

# KALAMAZOO HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2006

## INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the Kalamazoo Historic District Commission had 231 project applications for the 1,809 historic resources located in Kalamazoo's five locally designated historic districts. The commission meets every third Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission chambers. Over the summer months, during the construction season, the commission also meets on the first Tuesday at the same time, as needed, to facilitate timely work on projects.

## NEW INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN

**Historic District Commission Newsletter:** For the third year, the Historic District Commission has published a newsletter covering historic district information and emphasizing the availability of the Michigan historic preservation income tax credits. This year one issue of the newsletter was mailed to almost 1,200 property owners in the five districts. This has been an immensely successful tool for the commission increasing awareness of the historic districts and encouraging compliance.

**Historic Preservation Tax Credit Information sessions:** The commission supports informational sessions on the Michigan historic preservation income tax credits. These sessions are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month in the Development Center east conference room. As a result, the number of tax credit applications originating with Kalamazoo rank second only to Detroit in Michigan. Since 1999, property owners in the Stuart, Haymarket and Vine historic districts have earned over a million dollars in tax credits representing over four million dollars of investment in the districts

## IMPORTANT DECISIONS RENDERED

According to Chapter 16 of the City of Kalamazoo Code of Ordinance, the charge of the Historic District Commission is:

Sec. 16-22. General powers and duties.

- 1) Historical preservation is a public purpose. To serve that purpose, the Historic District Commission is hereby charged with the following responsibilities:
  - (a) The Kalamazoo Historic District Commission is empowered to regulate Work on the exterior of historic resources and non-historic resources in historic districts in the City of Kalamazoo and shall otherwise have all powers invested in historic district commissions pursuant to the Local Historic Districts Act, MCL 399.201 et. seq. 1970 P.A. 169, as amended. (Adm. Code § A229.2)
  - (b) To regulate work on resources which, by city ordinance, are historic or non-historic resources located within local historic districts, including but not limited to the moving of any structure into or out of, or the building of any structure in, a historic district.

To fulfill that obligation the commission convened eleven regular meetings on the third Tuesday of the month.

Altogether, the full commission reviewed thirty applications for Certificates of Appropriateness. Of these applications, six were denied. Three of these were brought back to the commission with a revised application and were subsequently approved. Two are pending appeals to the State Historic Preservation Review Board.

In 2006 the historic preservation coordinator reviewed and administratively approved 201 applications and the full commission reviewed 30 with six denials for a total of 231 applications for project review. The commission and the coordinator approved over 97% of the applications submitted. Nationally an average of 95% of applications to historic district commissions are approved.

## **STATUS OF PROJECTS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED TO THE COMMISSION**

### **Preservation Awards**

For the eighth year, two Historic District Commission members worked with the Historic Preservation Commission in identifying candidates for the HPC's annual Preservation Awards for buildings, people and projects that promoted historic preservation in the city of Kalamazoo. In 2006 the awards for projects in 2005 went to:

- 1) Commercial/Institutional/Government – 402 East Michigan – Grand Rapids and Indiana Depot - Owner: Depot Landmark LLC. In addition, the Michigan Historic Preservation Network honored the project with an award at their annual conference in April.
- 2) Residential Property – rental – 830 West Main - owned by Brian Spaulding (Stuart Historic District.)
- 3) Residential Property – owner occupied – 305 Stuart - owner Ryan Mervyn (Stuart Historic District.)
- 4) Individuals or institutions – Southwest Builders - Over the last six years, Pat Halpin and Southwest Builders have taken on several projects in downtown Kalamazoo. including the Style Shop building at 217 South Kalamazoo Mall which won a Historic Preservation Award of Merit, and the Arcadia Condominiums at 222 North Kalamazoo Mall. (Koopsen's Building/ Woodbury Block)
- 5) Interior rehabilitation – *The Historic Preservation Commission decided to add a new award category for 2006. Interior rehabilitation of historic buildings is generally less visible to the public, but demonstrates that historic preservation is more than the exterior shell of the building.*
  - i) Restoration - 430 Elm St – Home of Sharon Carlson & Tom Dietz
  - ii) Mixed - 244 East Michigan - Josh & Christine Willson. The award for interior rehabilitation is for the Button-Jannasch Block at 244 East Michigan. In addition to this award from the Kalamazoo Historic Preservation Commission, this project also received an award from the Michigan Historic Preservation Network at their annual conference in April.
  - iii) Adaptive Use - 222 N. Kalamazoo Mall - Hospice Care of SW Michigan

### **SUMMARY**

The Historic District Commission feels that the built environment provides an important sense of place and adds to the vitality and diversity of the community. The historic districts continue to speak for the past as the city moves towards the future. The Historic District Commission looks forward to continuing its role in preserving our architectural heritage.

Submitted February 27, 2007

Sharon Ferraro

Historic Preservation Coordinator