

**CITY OF YPSILANTI**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2008**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Jane Schmiedeke                      Chair    7:00 PM  
Meeting Location:                      City Council Chambers  
Commissioners Present:                Jane Schmiedeke, Hank Prebys, Brenda Rigdon, Joe Schultz,  
Christian Overland, Ed Penet  
Commissioners Absent:                Ron Rupert  
Staff Present:                            Courtney Miller, HDC Assistant

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion:                      Prebys moves (Second: Penet) approval of the agenda as submitted.  
Approval:                      Unanimous. Action carries.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**300 W. Forest, Tabled Item**

Applicant:                      Skip Caerier, owner (present)  
Carl Heuter, architect (present)

Discussion:                      Application is for new windows and various site plan details at 300 W. Forest. Mr. Heuter attended the previous HDC meeting (February 26, 2008), and provided information on the installation of a loading dock, as well as the replacement of windows with a more energy efficient Kalwall system. Mr. Caerier and Mr. Heuter are working with the Historic District Commission in their renovations to create a LEED certified building. Mr. Heuter is following up on a previous request from the Commission for windows that would not greatly alter the current/original fenestration. He distributes a drawing (called "option D" for purposes of the motion) of a proposed

replacement window which utilizes the Kalwall system. Mr. Heuter informs the Commission that he has spoken with the Kalwall company, and they are proposing that the window would not have to be broken into 2 panels, but that one panel could be used. Anodized aluminum bands could then be applied across the face of the Kalwall panel to emphasize the horizontal. The Kalwall bar (about 5/8 of an inch thick) is behind the fiberglass face of the panel. Mr. Heuter states that it is still visible, but that emphasizing the horizontal band, maintaining the operable window, and the applying a horizontal muntin will allow the windows to maintain their linear appearance. Commissioner Schultz asks if Mr. Hueter discussed different color options for the vertical muntins with the Kalwall representative. Mr. Heuter states that he did discuss this with them, however the vertical element is to be plain aluminum, and if it were made white, it would become more visible. The aluminum is considered the least visible color option for this project. The existing original visor would be maintained, as well as the horizontal rhythm of the windows. The bottom glass is to be clear, and the upper glass is translucent Kalwall. Commissioner Rigdon asks if it would be possible for the applied horizontals to be made thinner. Mr. Heuter states that they could be thinner.

Mr. Caerier asks about the motive of the Commission in recreating the windows. He would like to know if they are trying to match the general appearance of the windows that are currently there, or if they are trying to match the current windows exactly. Commissioner Overland states that the Commission initially attempts to match the features, and if this is not possible, they work to match features as closely as possible. He also informs Mr. Caerier that the Commission is currently trying to maintain the current fenestration, or general rhythm of the windows. Commissioner Prebys states that option D replicates the original window pattern of the building. Commissioner Rigdon states that if the two applied horizontals could be thinner, the design would be even closer to replicating the original windows. Commissioners agree that this new proposal from Mr. Heuter is an acceptable design. Commissioner Rigdon states that the windows on the front elevation should be clear glass, instead of Kalwall.

Commissioner Rigdon asks if insulation will be applied to the inside of the masonry walls. Mr. Heuter states that it will. Commissioner Rigdon recommends that a vapor barrier not be installed because solid masonry buildings need to breathe.

Mr. Caerier states that one of the issues needing resolution in the original site plan was the reduction of additional parking required by zoning (code requires a certain amount of parking based on square footage). The parking has now been reduced to the minimum number of spaces that is allowed. Commissioner Rigdon asks if the parking proposed on the site plan accommodates the 85 parking spots that was originally necessary. Mr. Caerier states that this number was reduced to 67. The business has also purchased the property at 305 Jarvis, which will be utilized for parking and plantings, as well as a one way entrance. The curved parking areas and driveway will create a one way flow of vehicular traffic which will enter from Jarvis and exit onto W. Forest. A ten or twelve foot loading dock will be attached to the current building on the west side.

