter be written to Home Depot asking how they intend to correct this situation. Staff states that there is still some question as to whether or not the Home Depot installed all of the windows in question.

**324 Oak** – Final inspections were performed and approved April 10.

**1266 Huron River Drive** - The electric is connected. Replacement corner posts are being cut.

**Demolition Application Draft** – Commissioner Schmiedeke has been working with staff on this project. Her intent was to make the application as basic as possible, and to issue the entire set of demolition guidelines with the application.

Motion: Rupert (second: Overland) moves to adopt the newly developed demolition application with attached guidelines.

## **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None**

## **HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS**

1. The two meetings in May (13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>) will be held in the City Hall meeting room.
2. Nomination forms are handed in.

**3. Approval of the minutes from April 8, 2008 meeting.**

Motion: Overland (Second: Penet) moves to approve the minutes as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:30 PM**