

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

Minutes  
June 19, 2007

City Commission Chambers  
2<sup>nd</sup> 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; James Tribu

Members Excused: Jay Bonsignore

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

Guests: David Anderson, City Commissioner

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Poole-Woldring called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF ABSENCES**

Mr. Bonsignore's absence was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA (June 19, 2007)**

There were no changes to the agenda.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the June 19, 2007 HDC Agenda as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**DISCLAIMER**

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**228 Rose Place (Case #: IHA 07-0200)**

Robert Besser was present to discuss the application. The application requests removal of the chimney throughout the house. The chimney is currently not used for venting a furnace or water heater.

Mr. Besser stated that he would like to remove the chimney because it runs through his living room. The chimney will remain in the basement because it is load bearing at that level. Removing the chimney will add 1/3 the size of the living room to the living space.

Ms. Ferraro stated that there is no evidence of a fireplace in the living room. Mr. Besser mentioned that two of his neighbors on Rose Place have also removed their chimneys. Ms. Ferraro commented that the chimney isn't very visible from the road.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the demolition of the chimney at 228 Rose Place per the applicant's request. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote.**

**Ayes: DeYoung, Oudsema, Poole-Woldring, Decker, Tribu  
Naves: Nave**

**813 W. South Street (Case #: IHA 07-0198)**

Richard Emig was present to discuss the application. The application requests a new sign in the front yard.

Mr. Emig advised that he has owned Spaman Jewelers since 1976 and he would like to move his jewelry sales to the house at 813 W. South Street. A number of improvements have already been made to the property. Mr. Emig wants to replicate the sign from 112 W. South. The sign and posts will be metal rather than wood to deter vandals. The Thomas Jacob sign that was in the same location was vandalized twice. The old sign was 3'6" x 7'; the new sign will be 3' x 8'. The sign will be double sided. Mr. Emig stated that he wants continuity and, therefore, he wants to keep the same sign design so customers will recognize it.

Mr. Emig stated that when the Park building was torn down, a number of tenants from that building began renting from him in this former home turned into office space. All the office spaces are rented and the existing sign hanging off the front porch column will continue to list the tenant businesses.

Mr. Nave inquired if this matter had been reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Ferraro commented that she didn't think this request would require a variance. Mr. Emig stated that the new sign will be in the same location as the old sign.

Mr. Nave questioned if this property was zoned for office use. Mr. Emig advised that it is zoned for commercial, office and retail. A grocery store would not be allowed in this location, but the proposed use would be acceptable. Mr. Nave advised that he was concerned about the proposed use in the South Street location and that he would abstain from voting. Ms. Ferraro stated that the applicant has spoken with Mr. Eldridge in the zoning department.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the proposed sign for 813 W. South Street with the understanding that the sign is to be double sided. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote.**

**Ayes: Oudsema, Poole-Woldring, Decker, Tribu**

**Nays: DeYoung**

**Abstain: Nave**

**1408 W. Michigan (Waldo's) (Case #: IHA 07-0202)**

Martis Pone was present to discuss the application. The application requests the installation of a fenced beer garden at the rear of the property.

Ms. Ferraro advised that this is the first application from the new West Main Hill historic district. The Zoning Board of Appeals approved this request last Thursday. Mr. Pone stated that the request was also approved by the liquor control commission and Public Safety, with the stipulation that an 8 foot fence would be installed. The proposal is for a combination stockade and chain link fence. Public Safety has requested that the fence near the gate be as visually open as possible. The gates will be black chain link not metal. The fence will be framed in cedar.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if a 6-foot tall ornamental fence would be appropriate. Mr. Pone indicated that patrons could too easily pass drinks through an ornamental fence.

Mr. Nave inquired if the chain link would be vinyl-coated and Mr. Pone responded in the affirmative. The fenced beer garden will have a two foot planter on the inside with the fence on top. Ms. Ferraro advised that the bottom two feet of the fence will be a planter and the fence will be on top of that.

