

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
February 20, 2007
DRAFT

City Commission Chambers
2nd Floor, City Hall
241 W. South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49019

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Poole-Woldring called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

AGENDA (February 20, 2006)

Ms. Ferraro stated that the applicant for 838 Davis would not be present this evening. She advised that the HDC could proceed with this application or postpone it until a later date. She requested that 1013 S. Park Street be added to the end of the agenda.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the February 20, 2007 Historic District Commission agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the preservation awards judging will be held on Saturday March 17th, not on the 19th as stated on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

DISCLAIMER

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

838 W. Cedar (IHV 06-0137)

There was no one present to represent this property.

803 W. Lovell (Case #: IHA 07-0022)

Randy Ellis was present to discuss the application. The application requests replacement of a non-historic fanlight east side door with a solid wood door with applied surface “panels” and new window.

Mr. Ellis advised that the existing door is deteriorated and he would like to replace it. The replacement door will need to be modified. The door currently has a single vertical window near the door knob and he proposed to add a second matching window. He also wants to miter two panels beneath the lights to make the door look similar to the Italianate style.

Mr. Snyder suggested that it might be easier to install an old door from the Heritage Company. Mr. Ellis stated that the door he’s proposing to install is the same size as the existing door and opening. The door he found at the Heritage Company would have to be cut down to size by about 1” on the width and 2” to 3” on the height. The door the applicant is proposing to use is solid wood with a ¼” laminate of plywood on the both sides. Mr. Snyder mentioned that the east door on Locust Street is now the primary entrance; the door on Lovell used to be the primary entrance at some point in time. The applicant’s proposal is an attempt in the right direction, but will still be exaggerated in its dimensions. Mr. Snyder inquired as to the details of the door. Mr. Ellis stated that it is a solid core door with ¼” hardwood laminate on both the interior and exterior. The door from the Heritage Company is a ½ light with muntins and would require a significant amount of restoration. Mr. Snyder stated that a more traditional historic door would be preferable. He suggested having a custom door made or retro fitting a door from the Heritage Company.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if the applicant was confident that he could make the door look appropriate. Mr. Ellis advised that he has a carpenter who takes care of the woodwork on his properties. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the door from the Heritage Company had a window that was broken into 8 or 9 true divided lites.

(5:25 p.m. – Mr. Nave arrived.)

Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the trim is applied to the surface of the door the applicant wants to install. Mr. Snyder commented that the proposed door has extremely elongated, narrow window. Historically, he felt that the glass wouldn’t extend down as far on the door. The proportions are a little different than what might have been there originally. Mr. Tribu commented that if the design is acceptable and the applicant wants to do the work, what he’s proposing should not be a problem. Ms. Ferraro stated that the door on

Locust Street was a secondary door and should not look like the grand door that is on the front of the house. Ms. Ferraro added that she thought that the applicant was proposing a reasonable design.

Mr. Snyder agreed that this would be a better option than using the door with the divided lites.

Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Oudsema, moved approval of the installation of the proposed new door with applied surface panels and new window at 803 W. Lovell as specified in the application. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

805 S. Park (Case #: IHA 07-0014)

Matt Bartz was present to discuss the application. The application requests the addition of a roof over the north side staircase door to direct water away from the landing. This matter is on the agenda for a discussion of design ideas.

Ms. Ferraro stated that it appears the staircase was added in the 1920's. Water cascading off this addition is causing damage to the main portion of the house. She suggested constructing either a gable or hipped roof over the porch and extending it from the existing cat slide roof. Mr. Bartz presented a historic photo of the house for Ms. Ferraro and the commissioners to look at. Discussion followed at the dais. The applicant advised that he would like to have a metal, standing-seam roof on the east wing of the house. It would cover the stair and back, east wing of the house.

(5:35 p.m.- Ms. DeYoung arrived.)

Mr. Nave suggested using a silver galvanized roof, which would not have to be painted. Mr. Bartz suggested mimicking the color of copper patina with a light green paint or the roof could be painted silver. Ms. Ferraro stated that the HDC does have a say with regard to the roof color.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if Mr. Bartz would also be installing a spindle rail. Mr. Bartz provided a description of what he would like to do and stated that he eventually would like to glass in the porch area. Mr. Bartz stated that he intends to return to the HDC with more details about his plan.

Ms. Ferraro suggested looking at roofing material that comes with a baked on finish and comparing the price with the type of roofing that needs to be painted. Mr. Nave mentioned that, in the past, the HDC has requested a medium to dark tone for the roof color. Ms. Ferraro stated that those colors would be used if the applicant were trying to mimic cedar shakes, but that is not the case for this application. She advised that she would put this matter on the HDC agenda for next month.

731 Wheaton (Case #: IHA 07-0026)

Melody Stirk was present to discuss the request. The application requests replacement of the rear east basement window with concrete block due to multiple break-ins.

Ms. Stirk advised that the cellar at this address is accessible from the back of the property. A thief has broken in twice through a cellar window and she is hoping that window can be blocked. Mr. Snyder suggested putting a bar on the inside of the window so no one can get in. This would be an inexpensive way to solve the problem and it wouldn't require altering the structure. Mr. Decker commented that an interior bar or screen would still allow light to come in to the basement.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Nave, moved to deny the application for replacement of the rear basement window at 731 Wheaton with concrete block, based on Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines numbers 2, 6, 9 & 10. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

1013 S. Park

Sally Reynolds was present to discuss the request. She advised that the basement windows are rotted. They are covered with plywood and she would like to replace the windows with glass block. Mr. Snyder advised that such a request would require a site visit to determine the condition of the windows.

