

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**  
**August 21, 2007**

2<sup>nd</sup> floor, City Hall  
City Commission Chambers  
241 W. South St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Lisa Poole-Woldring, Chair; Fred Decker, Vice Chair; Jay Bonsignore; Linda DeYoung; Nelson Nave; James Tribu

Members Excused: Bob Oudsema

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**APPROVAL OF ABSENCES**

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

**AGENDA (8-21-07)**

There were no changes to the agenda.

The August 21, 2007 Historic District Commission Agenda was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**DISCLAIMER**

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **610 S. Rose (IHA 07-0297)**

Rob Chamberlin, the owner, was present to discuss the application. The application requests the replacement of garage doors. He wants to replicate 1920's doors to be installed on the front of the garage. He also wants to add a set of similar double doors on the north side of the garage, where they will not be visible from the street. There is currently a five-foot original opening on the side of the garage and Mr. Chamberlin would like to enlarge the opening to six feet to accommodate 2, 3-foot doors to open onto the garden/back yard. The opening on the front of the garage is 7 feet and there will be two new 3 ½ feet doors on the front of the garage. The doors would have a 3 over 3 lite pattern but would be 6 inches smaller. Old barn beams made from white oak planks would be used for making the rails and stiles. Old bead board, which has never been nailed or painted, would be used for the panels.

Mr. Chamberlin is also rebuilding the front of the garage and installing a new foundation. The addition on the front was removed and reframed to tie in the rooflines correctly. The garage was touching the house, but he moved it back to make room for the gutter. Mr. Bonsignore commented that this constitutes more than just a repair, so the applicant will need approval from the HDC. Mr. Chamberlin stated that he elevated the garage in order to remove the bottom plate, which had deteriorated. He then re-poured the footings. The slab had been sub-grade and the siding was buried in dirt. Mr. Chamberlin received administrative approval for this work.

Mr. Nave inquired about the three windows currently hanging on the outside of the north side of the garage. He stated that the neighbor's garage is about 20 inches away from his garage, and he would like to move the windows to the garden side with one window on each side of the new double doors. Mr. Nave inquired if there would be a window on each side of the double doors? Mr. Chamberlin indicated that he had been contemplating that configuration and that he is open to suggestions. The other window to the left is from the south side of the garage and it will be reinstalled in that location possibly with obscuring glass.

**Mr. Bonsignore, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the south window to be moved to the north side of the garage. The size of the opening on the side of the garage is to be increased from 5 feet to 6 feet. Appropriate doors as pictured in the application are to be installed on the garage. The siding and trim are to be installed to match the original. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### **615 W. Vine St. (Case #: IHA 07-0302)**

Ernie Clapp was present to discuss the application. The application requests construction of a stone wall and arch in the back yard.

Mr. Clapp advised that this house was built in 1876. He wants to add to the stone fireplace approved by the HDC 2003 in the back yard. The stonewall Mr. Clapp built facing Vine St. was from homes torn down in the Vine Neighborhood over a period of time. Mr. Clapp commented that he is not restoring what is there but rather trying to make something new with salvaged materials. The square-cut stone for the proposed wall is from several houses that were torn down. The capstones will be from city curbing stone that was installed in 1905; eighteen inches of the curbing was below ground for a number of years. Mr. Clapp would like to use that curbing to construct a small 35' stone fence with an arch in the back yard on the driveway (east) side. The stone wall will be in front (north) of the fireplace and facing the back door of the house. He would also like to construct a large planter from square-cut stone and green stone that was salvaged from the Italianate near the Upjohn Institute. The Italianate was torn down around 1965. Mr. Clapp advised that he purchased the material from a lady across the street and he wants to preserve it by incorporating it into the proposed design. Mr. Clapp would also like to construct a grape arbor in stone. He advised that his intention is to leave the neighborhood better than he found it, and to contribute to the historic value by utilizing salvaged stone from the neighborhood. The intention is to build a 7-foot tall arch by the driveway (east side) so as an entry to the back yard. The new wall would be between the fireplace and the yard. On the inside of the stone fence in front of the fireplace, there will be an approximately 12" to 18" area for plantings. On the other side by the boardwalk, there would be a tall tiered flower box constructed of stone. The applicant is still working out the details of the foundation.

Mr. Bonsignore commented about the measurements that were provided in the drawings. He inquired if the 24 inches referred to the walkway. Mr. Clapp advised that it did not; it was for the soil that would remain. He approached the dais to provide further information about the measurements on the drawing.

**Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the proposed stone wall and arch for 615 W. Vine Street as presented. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Clapp stressed the importance of historic preservation. He thanked Ms. Ferraro for doing a wonderful job as the Historic Preservation Coordinator.

**901 S. Westnedge (Case #: IHA 07-0305)**

Mike Roche was present to discuss the application. The application requests removal of the existing structure at the south end of the building, and rebuilding with the addition of a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to be used as living space.

Mr. Roche advised that the flat-roofed area of the building has been neglected for quite some time. He bought the property six years ago. Estimates to repair the flat roof and the east end of the building were high so Mr. Roche explored the possibility of adding a

second floor over the south end of the building. Extensive research has determined that the southern portion is not an original part of the building. The north side of the building is original; it was constructed in 1924 and used as an architect's office. Mr. Roche stated that he is trying to restore as much of the building as possible. It is a 3,000 square foot building with a courtyard in back. He is working on a floor plan that will accommodate the commercial use on the lower level and the residential use on the upper level. Two parking spaces will be added in the back. Seven or eight feet of the foundation in the back is cement block. Other than that portion, the foundation appears to be adequate for adding a second level. Mr. Roche advised that he has considered what future owners might want to do with the property after he's gone. Since it might be used for retail space, the parking in back would be helpful.

