



MINUTES

**City of Ypsilanti
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Meeting held in person in City Council Chambers and
virtually via Zoom**

**Tuesday, March 8, 2022
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Meeting Called to Order 7:00 pm

Christopher Jacobs Gave Zoom and telephone usage instructions to attendees
Community Development Manager

Commissioners Present: James Chesnut – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
 James Ratzlaff – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
 Stefan Szumko - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
 Jeff Muir – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
 Alex Pettit – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti, ill and attending by Zoom

Commissioners Absent: Amy Swift – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti

Staff Present: Ellen Thackery, Preservation Planner
 Christopher Jacobs, Community Development Manager

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THIS MEETING

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to nominate James Chesnut to chair for this meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Szumko (second: Muir) moved to approve the agenda as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS—none

NEW BUSINESS

325 E Cross

**Storm Windows*

Applicant: Marc Arthur, homeowner – present

Discussion: Chesnut requested a description of proposal from applicant. Applicant provided a summary of the proposed plans—storm windows will be made of wood and glass in a one-over-one style for the majority of the windows. The exceptions are non-operable windows, and they will not get a one-over-one style storm—instead, they will get non-operable single panes of glass in a wood frame. All wood will be painted to match the house’s trim.

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the installation of 8 exterior storm windows as proposed in the application dated February 21, 2022. The storm windows will help to preserve the house’s historic materials and features and are removable.

Relevant Secretary of the Interior’s Standards:

#2, #5, #10

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

216 N Grove

**Window replacement*

Applicant: Tobin Fisher, owner - not present

Discussion: Staff provided a review citing the following information -- the agenda states that this is a retroactive application, but that is not correct. It is not a retroactive application and this will be corrected in the minutes. The application is for the replacement of vinyl windows in the arched, first-floor window opening at the front of the house. The applicant proposes to use a rectangular single-pane, non-operable window to fill the entire opening (but not rounded for the arch) like a picture window. The window they propose is Fibrex.

Motion: Ratzlaff (seconded by Szumko) moved to postpone the application for the replacement of the front window at 216 N Grove proposed with one Anderson Fibrex window in black for the applicant to provide more information, samples, and a rendering of how the proposed window would look in the historic opening as proposed, and/or for the HDC to further research this new material.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

It was noted that this postponement is for the next HDC meeting, April 12, 2022.

208 N Hamilton

**Window replacement (retroactive application)*

Applicant: Beal Properties, Stewart Beal present on Zoom

Discussion: Commissioner Muir indicated that he would need to recuse himself from this vote, acknowledging that that will affect quorum on this item. Commission agreed that there would not be quorum with Muir's recusal. Agenda item is bumped automatically to the next regular meeting April 12.

Commissioners thanked Beal for attending. Staff will send him notice for the April 12 meeting.

18 Washington

**Window installation*

Applicant: Mike Eller, property owner, represented by contractor Gary Turner, present

Discussion: Chesnut asked applicant for a summary of the proposed work. Gary Turner described that the building owner approached him to ask what could be done to make the installed second-story windows acceptable to the Commission. (The vinyl double-hung windows were installed without a permit.) Turner proposed half-round windows added above the double-hung vinyl windows that had been installed without a permit in the hope that these half-rounds above would make the vinyl windows acceptable to the Commission.

Chesnut reviewed the status of this application—the application to install the vinyl windows was submitted retroactively for the December meeting. The application was denied in December because of the material—vinyl is not an acceptable material for new windows in the local historic district. Turner described that he understands the concerns about the vinyl, but that he views these windows as a higher quality vinyl window and that he believes that it is difficult to tell that these are vinyl from the sidewalk. A commissioner explained that the expansion and contraction of vinyl in a historic building is one issue. Turner explained that these windows were installed to manufacturer's specifications and have appropriate shimmed gaps around the perimeter and there is adequate space between the vinyl and the brick for expansion and contraction. A commissioner also expressed that many plastics are hydroscopic and suck up water and that adds to the expansion and contraction issue. Turner stated that the manufacturer's specs allow adequately for changes in temperature and humidity.

A commissioner wanted to clarify that this was revisiting an old application—that wood windows existed in this building, those were removed without coming to this board, that retroactive application was submitted and denied in December, and now the applicant wants to install half-round wood windows? Applicant confirmed.

