



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Tuesday, August 10, 2021
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Pettit Video/telephone usage instructions given for potential attendees
Meeting called to order at 7:03pm

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Erika Lindsay - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Amy Swift - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
James Chesnut – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
James Ratzlaff – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Stefan Szumko - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Scott Slagor, Preservation Planner
Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Lindsay (second: Chesnut) moved to approve the agenda as submitted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Szumko
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Steve Pierce, City resident, addressed the Commission regarding his support for the application for 206 E Forest.

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS—none

NEW BUSINESS

206 E Forest

**Solar arrays.*

Applicants: Brandon Knight, contractor - not present

Sara Burg, contractor - present

Discussion: Slagor: Staff provided a review report citing the following information — that the house is a late 19th century vernacular building; that the application proposes two (2) sets of solar arrays on the rear addition [*reference drawings in packet materials*]; that the original house is an L-floor plan on E Forest and then there are long descending additions that look like they date to the mid-century and, apparently, were erected for a beauty school at one time, making them later in the original house.

Staff stated [*reference drawings in packet materials*] that all of the apparatuses face east to a parking lot; that the inverter and disconnect boxes will be on the west elevation; that the Ironridge mounting system is being used; and that solar panels will be installed parallel to the roof.

Per packet photo materials of the building, staff showed where the inverter and disconnect would be located behind a bush; showed the primary views from the street; and showed the descending elevation where the solar arrays would be placed.

Burg: Added that it does not face the road and is adjacent to the parking lot.

Pettit: Stated that the array is on a different side of the building from where the service panel and things would be. Asked how the wiring is routed from the panels to the control panel.

Burg: Stated that it would usually travel through the attic into the inverter.

Pettit: Stated that if applicant plans to go directly into the attic and then route over, that would likely be a requirement. [Commissioner Swift voiced agreement].

Chesnut: Asked if the inverter equipment is located inside or on the exterior of the building.

Burg: Stated that the company likes to put it on the outside of the house. Stated that the AC disconnect would definitely have to be on the outside by the meter but the inverter can also go into the house if deemed necessary.

Chesnut: Asked if the proposal is for everything on the exterior.

Burg: Confirmed.

Swift: Asked about the size of the equipment.

Burg: Stated that inverters are maybe two-feet wide and three feet tall. Stated that a disconnect is very small, like a small purse satchel size.

Pettit: Asked about the amount of equipment boxes mounted to the side of the house.

Burg: Stated that there would be two – the AC disconnect and inverter.

Chesnut: Initiated discussion to clarify page 17 of packet materials re: location of equipment for proposed installation.

Szumko: Asked if the exterior panels are paintable.

Burg: Stated that they probably could be painted but that it would be up to allowance by the electrical inspector.

Ratzlaff: Initiated discussion regarding the proximity of trees and possible debris causing issues.

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Lindsay) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 206 E Forest as submitted in the application on August 3, 2021, for installation of a solar array and power apparatuses as specified.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

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

#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Szumko

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

414 Maple

**Rear egress stairs.*

Applicant: Stefan Szumko, contractor - present

****Before discussion, Commissioner Stefan Szumko recused himself from deliberating and voting, citing a conflict of interest. Commissioner Szumko was available to answer questions about the proposed work.**

Discussion: Slagor: Staff provided a review report citing the following information -- that it is a vernacular gabled-ell form house that was erected in 1900, located on the historic east side; that there is a rear metal staircase [*reference packet photo materials*] coming off of what appears to be an addition that applicant would like to replace.

Staff explained that the proposal is for a platform deck [*reference packet photo materials*], supported by treated lumber wrapped in a black aluminum sleeve with Azek deck board flooring, which is something the Commission has approved before; and then a metal black aluminum stair system with the riser and treads being that Azek decking; and then a metal black aluminum guardrail system for the railing; and that each of the component parts use the risers and the sleeve and the deck joists adhesive tape.