Mr. Pone advised that the lighting will be aimed into the trees as much as possible. There will also be canteen lights and decorative lighting in the umbrellas which will shine down. The existing trees will remain. Mr. Pone commented that the fence will not be readily visible; you might be able to see it from Monroe St.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Oudsema, moved approval of the application as submitted for 1408 W. Michigan. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**715 Wheaton (IHA 07-0200)**

Douglas Tyler, II, the contractor for this project, was present to discuss the application. The application requests replacement of the glass in the upper sash of the west side, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor window with obscuring glass to accommodate the new attic staircase. The application also requests reconfiguring of the attic window in the east gable to accommodate the installation of an egress window.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the existing stairway is narrow and steep and the applicant wants to change the way it is configured. Mr. Tyler stated that the changes are being requested in order to bring the stairs up to code for rise and run and ceiling height. The window egress is also required by the building code as an emergency exit from a sleeping room.

Mr. Nave questioned if these changes were necessary in an owner-occupied home. Mr. Tyler advised that the building code has light and ventilation requirements that these changes will facilitate.

Mr. Oudsema commented that this issue is apropos if the house is owner-occupied. Ms. Ferraro agreed that this statement might be true with regard to the egress, but it was necessary to add the windows. She stated that the attic window sill is at the existing floor level and would be below the new floor. Mr. Tyler added that the window is a safety hazard as is. It must either be raised or tempered glass must be installed.

Mr. Oudsema commented that egress windows detract from the appearance of buildings and that he is usually in opposition to having them installed. However, because this property is in such great shape and it has been well cared for, he advised that he would support the installation of the proposed egress window with the understanding that the house will be owner-occupied.

Mr. Tyler advised that the owners are a brother and sister whose parents died last year. The siblings are redoing the house with the intention of living there.

Mr. Nave inquired if there was a better solution for the exterior appearance of the east egress window. The applicant proposes removing the existing horizontal window and installing a vertical casement. The "infill" for the former window area is proposed to be flat exterior grade plywood. He suggested having a tall window in the middle with smaller lites on the each side, rather than filling in the space with wood panels – like a Palladian window. Mr. Tyler advised that the problem is the logistics; the window is below the floor and that is a safety hazard. Also, it would not be possible to replicate the existing cedar shingles with staggered butts. Ms. Ferraro suggested leaving the window

opening but filling in with fish scale siding rather than flat boards. If the work is approved, the original window sash is to be stored in the house.

Mr. Tyler advised that there is no insulated glass in the windows, which currently have tape on them. Ms. Ferraro stated that this is not an easy window to see because the adjacent house blocks the view.

Ms. Ferraro suggested extending the window frame down to have the appearance of a window. Tempered glass could be placed on the outside and it could be made to look like two sashes. Mr. Nave suggested using flat cedar shingles stained to match the rest of the gable. Mr. Tyler stated that the original window opening would be retained and flat, thin shingles would be applied as infill around the new window.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the application for 715 Wheaton with the proposed changes: infill wood panel with flat cedar shingles. The bottom edge of the rows of new shingles is to line up with the existing shingles and obscuring glass is to be placed on the west window. The inside of the window glass is to be painted black. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**304 Sprague (Case #: IHA 07-0201)**

James Escamilla and Doug Burroughs were present to discuss the application. The application requests additions to the rear and north side first floor with an upper deck.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if the applicant wanted the tax credit and Ms. Ferraro advised that the tax credit would not be available for the addition. Mr. Escamilla stated that he would like a larger back entrance and screened in porch.

(5:52 p.m. - Commissioner Anderson left the meeting.)

Mr. Nave commented that the back of the house looks commercial because of the proposed use of a double door as compared to the rest of the house. The double glass entrance looks too commercial; it should have a historic door with side panels; the top half of the door should be glass rather than having a full window door. Mr. Nave referred to the lower gable in the picture of the porch. The entrance gable is the same. The gable on the second floor is good.

Mr. Oudsema advised that he was careful to keep the scale the same when he did his addition. He stated that he had no problem with the presentation and it seemed to be the consensus of the HDC that what's being proposed is acceptable.

**Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the application as presented for 304 Sprague. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**702 S. Rose (Case #: IHA 07-0203)**

Nancy Arcadipone was present to discuss the application. The application requests removal of the deteriorated garage and reconfiguration of the exterior rear balcony and stair.

Ms. Arcadipone advised that this property is a rental. There has been an extensive renovation on the front. The metal porch posts will be replaced with appropriate wood pillars.

The small balcony porch on the west/ rear is supported by the roof above the carport. The applicant wants to keep the balcony and install a new staircase to the 2<sup>nd</sup> doorway. There are two apartments at this address; one on the first floor and one on the second floor. The car port, really more like a drive-through garage is also in poor shape and the applicant wants to have it removed.

Mr. Oudsema commented that it doesn't look bad and that the roofline appears to be a good point of egress if there's a fire. Ms. Arcadipone advised that the "egress" had been used for purposes other than an emergency exit and she has safety concerns about people using it on a regular basis.

Mr. Nave inquired if closing in the back of the garage would be a possible option. Ms. Arcadipone stated that there isn't one good piece of wood on the garage. Mr. Tribu commented that he thought the garage was not really all that deteriorated.

Ms. Poole-Woldring inquired as to the history of the garage. Ms. Ferraro stated that it appears to be from the 1920's; it's not original to the house. Ms. Poole-Woldring mentioned that the garage has attained its own historic value. Ms. Ferraro commented that it may be doing active damage to the house. The applicant concurred and added that OSB has been applied to the west wall of the house inside the garage and that leaks along the line where the garage roof is joined to the house have saturated the OSB from behind. The garage as it is currently configured is doing structural damage to the house.

Mr. Nave questioned what the new structure would look like once the old garage is removed. He stressed that the new stairway needs to be an appropriate design. Ms. Ferraro advised that the balcony is not necessary for egress. She commented that the door onto the balcony cannot remain if it is no longer used as a door.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the request to demolish the carport at 702 South Rose St. and that the applicant return to the HDC with more detailed drawings of the staircase for the back elevation. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Ferraro commented that when the car port is removed, it might be possible to see what used to be there. She added that a roof would not be required over the staircase.

### **MINUTES (May 15, 2007)**

Ms. DeYoung referred to page 4, the first paragraph after the motion, second line, the steps are to be “rebuilt.”

**The May 15, 2007 HDC minutes were approved, as amended, by unanimous voice vote.**

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Ferraro advised that the West Main Hill Neighborhood Association has applied for a new sign at Henderson Park. The application wasn't turned in before the deadline for the June meeting. The applicant is still working out the details with MDOT and the city parks Department. Sign Writer is working on this project.

Mr. Nave mentioned that if 813 W. South Street is going to be used for retail, that is a change of use which will be subject to the barrier-free code.

Mr. Nave requested an update on the wall at 530 W. South Street. Ms. Ferraro advised that she sent a deficiency violation letter to the owners. The letter stated that the owners must submit a written plan to city staff by July 15<sup>th</sup> or an appearance ticket will be issued. One of the owners called to advise that they are having a problem with the contractor and that the custom iron fencing has been sold by the contractor. Ms. Ferraro advised the owner to put the information in writing; a written work plan and narrative should be submitted to city staff.

Mr. Decker requested an update regarding 531 Eleanor St. Ms. Ferraro stated that it is still on appeal at the state level, but there should be a decision in September. On the appeal at 523 Eleanor, Ms. Ferraro went to the appeal in Lansing, and after an informal discussion with the judge Amanda Terberg, for O'Brien realty, agreed to investigate placing separate electrical cut-offs in the apartments. A closer investigation revealed that there were already separate electrical boxes in each unit. The door will be removed, and Ms. Ferraro has issued a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the historic district orientation is Thursday, June 21st. Only one RSVP has been received. A mock HDC meeting is schedule to take place at the orientation. Ms. Ferraro advised that she would be at city hall in case anyone showed up for the orientation. She will e-mail the HD commissioners to advise if the mock HDC meeting will take place.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to adjourn the June 19, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_