Ms. Poole-Woldring inquired as to why Ms. Reynolds was requesting glass block and not just replacing the windows. Ms. Reynolds stated that she wants to seal the opening and the glass block would be more secure.

Mr. Nave inquired if the applicant received a brochure on window repair from Ms. Ferraro, and Ms. Reynolds stated that she had not. She commented that there is very little left of the original windows.

Mr. Nave advised that the wood sills can be replaced with something that won't rot. New windows can be installed that will replicate the original windows. A bar or two by four can be installed on the inside of the windows to deter thieves. Ms. Reynolds stated that she doesn't want someone to be able to look through the windows. Mr. Nave suggested that curtains or an adhesive film could be added to accomplish that goal. He advised that the HDC typically doesn't allow glass block. Mr. Snyder commented that glass block has only been allowed in the past under special circumstances when the window ledge is actually below grade. Sometimes yards and driveways are built up over the course of time to the point that water runs into the window wells and they deteriorate. The pictures show that the sill is severely rotted as well as the window frame. Ms. Reynolds stated that there are seven basement windows in need of replacement. Ms. Ferraro advised the applicant that she would contact her to set up a site visit.

838 W. Cedar (Case #: IHV 06-0137)

The applicant was not present to represent this property. The application requests retroactive approval of a guardrail on the west end (left if facing house on Cedar) of the front porch as built, with treated material.

Mr. Snyder, supported by Mr. Oudsema, moved to deny the request for retroactive approval of the guardrail for the front porch at 838 W. Cedar, based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines numbers 2, 6 and 9. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

838 Davis (Case #: IHA 07-0013)

The applicant was not present to represent this property. The application requests retroactive approval of the north, 3rd story casement egress window. The owner wants to install a false muntin to mimic the appearance of a double hung window. This window replaces an inappropriate double hung vinyl window installed by the previous owner.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to postpone the decision on the application for the installation of a false muntin on the 3rd story casement window at 838 Davis until the next HDC meeting. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Minutes (December 19, 2006)

Ms. Poole-Woldring requested that the starting time for the meeting be changed to 5:10 p.m., and the time for her arrival should be changed to 5:12 p.m.

The amended minutes for the December 19, 2006 Historic District Commission meeting were approved by unanimous voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Consideration of Jay Bonsignore's application for the HDC (position to be available after Bill Snyder's term is up at the end of March.)**

Mr. Bonsignore advised that he was on the Housing Board of Appeals (HBA) for 12 years. He is a builder and his considerable knowledge would be a positive contribution to the HDC. He lives in a historic home on Stuart Ave.

Mr. Snyder inquired if the applicant's schedule would allow him to attend the HDC meetings. Mr. Bonsignore stated that there should not be a conflict with his schedule; he only missed one HBA meeting in 12 years.

Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to recommend to the City Commission the approval of Jay Bonsignore to serve on the Historic District Commission. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

2. Appoint two judges to the Preservation Awards.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Erin Seaverson and Josh Wilson from the HPC have volunteered to help with the judging for the Preservation Awards. She inquired if anyone from the HDC would be interested in helping. There are three owner-occupied homes, 1 rental property, the train station and two people – Bill Schomisch and Marty Myers. Mr. Schomisch is the Director of the Transportation Dept. and he has been involved with the transformation of the train station. Marty Myers is the Fire Marshall; he has been submitting grants for sprinklers to be installed in many of the old buildings downtown. The judges will be meeting on March 17th at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Nave and Mr. Tribu both volunteered to help with the judging.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the election of officers for the HDC will be held in April. She requested that any comments on the annual report be directed to her by the end of the week. The report will be submitted for inclusion in the City Commission packet.

March 5th will be the first reading at the City Commission for the proposed new historic districts. The public hearing will be held at the March 19th City Commission meeting. She encouraged the HDC members to be present to speak at that meeting. The portion of the ordinance pertaining to the historic preservation commission and the historic district commission will be updated so that the Historic Preservation Commission will become a permanent Historic District Study Committee. This will eliminate the need to appoint an independent study committee in the future and will help expedite the process in the future. Ms. Ferraro will send a reminder to the HDC members regarding the City Commission meetings. She inquired if any of the HDC members would be interested in taking a tour of the W. Main Hill neighborhood after it becomes a district; Ms. Poole-Woldring responded in the affirmative.

Ms. DeYoung inquired if 531 Eleanor was being moved. Ms. Ferraro advised that it was not being moved. The applicants for that address have appealed the decision made by the HDC last year. There will be a hearing at the state level on April 12th, which Ms. Ferraro will be attending along with someone from the City Attorney's office. The appeal for the side door at 523 Eleanor will be on March 20th.

Ms. DeYoung that Willis and Willis has moved from 628 S. Park Street; there is a for sale sign in front of the building. Ms. Ferraro stated that she is drafting a letter for the realtor regarding the outstanding violation at that address. The violation goes with the building.

Ms. Poole-Woldring inquired if an appropriate screen door had been installed at 820 W. Lovell, and Ms. Ferraro responded in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. Poole-Woldring, moved to adjourn the February 20, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____
(Staff Liaison)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
(HDC Chair)