Staff showed an illustration of the proposed work, per schematic in packet materials which breaks down each part and component.

Pettit: Asked about the two-by-eight band joist on the outside, if it would be exposed.

Szumko: Confirmed, no. Stated that they would like to cover it with the Azek board, same color. Stated that it will all be gray and black and, ideally, no painting.

Ratzlaff: Initiated discussion re: platform deck vs porch comparisons; query as to possible lattice considerations.

**Commissioner Szumko removed himself by turning his camera and microphone off as the Commission deliberated and voted.

Ratzlaff: Indicated an opinion that on an historic feel, the new design is more appropriate than the steel concrete that is there.

Lindsay: Indicated an opinion that the materials being used are smart as far as not painting but having a finish that feels appropriate; that the coated aluminum will be a nice way to not have to deal with treated lumber; and that it seems to be a good solution that should last for quite a while.

Swift: Indicated an opinion that the lattice is usually something that would be more of a concern on the front; that being open is fine; and that the retaining wall shields part of that edge.

Pettit: Indicated an opinion that the proposed work is an improvement on what is there; that he likes that the risers will be open for visibility; that having the wood-like deck on top and finish will look good longer than paint; that lattice work does not seem to be a problem in this case as there is not an earthen floor underneath or a critter concern, that the desire is to be able to access the space, and that it is tucked in the rear.

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Lindsay) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 414 Maple as submitted in the application dated August 3, 2021 for replacement of the rear entry deck and stairs. The new deck and stair shall be built to the submitted specifications including a black aluminum stair and guardrail system, and Azek Timbertech deck boards in the "Coastline" finish.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

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

#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut, Ratzlaff

Abstain: Szumko

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

STUDY ITEMS—none

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

9-11 S Washington Extension

332 Oak Roof

207 W Michigan Fence

Motion: Lindsay (second: Ratzlaff) moved to accept the administrative approvals cited above, as submitted by staff.

Discussion: Pettit: Initiated discussion for clarification of the work administratively approved at 207 W Michigan.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Szumko

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Demolition by Neglect – 302 E Cross

Commissioners considered the case of Demolition by Neglect and submitted the following resolution:

RESOLVED BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF YPSILANTI:

WHEREAS, the City of Ypsilanti Historic District Commission is charged with safeguarding the built heritage of the city; and

WHEREAS, the house at 302 E Cross is a significant Queen Anne/Gothic Revival building that is contributing to the Ypsilanti Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the house at 302 E Cross was found to be a dangerous building by the City Building Department and a case of demolition by neglect by the Historic District Commission; and

WHEREAS, the property owner has not sufficiently responded to multiple requests for repair,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Ypsilanti Historic District Commission supports the City filing suit against the owner of 302 E Cross to resolve the case of demolition by neglect, thereby preserving the historic integrity of the resource and the historic district.

Offered by: Stefan Szumko, Supported by James Chesnut

Ayes: Pettit, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Lindsay, Swift, Szumko

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

2. Property Monitoring

Commissioners/Staff discussed status of previously approved property work and property issues under review.

3. Updates from Staff

Re: Commissioner vacancy

4. Commissioner Comments

Comments re: availability schedules and considerations.

Comments re: open commissioner vacancy.

Query/comments re: Robert's Rules procedures - voting/attendance/quorum.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

1. Review of Approved Amended Minutes from July 13, 2021

Reviewed and acknowledged amendment.

2. Approval of the minutes of July 27, 2021

Motion: Lindsay (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve the minutes of July 27, 2021, as submitted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Pettit, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Lindsay, Swift, Szumko

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

3. Nominations for Vice Chair

Chairperson Alex Pettit opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

James Chesnut nominated Erika Lindsay, who accepted the nomination.

Amy Swift nominated James Chesnut, who declined the nomination.

Chairperson Alex Pettit closed the nomination period.

ADJOURNMENT

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

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:49 p.m.