

**CITY OF KALAMAZOO
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT
2009**

Introduction

In 2009, the Kalamazoo Historic District Commission (HDC) received 498 project applications for the 2,075 historic resources located in Kalamazoo’s six locally designated historic districts. This represented a slight decrease from the previous year. Meetings take place every third Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.

History and Purpose

Chapter 16 Section 22 of the City of Kalamazoo Code of Ordinance, outlines the responsibilities of the HDC as follows:

- (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.

Meetings

To fulfill its charge, the HDC convened 11 regular meetings in 2009 and reviewed 53 applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness were reviewed. Of these, 42 were approved and 11 were denied. In the case of the denials, two were proposed demolitions and two were asking for retroactive approval of completed work.

In addition to the HDC’s 53 application reviews, the Historic Preservation Coordinator reviewed and administratively approved 445 applications for a total of 498 applications reviewed. Almost 70% of the administrative applications came from the Vine Area - South Street historic district, 14% from the Stuart area and 14% from West Main Hill. The HDC and the Coordinator approved over 98% of the applications submitted which compares well with the national average of 95%.

Membership

The HDC enjoyed a full roster of members throughout 2009:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>
Jay Bonsignore	Chair	First full term
Linda DeYoung		Second full term

Nelson Nave	Licensed architect	Second full term
Bob Oudsema		Second full term
Bob Cinabro		First full term (appointed in July 2008)
James Tribu		Second full term
Erin Seaverson		First full term

Newsletter

For the third year, the HDC published its newsletter covering historic district information and emphasizing the availability of the Michigan Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit. This year, two issues of the newsletter were mailed to almost 1,400 property owners in the six districts. The newsletter has been an immensely successful tool for increasing awareness of the historic districts and encouraging compliance as well as allowing homeowners to claim thousands of dollars in historic tax credits.

Tax Credit Information Sessions

In 2009, the HDC provided monthly informational sessions on the Michigan Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit. The sessions were held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at The Development Center. The number of tax credit applications originating with Kalamazoo ranks second only to Detroit in Michigan.

New Initiatives Undertaken

At three meetings in 2009, the commission welcomed contractors and suppliers to present new materials and services available for historic buildings. The presentation this year was from a company marketing an insulating paint. The contractors and suppliers are given 20 minutes at the end of the meeting, after all the applications have been reviewed.

The Historic District Commission strongly supported the Preservation Trades – Window Rehabilitation Training Workshop held in July 2009. Twelve contractors from all over Michigan participated in the two week long workshop, funded by a grant-in-aid from the National Park Service through the Michigan Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). At the completion of the training, they were familiar with techniques to rehabilitate wooden double hung windows including repair and replacement of work parts as needed and installing weather stripping. In the fall of 2009, SHPO asked Kalamazoo to host an additional two workshops in the first quarter of 2010 and awarded a grant to cover the costs without a city match. These three workshops will make a dozen contractors available in Kalamazoo to rehabilitate windows, keeping sound material out of landfills and preserving the character of historic homes.

Summary

2009 was a busy and successful year for the HDC. Staff expects that 2010 will be similarly busy.