

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
September 18, 2007
DRAFT

City Commission Chambers
2nd floor, City Hall
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 5:06 p.m.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Mr. Oudsema advised that he would not be present for the September 18th HDC meeting.

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

AGENDA (September 18, 2007)

There were no changes to the agenda.

The September 18, 2007 HDC 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

1218 Oak St. (Case #: IHA 07-0347)

Lance Ferraro was present to discuss the application. The application requests replacement of deteriorated side-hinged garage doors with an overhead door on a single car detached garage.

Mr. Ferraro advised that he would like to have the existing wood doors replaced with an uninsulated metal door. He is looking for guidance regarding the style of door to be installed. The side door would be replaced with a new wood door to match the old one. Ms. Ferraro stated that there are no windows in the proposed door or the existing door.

Ms. Poole-Woldring inquired if the old doors would be stored on the property. Mr. Ferraro stated that one of the doors is badly damaged.

Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the garage doors as proposed for 1218 Oak Street. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Tribu mentioned that it might be possible to get new paneled doors to mimic the older style doors. Mr. Ferraro advised that he tried to get as close to the configuration of the existing doors as possible. Ms. Ferraro stated that she would assist with the search for appropriate doors for the garage. (Note: Lance Ferraro is the preservation coordinator's father.)

1615 Grand Ave. (Case #: IHA 07-0351)

Ed Brezrnsky, builder, was present to discuss the application. The application requests the construction of a new 2-car garage facing Henderson Court. The final details are to be presented at the meeting.

Mr. Bonsignore advised that he would be working on this project so he would abstain from voting.

Mr. Nave inquired if the zoning was approved for this project, and Mr. Brezrnsky responded in the affirmative. The site plan shows that the back, left corner of the garage is closest to the property line; it is a very odd-shaped property. Mr. Bonsignore referred to the site plan and stated that the southwest/lower left corner of the garage would be about 4.5 feet from the street. The southeast/lower right corner is about 22 feet from the street. The white fence in the photos is on the east property line; the 26 foot wall of the garage runs parallel to that fence. Mr. Brezrnsky stated that the area where the owners want the garage is narrower at the back than it is at the front; if the garage were turned, it would infringe on the setback requirements. The lot is so narrow at the back that 16 feet

is all the room there is at that point. The east wall of the garage is parallel to the east property line.

Mr. Nave suggested incorporating some arts and crafts features to relate the garage to the house. Ms. Ferraro advised that it does have a frieze board. She mentioned the necessity of differentiating between the historic home and the new construction of the garage. Mr. Bonsignore stated that the house has exposed rafter tails, but there is not enough room for exposed rafter tails on the garage. There is minimal overhang because of the setbacks. The trim is also in scale with the building.

Mr. Nave inquired as to how the “man” door and the gables and columns would look; discussion continued at the dais. Mr. Bonsignore suggested chamfered corners on the 4 x 4 wolmanized posts. Mr. Brezrnsky suggested putting a stepped, flat detail on the posts to mimic the craftsman style and match the front of the house. Bumping out the roof of the garage also picks up the dormer details on the house. Mr. Nave suggested having a square or triangular gable vent at the top. Mr. Bonsignore stated that there will be no need for a vent since there will be no ceiling in the garage.

Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to approve the application for the garage at 1615 Grand Ave. with ¾” trim around the 4 x 4’s, with chamfered corners to be about two feet above the ground and trim around the gable vents. The garage door details are to be worked out with the Historic Preservation Coordinator. With a voice vote, the motion carried by a majority vote.

Ayes: Nave, DeYoung, Poole-Woldring, Decker, Tribu

Abstain: Bonsignore

Mr. Nave advised putting a dark drip edge on the roof.

350 E. Michigan Ave. (Case #: IHA 07-0322)

Mac Waldorf, developer, and Steve Vanden Busche, architect, were present to discuss the application. The application requests the following: 1. Exterior masonry restoration; 2. Window and door replacement; 3. Balcony restoration; 4. Exterior painting; 5. Exterior lighting; 6. Awning and flag replacement.

Mr. Waldorf provided a brief review of the process the applicants went through to purchase the building. They are hoping to attract tenants from outside the city, not just local businesses. The goal is to make improvements to the building and still provide space at market rate. The skylight on the roof will be replaced with translucent material as was used on the Food Dance building at 401 East Michigan. That panel is approximately 15 feet wide by about 80 feet long. This will provide 30 to 40% emission retention for the building, which is fine for the public areas (15% of the building). The remaining 48,000 square feet is tenant space. A majority of the front windows are double

hung, double pane windows installed as part of the restoration of the building in the mid 1980s and they have lost their seals. The south building has the original steel sash windows and sliding storm windows; some of them are operable, but most are not. Mr. Waldorf advised that the applicants would like to replace the old, steel windows with new, energy efficient windows.

Mr. Nave stated that this building was a federal tax credit building/property in 1986. As a condition to receiving the tax credit, the previous owners were required to keep the steel windows and replace the wood windows.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if this building was damaged from the tornado in 1980. Mr. Waldorf advised that he didn't have any record of such damage occurring. According to the pictures, there appeared to be no damage from the tornado. At that time, the Pitcher Street buildings were not attached. They were later connected by the rear stairwell. They were originally two wings off the front building. There had been windows all the way down the east and west wings but they were replaced with hallway doors and office suite doors at some point.

Mr. Nave inquired if there were any other old pictures available. Ms. Ferraro stated that she had presented all of the information she could find, but other pictures may exist. The original entrance to the building was under the balcony further west facing Michigan Ave.

