



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Tuesday, July 27, 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 7:05pm

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Erika Lindsay - 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
Anne Stevenson (resigned)

Commissioners Absent: Amy Swift

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Discussion: Staff requested to remove 332 Oak, which was erroneously added as a study item. Staff requested to add 407 E Cross as a study item.

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS

11 E Cross

**Sign.*

Applicants: Jordan Philips, business owner – not present
Kevin Short, Johnson Sign Company – present

Discussion: Slagor: Staff provided a review report citing the following information -- that the Commission tabled this item at the July 13, 2021 meeting, specifically citing concerns over the placement of a new sign over the "ghost sign"; that the Commission asked for potential new designs to be considered to either further obscure or expose the "ghost sign", as well as a different typography; that the sign as proposed is aluminum, that will be mounted to the brick mortar joints and generally otherwise meets HDC sign criteria; that the main concern commissioners had was with the placement over the "ghost sign".

Staff added that the building was erected in 1925 for an automotive station and has changed multiple times since then and has had a lot of renovations.

Staff also stated that the current façade is probably from the 1940s and, at the time of listing in the National Register, was considered non-contributing.

Pettit: Asked applicant, given the staff review of the application, if there is any further information that he would like to share with the Commission.

Short: Shared the process of working with the business owner to come up with a newly proposed sign *[reference supplemental photo material submitted for review 7-27-2021]*.

Pettit: Asked if it is applicant's intent to stick with the original design.

Short: Stated that the original sign is the same except for the font, which they modified per the Commission recommendation.

Lindsay: Stated an opinion that it appears well balanced and feels like it responds to the doors underneath – that the alignment and the equal spacing can be seen. Stated an opinion that it is a great solution. *[Commissioners Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Szumko acknowledged agreement]*

[Review continued comparing the previously-submitted sign and the newly proposed sign]

Szumko: Stated an opinion that the black font stands out, does not make the proposed sign appear to hide the "ghost sign", and matches the door coloration, connecting it well. *[Shared findings re: his in-person inspection of sign]*

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Lindsay) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 11 E Cross as submitted in the application on July 2, 2021, for installation of an aluminum sign panel as specified. The sign shall be mounted to the mortar joints to the greatest extent possible. This project does not include illumination.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

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

#10- New work shall be removable.

Slagor: Staff asked if Commissioner Ratzlaff would like to amend the motion to note the updates submitted on July 27, 2021.

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to amend the above-cited motion to include the language that the sign shall be consistent with the updated designs submitted July 27, 2021.

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

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Swift

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

413 Maple

**Porch changes.*

Applicants: Richard Nation, owner - present

Discussion: Slagor: Staff shared a review report citing the following information -- that this is a late 19th century vernacular front gable house with porches; that the porch in question is the rear porch *[reference packet photo materials]*, which the applicant believes to be a later addition.

Staff stated that applicant would like to remove the existing guardrails, and spindle frieze that is referred to in the application as a spandrel, and change the porch to match what is on the front of the house, which was approved by the HDC in 2007 and 2005, to have a more simple railing.

Staff indicated that research by other staff members confirmed that the rear porch in question is likely late 20th century; therefore, the fabric that applicant would like to remove there is not historic.

Pettit: Asked applicant, given the staff review of the application, if there is any other information or comments that he would like to submit.

Nation: Confirmed, no.

Ratzlaff: Asked if it is visible from the right-of-way.

Nation: Stated that it is not visible from the street.

[Discussion continued, reference façade photo in packet materials]

Lindsay: Asked how repairs to existing spindles would be handled.

Nation: Stated -- patched, sanded and painted.

Chesnut: Stated that it sounds like only the spindles are coming out and that the top rail is being left in.

Nation: Confirmed.

Motion: Szumko (second: Lindsay) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 413 Maple as submitted in the application on July 19, 2021, for replacement of spindles and rails on rear porch to match those on front and side porches, and for removal of spandrels on rear porch.

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, Chesnut, Ratzlaff, Szumko
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Swift
Motion carried.

STUDY ITEMS

407 E Cross

**Windows.*

Applicant: Geoff Van't Hof

Discussion: Application for window work was denied at the April 27, 2021 HDC meeting with the finding of an adverse impact. 60-days have passed since the time of the denial, the appeal window is closed and applicant is before the Commission to discuss possible solutions.

Motion: Lindsay (second: Chesnut) moved to add 23, 25, and 29 E Cross to the agenda as study items.

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

23, 25, 29 E Cross

**Awnings.*

Applicant: Gary McKeever

Discussion: Applicant discussed proposed replacement of awnings for the property.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS—none

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Property Monitoring

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

2. Updates from Staff

Staff acknowledged the resignation of Commissioner Stevenson, stating appreciation and thanks for the expertise she shared with the Commission and her many years of dedicated service.

3. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Ratzlaff discussed 319 S Washington and a mistake in thinking that a permit had been issued for the work which, he stated, is what led to his vote to approve. He requested that the July 13, 2021 meeting minutes be amended to include his remarks made during the commissioner comment section in that regard, in order to make it clear that he would not have voted to approve the application for work at 319 S Washington had he had a clearer picture of everything that had gone on.

Commissioner Lindsay discussed possible upcoming changes to her availability schedule.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of July 13, 2021

Discussion: Ratzlaff: Requested "to amend the draft minutes of July 13, 2021 to include, under the commissioner comment section, that James Ratzlaff had mentioned that he would not have voted for a motion for approval of the installation of the windows at 319 S Washington had it been more clear to him at the time that there was absolutely no permit issued at the time of installation."

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Chesnut) moved to amend the minutes of July 13, 2021, to include language cited by Commissioner Ratzlaff during said meeting which reflects the language of the above-stated request made by Commissioner Ratzlaff.

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

Motion: Szumko (second: Chesnut) moved to approve the minutes of July 13, 2021, as amended.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:41 p.m.

Full Minutes Prepared By: Nancy Hare-Dickerson