Mr. Caerier discusses his idea of 6 foot tall plantings at the top of the retaining wall between the building and the property next door in order to screen the delivery area from the property next door. He refers the Commission to sheet 8 of the provided site plans, which includes other site plantings. He states that he hopes the plantings will allow the existing park-like setting to be retained.

Commissioner Schultz asks Mr. Caerier about screening between the property at 305 Jarvis and the property to the west. Mr. Caerier states that there is currently 6 foot

fencing on either side of the vacant lot. New fencing will be installed according to the site plan. The current 6 foot dog-ear wood fencing will remain, and new fencing will match.

Commissioner Prebys expresses concern over the proposed planting of arbor vitae as a screen. He states that arbor vitae tend to lose their shape, and over time would not fit the purpose that Mr. Caerier is looking for. Commissioner Penet suggests Skyrocket juniper, which grow to 10 or 12 feet. Mr. Caerier states that he is looking for a flat wall of green, which will be maintained once or twice a year. Commissioner Penet states that the juniper is low maintenance. Mr. Heuter states that the Hicks variety Yew might also serve this purpose. Commissioner Schmiedeke suggests that the tall trees not be planted at regular intervals, but be staggered.

Commissioner Schultz advises Mr. Caerier that any signage that is added to the property will need an application to the Historic District Commission.

Mr. Heuter asks about the textured glass on the windows to the left of the entry door, and whether or not this should be maintained. The owners have the option to use textured glass where it already exists.

Motion: Rigdon (second: Penet) moves to approve the work at 300 W. Forest. The site plan from Midwestern Consulting, dated 2/20/08, and the landscaping plan are approved. Sections of new dog-eared wood fence will be installed to join sections of existing fence to enclose the site. New fence shall match existing fence. New fence must be opaque-stained or painted. The Commission recommends a substitute for the proposed arbor vitae screening, possibly a juniper or yew. The Commission is approving window option D (as labeled) with the stipulation that all of the horizontal muntins be the same size and as close to the original size as possible. The street side windows shall all have clear glazing and be transparent. The other windows shall have Kalwall glazing and be translucent. The owners have the option to use textured glass where it already exists. The windows shall be aluminum clad wood with a clear anodized finish, full frame replacement with clear, low-e glass. On the windows with the Kalwall system, the bottom two panels shall be clear, and the upper three shall be translucent. The existing doors are wood, and will be refinished and reused. The Commission requires that no torches be used in the installation of the roof. The parapet wall must be fully capped to prevent moisture infiltration. Cleaning and restoration of masonry shall be done in accordance with the Masonry Fact Sheet provided by the Commission. Lintels, flashing, and coping may be replaced in kind, as needed. There will be a 10x12 masonry loading dock with overhead doors. The materials shall match the existing materials on the remainder of the building.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited:

- #2 – Do not destroy original character
- #5 – Preserve distinctive features
- #7 – Clean building gently
- #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **302 N. Hamilton, Action Item**

Applicant: Judy MacDonald, representative for owner (present)

Discussion: Application is for the replacement of deteriorated crown molding and fascia on front porch. Commissioner Schmiedeke asks if the proposed material is a composite. Commissioner Rigdon states that composite would be easier to use on the curved surface, as it is more flexible.

Commissioner Schmiedeke expresses concern with the profile of the proposed molding and Commissioner Rigdon does not feel that the proposed colonial crown molding is appropriate for this Queen Anne style house. Commissioner Overland suggests that a piece of the existing molding be taken to United Mills for replication.

Motion: Rigdon (second: Prebys) moves approval of the work at 302 N. Hamilton to include the replacement of a rotted section of the porch fascia. The proposed colonial style trim is inappropriate; however, the Commission approves the work providing that the repairs match the existing exactly. Paint color shall be the same as the surrounding colors. The repairs to the fascia shall match the profile and dimensions of existing precisely. The molding may be a composite material.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited:

#6 – Repair, don't replace. Replacements shall match original.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

### **109 Maple, Action Item**

Applicant: Guillermo Lopez, owner (present)  
Aurora Lopez, owner (present)

Discussion: Application is for a shed that was constructed without an application to the HDC.

