

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

**Minutes
April 18, 2006
5:00 p.m.
DRAFT**

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

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

Members Absent: None

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

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Poole-Woldring called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

AGENDA (April 18, 2006)

Mr. Snyder requested that a status review of properties he inquired about at the March meeting be added to the end of the agenda.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Dean Plichta is awaiting repair estimates for the garage at 418-20 Pearl St., and he has asked that his application be postponed until the May meeting.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the April 18, 2006 HDC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCLAIMER

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

MINUTES (March 21, 2006)

Mr. Snyder requested the following changes to the Minutes: Page 4, the ayes and nays were reversed in the minutes and need to be corrected to show that the motion carried. Page 7, middle of the 2nd paragraph, “don’ts” should be “dонт’s.” Page 9 under 628 S. Park, the 3rd paragraph, after “existing”, replace the word “joist” with “deck.” Page 10, under 614 W. Lovell, for clarity, there are two self-storing storms on the front that are non-conforming and one appears to be a replacement since it’s now a glaring white. Strike, “someone took down the storm door” and insert, “As the inappropriate storm door was being installed, Mr. Snyder advised the installer that the storm door was inappropriate and should not be installed. The inappropriate storm door was, nonetheless, installed about a month later.” Page 11, under 916 Lee Barton Court, at the end of the first sentence add, “of the back porch.” Page 11, set out “217 Merrill” as a header (underline it the same as the previous addresses). Page 11, 5th paragraph, last sentence, add “813 W.” before “South St.” Page 12, in the middle of the first paragraph, “womanized” should be “wolmanized.” Page 12, the last sentence before adjournment should read, “Ms. Ferraro advised that all the HDC can rule on is whether the buildings can come down and the design of the new buildings.”

Ms. Poole-Woldring requested the following changes: Page 4, 2nd to last paragraph, “knob and tub” should be changed to “knob and tube.” Page 6 under 1218 Oak, 3rd paragraph, 3rd line, add “s” to “window.”

With a voice vote, the March 21, 2006 HDC minutes were approved as amended.

902 W. North (Case #: IHV 05-0028)

There was no one present to represent the property. Ms. Ferraro stated that at the last historic district training session, the trainer pointed out some important information about the 60-day deadline and automatic approval of applicants: If an applicant doesn’t appear at the meeting, and there is no written agreement to postpone, it is better to deny the application and have the applicant re-apply. This will avoid the risk of having an application automatically approved after 60 days with no action.

420 Douglas (Case #: IHA 06-0028)

Josh Davis was present to discuss the application. The application requests approval in concept regarding latticed screens for the front porch.

Mr. Davis provided photos showing the front terrace/porch to be enclosed. He wants the area enclosed for more privacy and security. Mr. Davis advised that he is making a distinction between a terrace and a porch. The terrace is being defined as a seasonal extension of a living area. It is not a porch because there are no steps from grade level.

Mr. Davis stated that the proposal will emphasize the arches in the architecture of the house.

Everything in the proposed design is removable. The intention is not to cut into the stucco. However, a few holes will need to be drilled into the stucco and the mantel to anchor the support structure, but those holes can easily be filled and repainted. Following are the two main characteristics of the structure of the design: #1. The support structure will be minimal and must rest on the mantel, it can't rest in front of the terrace or on the floor of the terrace. #2. The support structure and the lattice panels must be perpendicular to the mantel and the arch. Currently, it is not possible to do that because of the 14" offset from the middle of the arch to the middle of the mantle underneath.

The three elements to the appearance of the design are as follows: #1. The arched eyebrows/extenders and the flexible pieces of wood bolted underneath the arch. The eyebrows would project out far enough so that the support structure that's perpendicular to the mantel will also be perpendicular to the overhead arch. #2. The support structure will be minimal. #3. Lattice. Mr. Davis stated that he has found a contractor that can construct the lattice with a lap joint so each piece will fit together for a flat surface. The intention is that the lattice will not be too dainty as that would look Victorian. Mr. Davis inquired as to how far out the eyebrows should reach and how wide the lattice should be. He advised that he would like conceptual approval from the HDC so he can continue to work out the details of the project with Ms. Ferraro.

Mr. Davis provided a brief history of the house. He stated that his house and 3 others were carved out of the west 92½ feet of 427 Stuart around 1909. The house at 420 Douglas is the only one of the 4 that doesn't have an enclosed terrace. He stated that his house most closely resembles 428 Douglas. Accordingly, if the support structure is visible, he would like it to mirror the configuration of the windows on the front porch at 428 Douglas: 3 panels of lattice on the front and two on the side.

(5:30 p.m. – City Commissioner David Anderson arrived.)

The front and rear chimneys were redone with copper flashing a few years ago. The copper has developed a patina and is barely visible above the roofline of the front terrace. It may be necessary or desirable to sheath the eyebrows in copper to appear more harmonious. Also, it would be easy to pitch the copper for water runoff, as opposed to pitching the eyebrow at the arch for drainage.