A commissioner recalled that the previous December application showed what existed in the window openings before the vinyl installation. A commissioner asked whether the windows that were here before the vinyl installation were indeed wood double-hungs? This application seeks to

make the condition better by proposing an appropriate half-round window over a vinyl double-hung window, but the issue remains that the double-hung vinyl windows are inappropriate. Commission recalled that there were inappropriate windows a long time ago, then someone installed wood double-hungs so they were appropriate, and then those were recently removed and we're back to inappropriate windows again. A commissioner stated that these vinyl double-hung windows took this façade back a step and does the proposal of the half-rounds do enough to make these vinyl windows approvable by the Commission? Turner stated that he believes that these windows could be good enough right now and then the next time a window replacement is needed, windows that are more appropriate to the district could be installed at that time. A commissioner stated that the alternative to that would be to install what's appropriate now. It's understood that that isn't what the applicant wants to hear, but that is what the Commission is struggling with. A commissioner summarized that the wood transoms being proposed are appropriate and would be approvable, but if the double-hung vinyl windows are a part of this application, the double-hung vinyl windows are not an approvable window.

Motion: Ratzlaff (seconded by Muir) moved to deny the application as submitted for the installation of the half-round wood windows at this time because the application is incomplete. The applicant can submit a revised, complete application for work that includes both the already-installed vinyl windows and the newly proposed wood half-round windows in the complete description of proposed work. Relevant Secretary of the Interior's Standards include Standards 2, 5, 6, and 9.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards:

#2- Do not destroy original character. Do not remove or alter historic material or features.

#5-Preserve distinctive features.

#6- Repair don't replace, replacement shall match the original.

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

Approval: Unanimous.
Motion carried.

12 E Forest

**Façade work*

Applicant: Ypsilanti Warehouse, LLC, representative Steve Dumont present.
Owner is Michigan Ladder Properties, LLC (not present), but the buyer (Ypsilanti Warehouse, LLC) received permission from the owner to propose this application.

Discussion: Steve Dumont presented project, described that they want to replace the deteriorated rubber membrane roof currently in place, described that they have selected an aluminum commercial window in keeping with the industrial character, seeking to unify the various buildings that make up the complex—repair existing stucco and tint it where possible but may have to replace it with similar, metal cap flashing, grille on the outside of the window (not inside), grille is 1" by ½" thick, new gutters will help drainage, replacing wood fence with a 6' aluminum fence, changing shape of façade a little to help drainage, commissioner suggested that the stucco not come all the way down to touch the sidewalk because then you may have material deterioration, clarified that the gables will be removed because none of the angles of it work together, and the installation of the windows is standard and even though the installation details are lacking, commissioner clarified how the

installation will be and that it will be appropriate, and applicant clarified that some siding will be horizontal and some will be vertical.

Motion: Szumko (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed at 12 E Forest, citing Standards 2 (preserve original character and materials), 3 (don't imitate earlier styles), 5 (preserve distinctive features), 6 (repair, don't replace), and 9 (contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original materials).

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#2- Do not destroy original character. Do not remove or alter historic material or features.

#3- Do not imitate earlier styles.

#5-Preserve distinctive features.

#6- Repair don't replace, replacement shall match the original.

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

Approval: Unanimous
Motion carried.

STUDY ITEMS

316 N Grove

**Altering roof because roof on tower and roof on main front gable meet and dump water on front of house*
Homeowner and retired civil engineer Hugh Kennedy outlined the challenge that ever since a reroofing 16 years ago, the roof has leaked and damaged the plaster upstairs, and so they need to eliminate that dead valley on the roof they have now. Commissioners asked questions and encouraged homeowner to make sure that with all of that water dumping in one place after the alterations, the roof system can manage it all. Homeowner will make sure that all of the slopes and drainage receiver boxes are adequate. Commission encouraged homeowner to submit a Work Permit Application.

411 N Huron

**Roof and gutters*

Homeowners Hannah and Joshua McCready described their current roof condition and drainage challenges and outlined the metal standing seam roof and gutters they would like to propose. Commission was receptive to the proposal, homeowners are paying special attention to the highly decorative cornice and brackets they have, and they will be thinking more about adequate and appropriate venting.

516 N River

**Potential proposed addition at house's rear*

Homeowner could not attend but staff described what homeowner has stated that they are considering. Staff also mentioned that the homeowner is working with an architect and that that architect is working with the City's planner regarding setbacks for the addition. Staff described that homeowner seeks to consider a kitchen addition and would like to remove the enclosed porch that had been built around 1988 (1988 is when the permit was approved) and replace it with a kitchen addition that will go back a little further than the enclosed porch does, still being mindful of the side and rear setback requirements. Commission discussed how the Standards apply to new construction and looks forward to seeing the proposal.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS—none

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Property Monitoring

Commissioners/Staff discussed property concerns.

2. Updates from Staff—none

3. Commissioner Comments--none

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the 2021 Annual Report and CLG Report

Motion: Szumko (second: Muir) moved to approve the 2021 HDC Report and the CLG report, as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous
Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes of February 22, 2022

Motion: Szumko (second: Muir) moved to approve the minutes of February 22, 2022, as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous
Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Chesnut adjourned the meeting, citing the end of the agenda with no further items to discuss.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:58 p.m.