Commissioner Prebys asks about the location of the shed. Mr. Lopez states that the new shed is in the same spot as the old shed. When he attempted to move the old shed forward, it collapsed due to deterioration, creating the need for a new shed. The new shed is slightly larger.

Upon looking at the provided pictures, Commissioner Rigdon asks about siding on the shed. Mrs. Lopez states that the shed is not yet completely finished. The particle board was painted to protect the material from the weather, however Mr. Lopez still intends to side the structure. Commissioner Rigdon states that the Commission requires clapboard siding for structures similar to this. It may be cedar or a composite material (with the smooth side out).

Commissioner Prebys asks about a light on the shed, and recommends that a simple light be installed.

Mr. Lopez states that the current door on the structure will be replaced by a flat (flush) wood door.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Prebys) moves to approve the application for the work at 109 Maple Street. The work involved the construction of a storage shed 12x18 feet with a black roof. It shall be sided with cedar clapboards or a composite material, smooth side out, with a 4-6 inch reveal. The new siding shall be painted to match the house. Also approved is the future installation of a very simple exterior light over the door. The existing door will ultimately be replaced by a solid wood door.

Secretary of Interior Standards cited:

- #3 – Do not imitate earlier styles
- #10 – New work shall be removable

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

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

Applicant: Jack Miller, curator, Ypsilanti Automotive Heritage Museum (present)

Discussion: Mr. Miller is presenting the new site plan for improvements at the museum site for review by the Commission. Application is for the installation of a 5' chain link black vinyl-coated fence on the property (previously approved application had expired), the removal of the brick paved area and the two trees on the River Street side of the property, and the replacement of those bricks with concrete and those trees with planters. There will be 4 planters along the south side of the Hudson garage, and 4 more on the south side of on either side of the ramp.

The parking lot will be completed in two phases and complies with the necessary number of spaces. The first portion of the parking lot that will be completed will terminate at Lincoln Street. When complete, the parking lot will extend to Park Street. The parking lot entrance on River Street will be improved. The drive from Cross to the parking lot behind the Hudson Garage will be two-way. There will be one parallel parking space for an RV, and the other spaces will be at a 90 degree angle from the fence with concrete bumpers. In accordance with the lease from the railroad, the lot will be gravel and will be graded to drain.

The ramp behind the museum will have concrete stairs (replacing the current wooden stairs), and both sides of the ramp will be brick pavers. The west side of the ramp will utilize engraved bricks obtained through a proposed "buy-a-brick" program, to raise money for the museum's improvements.

A majority of the trees on site will remain, and the area in between and around the trees will be graded and will remain grass. Commissioner Schultz clarifies that two street trees will be removed at the corner of River and Cross. Mr. Miller states that these trees are creating a hazard by raising the sidewalk. The trees would be replaced by planters. The Commission discusses replacing the removed trees with trees planted elsewhere on the site.

In the future, a vertical sign will be installed in the area above the showroom. The neon will be replaced and the sign will be illuminated. The tree on the corner would block this sign. The southernmost tree to be removed is interfering with the drive into the parking lot. Commissioner Overland asks about the amount of new concrete to be installed. Mr. Miller replies that the driveway and the sidewalk will be replaced. The sidewalk will need to continue north past the corner of the building, as the current sidewalk is deteriorated, and end at the south as close to the railroad tracks as permitted. Mr. Miller suggests that an appropriate tree could be planted to the north of where one of the trees will be removed. Commissioner Schultz suggests that if the current trees (which will be removed) are silver maples, the removed trees could be replaced by a more suitable tree. Commissioner Prebys states that the removal of these trees is a concern, and they need to be replaced by at least one appropriate street tree properly planted and less likely to create sidewalk problems. He suggests that an arborist might be able to help Mr. Miller with the placement of the trees and the appropriate type of tree to be planted. Commissioner Schmiedeke states that the location of number 11 tree on the site plan, which is proposed to be removed because it is dying, is an opportunity to plant another tree.