Mr. Davis advised that he had originally wanted to resurface the floor of the terrace with pressed or stamped concrete. However, Ms. Ferraro suggested cleaning the floor with muratic acid then painting and sealing it so the change would be reversible. The current floor is concrete and the drainage pipes on the terrace could be reconnected if needed.

Mr. Snyder inquired as to how the wood will be pitched to make the eyebrows. Mr. Davis stated that he hoped to find a piece of cedar or cypress, but that he was not certain of the flexibility of either material. Mr. Snyder suggested scoring the wood to increase the flexibility. The copper will protect it from the weather.

Mr. Snyder inquired if there would be screening used on the front porch/terrace behind the lattice, and Mr. Davis responded in the affirmative. Further discussion followed with regard to the framework for the lattice. Mr. Snyder stated that there are sealants that can be used as adhesives and this would eliminate the need for drilling into the stucco. Mr. Davis expressed concern that removal of the adhesive at a later date might cause damage to the stucco. Mr. Snyder advised that, if the stucco is in good shape, the adhesive should not have an adverse effect. Mr. Davis confirmed that the stucco is in good shape. There are wood studs and metal lath behind the stucco. Mr. Nave suggested using fasteners in the stucco. Mr. Davis stated that, if the adhesive works and the wood is flexible enough, he would have no objections to using it.

Mr. Snyder advised against relying on the bolting to accomplish the framing; the curvature of the wood should be established before it is fastened. He suggested using redwood and, after it is kerfed it could be filled with fiberglass resin, which will make it stronger. The kerf lines would be cut across the board about every ½" to 1". The laminated structure will be covered with copper so the kerf lines would not be evident. Mr. Nave suggested bending thin layers of plywood. The first layer of wood would be attached to the stucco and the next layer would be glued (laminated) on top of the first layer of wood. The sill (mantel) will be wood and that is the only area where rot might be a concern. The sill might have to be replaced every 20 years or so. Mr. Nave advised that cypress might last longer; cedar is softer and easier to work with but won't last as long.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval in concept of the proposal for alterations to the front porch/terrace at 420 Davis as presented. The details are to be worked out with the Historic Preservation Coordinator. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF VIOLATIONS DISCUSSED AT THE MARCH HDC MEETING

418 Davis

Mr. Snyder stated that the owner advised that the back storm door was there when she bought the house. There is rust around the bolts on the door. It may have been an old door that was installed, but there is no documentation to show that it wasn't already there.

614 W. Lovell

Ms. Ferraro advised that she hasn't had time to follow up on all the violations that were discussed at the last meeting. She stated that she would continue following up on the violations next week after she returns from a conference. Ms. Ferraro informed the HDC that she would write a letter to the owners of 614 W. Lovell (behind the Dairy Mart) about the violation regarding the railing. This property is under new ownership.

Mr. Snyder requested that the violations he inquired about be added to the next HDC agenda. Ms. Ferraro stated that she hoped to have a comprehensive violation report prepared for the May HDC meeting.

611 W. South

Mr. Nave advised that a fake-stone chimney had been constructed on the east side of this house late last year and the scaffolding is still there. There are now two chimneys next to each other. Ms. Ferraro advised that she would add this property to her list of violations for follow-up.

723 W. South St.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she visited the site when the excavation first began in early summer. She took pictures when she returned in October and didn't observe any changes in the window wells. However, the owner will be getting a letter about the railing for the stairs leading to the second story, which has been extensively altered.

902 W. North St.

Ms. Ferraro stated that she'd had a confrontation with the mason on this project when he came to the Development Center to speak with her. City staff was nearly forced to call public safety because of his behavior. A stop work order has been placed on the project. The mason was advised of the need for a new application to be submitted to the HDC detailing the changes to be made. Ms. Ferraro advised that she had sent a letter to Mr. Payne, the owner, giving him some choices as to how the violations could be remedied. The only response she received was a drawing and notes from Mr. Payne.

Mr. Snyder commented that the massing is inappropriate and that it would not be appropriate to add more massing. He advised of the need to review the minutes from the meeting when this matter was initially discussed. Ms. Ferraro commented that the application was reviewed at the November 2005 meeting. Accordingly, there was no expectation that work would resume until spring. Since the owner initiated work on this project again recently, it would be appropriate to have a specific deadline for remedy of the violation. This would also allow city staff to pursue the enforcement process. The owner can appeal the denial.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Decker, moved denial of the request to keep the bolsters at 902 W. North St. intact, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines numbers 6 & 9. Remedial action is to be completed within 90 days of this meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the owner would receive violation letters if the violations were not corrected within the 90-day time frame. Mr. Decker inquired as to why a building permit was not pulled. Ms. Ferraro stated that the mason advised that the footings are adequate, but that is not an issue with which she would be dealing.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Oudsema advised scheduling the first applicant for 5:00. He expressed concern that there are too many gaps and the commission is waiting too long. Ms. Ferraro stated that she would revert back to the previous scheduling pattern.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to adjourn the April 18, 2006 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Dated: _____

Reviewed by: _____
(Historic Preservation Coordinator)

Dated: _____

Approved by: _____
(HDC Chair)

Dated: _____