Mr. Nave inquired as to the two existing businesses in the building. Mr. Roche advised that he has a recording studio and his partner, Allison, has a photography studio. The building will be owner-occupied.

Mr. Nave mentioned that his business partner, Mike Blied is the architect for this project. The reception area of this building is in the Frank Lloyd Wright style, and resembles his office in Oak Park. The front room has a half barrel ceiling with trim and plaster similar to what Frank Lloyd Wright used in his Oak Park studio. Ms. Ferraro stated that Ernest Batterson designed the First Methodist Church on Bronson Park and the Old Douglass Community Center on Ransom Street. He designed a huge range of buildings from humble homes to fancy buildings.

Mr. Roche stated that he met with Marjorie Batterson, the daughter-in-law of Ernest Batterson. She advised that the building had been used as a polling station in the past. It has also been a book store, a dry cleaner, and a restaurant. Ms. Batterson showed Mr. Roche old photographs of the interior of the building as it appeared many years ago, and she shared with him some memories she had of the building. Mr. Roche advised that the roof drains are full of moss and sod and there are many leaks in the roof.

Ms. Ferraro stated that Mr. Roche is looking for approval in concept for the project he is proposing. Mr. Roche advised that the south side roof drain on Westnedge Court broke off and water drained down the side of the building. The back wall (east corner) has a drain in the courtyard, but an ice dam rotted the back entrance.

Mr. Nave referred to the arch Mr. Roche wants to add to the front door. He inquired if the old arch in the office had muntins, and Mr. Roche advised that it did not. Mr. Nave suggested that the new arch should match the old one or have a single light or peephole. Ms. Ferraro commented that the door should correspond with the use of the building on the ground floor at the south end. If that area is used for a commercial purpose, it might be appropriate to have a more inviting door to welcome customers. Mr. Roche stated that it would be the entrance to the residential area. Ms. Ferraro suggested having a

paneled door with a window at the top for the residential use. Some doors are available with shatter resistant windows.

Mr. Bonsignore inquired as to the plan for blending the new construction with the existing structure. The depiction shows narrow siding as opposed to the wider siding on the existing building. Mr. Roche stated that the new siding could match the width of the original 8" siding if that was the preference. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the new part should be distinguishable from the original in some way. She commented that the new construction will be two-story and that will set it apart from the old building. She left the decision regarding the siding up to the HDC. Mr. Nave mentioned that the wider siding might be less expensive and less labor intensive to install. He suggested matching the trim to the rest of the building. There was a sloped roof on the building at one point, and he also suggested reverting to the flatter roof to match the rest of the building. The new construction and fascia is starting to blend in with the old building. Mr. Nave inquired if there would be a gutter on the alley side. Mr. Roche advised that the roof slopes to the back so he wasn't sure where the gutters should be placed. Mr. Nave stated that only one gutter would be needed in this instance.

**Mr. Bonsignore, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the removal of the south end of the building as proposed and approval in concept of the two-story addition. The plans are to be reviewed by the HDC prior to final approval. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Ferraro advised that the siding width, trim details, doors and windows are to be addressed in the final details.

Discussion followed with regard to the chimney examples in the pictures provided. Ms. Ferraro advised that the Parchment Chimney Company constructed the chimneys in the photos.

#### **MINUTES (July 17, 2007)**

Ms. DeYoung requested the following changes to the minutes: Page 4, about half way down the page, "exiting" should be "existing." Page 5, under 1553 Grand Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, the 2<sup>nd</sup> line should read, "....the trim on the addition will match the existing trim." Page 8, under 530 W. South St., about 1/2 way down the page, insert "be" before "installed."

**Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Bonsignore, moved approval of the July 17, 2007 Historic District Commission Minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Poole-Woldring requested an update regarding 530 W. South St. Ms. Ferraro advised that there has been no further contact from the owners, and a ticket will probably be issued for this property shortly.

Ms. Ferraro stated that a 49-page Proposal for Decision was issued by Judge Jones regarding 531 Eleanor, which supported the decision made by the HDC. Both parties can respond to the Judge's ruling. This issue will be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Commission on September 14<sup>th</sup> in Lansing. The church can still appeal to the Circuit Court. The SEV on the 531 Eleanor property is only \$1,000 less than the amount that was estimated for repair of the exterior. The rosary garden is a moot point since they can have it elsewhere on the property they already own. Neither house (527 or 531 Eleanor) has sold. The cash value of both houses is listed at \$103,000 (combined price for both houses). There was some question as to why the church was trying to sell the houses for \$125,000 (combined price for both houses) since that might not be considered a good faith effort to sell the properties.

Ms. Ferraro stated that she received an application to join the Historic District Commission from former City Attorney Robert Cinabro. There are currently no openings on the HDC, but the application will be kept on file for future reference.

Mr. Nave requested an update regarding the house on the northeast corner of Cedar and Locust. Ms. Ferraro advised that the owner made arrangements through KNHS (Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services) to repair the roof. The owner has applied for funds in the past but hasn't followed through with the repairs. This property has reached the point where it might need to be referred to the DBB (Dangerous Buildings Board).

Ms. Ferraro referred to the address on 1019 S. Park St. where the owner had requested glass block for the basement windows. The owner decided to put in regular windows instead.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Nave, moved to adjourn the August 21, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Recording Secretary)

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

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Staff Liaison)

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

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(HDC Chair)

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