Commissioner Schmiedeke asks Mr. Miller to describe the proposed lighting to be installed. Mr. Miller states that there is currently one wall pack installed on the rear of the far east building, the Kaiser room. More lighting is needed along the Hudson garage.

Commissioner Overland asks the purpose of the lighting. Mr. Miller states that the new lighting will illuminate the west end of the driveway. The commissioners are seeking an alternative light design to the wall packs. Commissioner Overland suggests green gooseneck lights, which would be more in character with the building. Mr. Miller states that the shades on the wall packs can be adjusted. Commissioner Penet asks if the new wall packs would be on timers. Mr. Miller states that they would.

Commissioner Prebys asks when the work is proposed to begin. Mr. Miller states that it is likely to begin in 60-90 days. Commissioner Prebys suggests that the application be tabled, which would allow Mr. Miller to return with more information on what type of trees will replace those removed, and the type of lights to be installed. He asks Mr. Miller to return with a description of the trees, and cut sheets of the lights.

Commissioner Schmiedeke reminds Mr. Miller that when the brick infill on the east end (Cross Street side) of the building was approved, it was required that the infill be painted to match the rest of the building. She informs him that this needs to be completed.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Prebys) moves to table the application for work at 100 E. Cross pending receipt of requested details on trees and lighting.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

## STUDY ITEMS

### 16 N. Washington

Applicant: Victor Swanson, owner (not present)

Discussion: Mr. Swanson requested to be a study item on the agenda without providing materials previously. He would like to discuss installing signage on his building.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Administrative Approvals - None

### Property Monitoring

**211-217 Arcade** – Owner has been ill and not been able to look at doors. He will try to get to Fingerle next week to look at the types of doors recommended by the Commission.

**306 Maple** – No response to letter. Door is appropriate, but still needs application.

**526 N. Huron** – No new information, no response to letter.

**100 W. Michigan** – No new information, no response to letter.

**234 W. Michigan** – Door belongs to 4 N. Adams. Predates current owners and is at the rear of the building.

**120 W. Michigan** – Following up on a request from Commissioner Penet for information on this property. The building is currently in foreclosure.

**218 Ferris** – Staff will check the status of this.

**300 W. Forest** – See 'old business'.

**Frog Island** – No new information.

**310 S. Washington** – Staff sent email with no response yet.

**631 N. River** – Application for demolition pending informational materials. Contact with owner March 5. She is sending a structural assessment from a contractor, as well as a letter stating the purpose of the demolition. This demolition was previously approved by the HDC following a public hearing. Staff asks if a public hearing is necessary. The Commission does not believe an additional public hearing is necessary. The commissioners state that the proposed future use of the site will need to be included in the application materials. (No new structure would be allowed on this site due to its size.). Commissioner Prebys states that information on how the land will be treated one the building is removed (clearing, grading) is also necessary Commissioner Overland expresses concern over the change in historic neighborhood density.

**215 N. Hamilton** – Doors and side lights were changed at some point between 2003-2007, with no record of HDC approval. Commissioner Schmiedeke states that this work was done by a previous owner. Staff will send letter.

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

## **HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS**

**Property Monitoring** – Commissioner Overland asks if property monitoring is currently included on the website. It is not, other than on the agendas and minutes. He asks if there can be a separate section on the website with information on current issues. Staff will consult with Planner II to determine if this is a viable option.

**Historic District Commission Manual** – Commissioner Schmiedeke states that this needs to be updated soon.

### **Approval of the minutes from February 26, 2008 meeting.**

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

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:45 PM**