

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
May 17, 2005

City Commission Chambers
2nd Floor, City Hall
241 W. South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Bill Snyder, Chair; Lisa Poole-Woldring, Vice Chair; Fred Decker; Linda DeYoung; James Tribu

Members Absent: Nelson Nave, Bob Oudsema

City Staff: Sharon Ferraro, Historic Preservation Coordinator; Amy Thomas, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Snyder called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

AGENDA (May 17, 2005)

Mr. Snyder requested that a discussion regarding the current status of the Pfizer demolitions be added to the end of the agenda.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to approve the May 17, 2005 HDC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

807 Wheaton (Case #: IHV 05-0003)

No one appeared to represent the property. The application requests replacement of the front door.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the current door is not original to the house. She commented that flat, wooden doors were used occasionally in the time period that the house was built. Ms. Ferraro suggested painting the white frame around the central window to make a substantial difference in the perception of the door. Discussion followed with regard to the details of the violation.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to deny the application for 807 Wheaton with regard to the replacement door. The denial is based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines numbers 2 & 6. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

1002 S. Westnedge (Case #: IHA 05-0107)

Angie Dawson from Home Marketing Systems, property managers for this house, was present to discuss the application. The application requests replacement of the existing "dining room" window on the north side first floor with double hung wooden window, sash of equal size, to meet egress requirement for sleeping room.

Ms. Dawson advised that the window only opens 16" and she would like to have the window rebuilt to have a 26" clearance and meet egress requirements. This room was originally a dining room but has been converted to a bedroom. The rough opening of the window meets egress requirements but it doesn't open far enough to meet code.

Mr. Snyder advised that the top window is smaller than the rest and it is a defining characteristic of the house. Accordingly, he stated that he could not be in favor of the applicant's request. Mr. Snyder pointed out that the window is visible from the sidewalk since this house is located on a corner lot.

Ms. Dawson advised that the existing exterior frame would remain unchanged. The house is currently leased as a six-bedroom rental. She stated that this was the first time there has been a problem during an inspection.

Mr. Tribu inquired if there was a way to make the window easy to pull out in case of an emergency. Further discussion followed with regard to alternatives. Ms. Ferraro commented that if people wake up in the middle of the night, they might not remember how to open the window if it was not a regular window that operated in a standard way.

Mr. Decker mentioned the storm window and commented that this would also present a problem with egress.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to deny the application for 1002 S. Westnedge to replace the window on the north side, first floor in the dining room/bedroom. The denial is based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines numbers 2 and 5.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the applicant could go before the Housing Board of Appeals and ask for a variance. Since the dining room/bedroom is on the first floor, there is a chance that the appeals board might grant a variance. Ms. Ferraro advised the applicant to contact Housing Inspector Maggi Smith with further questions.

With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

709 Eleanor (Case #: IHA 05-0045)

John R. Green, Jr., the owner, was present to discuss the application. The application requests the addition of a carport to the driveway. The carport would be removed when the house is sold.

Mr. Green advised that he and his wife are in their 70's and they would like to construct a car port to provide shelter from the elements. The carport would not be attached to the garage and the garage would still be visible from the street.

Discussion followed with regard to the details of the project. Mr. Snyder advised that the windows would be partially obscured and he expressed concern regarding the aesthetics.

Mr. Green stated that the carport would be custom made and would be a foot from the house. Ms. Ferraro advised speaking with someone in the zoning department to find out about the required setbacks. Further discussion followed with regard to the need for more details about the project. Ms. Ferraro suggested conferring with Pete Eldridge in the Zoning Department, obtaining specific measurements from the manufacturer of the carport and coming back to the Historic District Commission with more details. She stated that she would work with Mr. Eldridge regarding the zoning details and then contact the applicant to obtain the exact dimensions of the proposed carport.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to postpone the decision on 709 Eleanor to await further information regarding the carport. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

443 Stuart (Case #: IHA 05-0107)

The owner, Jay Bonsignore was present to discuss the application. The application requests that the house be re-roofed to historic district standards and that the second floor, bay window on the north side be removed and reconstructed.

Mr. Bonsignore stated that he would like to extend the height of the bay window and extend the roof over the bay window to allow for foam insulation to be added. Currently, there are two brackets, which appear to be supporting the bay window, that are failing. Accordingly, Mr. Bonsignore would like to reframe the area under the window to provide better support. He stated that he would like to leave the sides square and put the brackets back to simulate what is currently there.

Discussion followed with regard to the details of the project.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval in concept of the proposed work at 443 Stuart to include re-roofing to Historic District Standards and removal and reconstruction of the bay window, with details of the roof edge, rackets and soffits to follow at a subsequent Historic District Commission meeting. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the next HDC meeting is scheduled for June 21, 2005. She advised the applicant that she would provide him with a letter detailing what he would need to provide to the HDC.

632 Locust (Case #: IHA 05-0104)

The owner, Bob Miller was present to discuss the application. The application requests the addition of a metal grate over the glass on the side door to the apartments facing Duffield Court.

Mr. Miller advised that the door facing the street has 24" x 58" safety glass and he has had to replace it 3 times in two years due to vandalism. The grate measures 2' x 5' and will be painted black. It is the only door into the rental unit and Mr. Miller wants to provide security for his tenants. The door is original to the building and the applicant hopes to save it. The theory is that the grill should prevent vandals from kicking out the glass.

Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the application as proposed. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote.

Ms. Poole-Woldring voted against the motion.

Mr. Miller is proposing to use ½" bar with 3" spaces. Accordingly, there will be either 8 bars with 7 openings or possibly 9 bars with 8 openings depending on the layout. There was general consensus among the commission that this would be acceptable.

1007 S. Westnedge (Case #: IHA 05-0026)

No one appeared to represent the property. The application requests that a barrier free ramp be built on the front of the house to accommodate the handicapped tenant. The owner supports the addition of a ramp and has provided a letter. The ramp will be a freestanding structure, not attached directly to the house. The front steps will be moved forward and can be moved back into place when the ramp is removed.

Discussion followed with regard to the location of the ramp. The back of the house would be the least objectionable area for the ramp to be located. However, the area in back is a parking lot for three houses and there is no room for a ramp. The commissioners expressed concern that the applicant was not present to answer questions.

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to instruct the Historic Preservation Coordinator to let the applicant know that the Historic District Commission is not willing to reconsider this application until a representative is present to answer questions. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

819 Locust Place (Case #: IHA 05-0082)

No one appeared to represent the property. The application requests awnings over the east, south and west windows, removal of a the concrete entry stoop and the addition of a front porch.

Discussion followed with regard to the need for more details about the project and that the application was incomplete. Ms. Ferraro advised that a motion wasn't necessary. She stated that she would advise the applicant that there was general consensus among the commissioners that more information was required before a decision could be made.

Minutes (April 19, 2005)

Mr. Snyder requested the following change: page 2, third paragraph from bottom, the sentence should read, "Mr. Nave commented that he would like to see the 24" urns in place, which would be more appropriate."

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the April 19, Historic District Commission Minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Ms. Poole-Woldring, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to adjourn the May 17, 2005 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____