Mr. Nave was agreeable with regard to replacement of the steel windows with the examples shown by the applicant. He suggested that the grills be inside, outside and between the panes so they look real. Mr. Nave advised that the second piece of wood trim on the frame of the double hung windows was probably added with the replacement windows in 1986 and is not original to the windows.

Ms. Ferraro stated that one over one metal double hung windows may be acceptable for this application.

Mr. Nave questioned covering the stone window sills with latex modified parge coat because it makes them look like they have a latex coating rather than stone. The latex turns the stone white. You can put it on the sill so rain won't penetrate that area, and you can leave the limestone face as is. Mr. Bonsignore referred to page 2 of the Building Restoration Proposal and stated that the material proposed to be painted with the latex modified parge was concrete not limestone. Mr. Waldorf affirmed that there are some concrete sills on the west side of the building.

Mr. Nave suggested modifying the grills on the transoms of the store front windows facing Michigan Avenue. Mr. Waldorf stated that the transom would have smoked glass. Otherwise, the dropped ceiling and plenum would be visible. Mr. Nave commented that he didn't have a problem with square grills.

The commission discussed the use of 6/6 divided lite windows on the double-hung windows. The owner felt that the divided lites and grills on the double-hung windows provided the desired emphasis. Ms. Ferraro advised that if multiple divided lites are approved, the applicant might not be eligible for the tax credit since the historic photos show single lite windows. Mr. Waldorf stated that they were willing to sacrifice the tax credit for long-term aesthetics. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the HDC is bound by the rules of the Secretary of the Interiors Standards and Guidelines, which would not allow the use of details which mimic historic features. There needs to be proof that the details existing or the details should be neutral. There is evidence to show what was originally there.

Mr. Nave inquired as to the plans for the canopy. Mr. Waldorf stated that the goal is to square up the canopy on the sides. Mr. Nave requested that the applicants return with a sketch of the plans for the canopy. He advised that the canopy should be dark aluminum or steel underneath, and there would typically be no lighting or ceiling under the canopy.

Ms. Ferraro advised that today there appears to be two balconies, but historic photos are different. The upper balcony on the third floor is set out from the building. However, evidence suggests the lower one was an open promenade over the entry. The third floor balcony should be replicated and set out from the building and the second floor "balcony" should have a matching grill set in the recessed door opening. The Downtown Design Review Committee prefers this design as well. The grille would be flush with the front plane of the building. He suggested consulting with Eric Lee Custom Iron to do the metal work for the rail.

Ms. Ferraro suggested that if the applicants were not doing the six over six windows on the upper levels, it would be acceptable to have the larger spacing on the transom over the storefront windows, similar to how it appears in the newspaper photo. She suggested removing the middle horizontal section in the store front windows leaving approximately square openings and the proportions would be correct.

Mr. Waldorf inquired about the deteriorated steel door on Pitcher St. The door goes into the first floor exit and it was abandoned at some point in the past. Mr. Nave stated that there had been a canopy in that location in the 1930's. If the door is not used as an entrance/exit it cannot look like a door, according to the fire code. However, the opening can be preserved for future use. The commission recommended replacing the deteriorated steel door with a matching flat door without a door knob.

Mr. Waldorf advised that there are eight new exterior sconces proposed on the Michigan Ave. and Pitcher St. facades. The oil rubbed bronze exterior is consistent with the colors planned for the store front and the metal clad windows throughout. The sconces have a high and low flood light. Ms. Ferraro stated that they serve as pedestrian lighting as well. She stated that the two acorn light posts in front of the building were never hooked up to electricity when they were installed.

Ms. Ferraro provided a summary of the discussion as follows: The steel windows are to be replaced on the south building. The grills are to be inside, outside and between the layers of glass. New aluminum double hung windows will replace the existing wooden double-hung windows, and they should match the existing windows in configuration (one over one), and they should match with regard to the original frame detail. The skylight is accepted as proposed. The final awning details may be reviewed later as the design is formalized. The store front windows should have a single row of apparent square openings across the top as a transom, eliminating the center horizontal bar. The non-functional door on Pitcher Street should be replaced with same if it is in poor condition. It should then be painted and secured according to code. The third floor balcony should be replicated and reinstalled. The second floor should have the same rail, but it is to be recessed on a plane equal to the front of the building. The sconces are acceptable as presented. The applicants are to contact Ms. Ferraro if there are further questions.

Mr. Waldorf mentioned that there are four flagpole mounts by the front awning, and he would like to place a City of Kalamazoo flag in one of those spots. Ms. Ferraro advised that there is an example of the city flag in commission chambers. Mr. Waldorf stated that he would also like to have a US flag and a Michigan flag for the other locations. He stated that they would be 8' foot side rigger flag poles with 8" bases. The screws would be installed in the mortar joints.

Mr. Bonsignore inquired as to how the front door would look. Mr. Waldorf stated that he didn't have any close up photos of the door. He stated that there is a Dryvit panel above the original limestone. He would like to eliminate the Dryvit. The applicants would like to install a wood door with glass and then reset the limestone pieces flanking the door. The plan is to install two wood doors on the inside. They also want to sand and re-stain the original double doors under the balconies.

Ms. Ferraro confirmed the plans as follows: There will be three or four flag poles in front of the building. There will be a single lite in each of the double doors under the balcony, and the glass will be replaced by the front door. The masonry will be repaired.

Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Bonsignore, moved approval of the work as discussed for 350 East Michigan Ave. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Minutes (August 21, 2007)

Ms. Decker referred to page 6, line 4 and advised that the date was September 14th not December 14th. On page 3, eliminate the paragraph about saving the house.

Mr. Decker, supported by Mr. Bonsignore, moved approval of the August 21, 2007 HDC minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Ferraro stated that she had no response regarding 444 W. Vine St.

The HPC (Historic Preservation Commission) will be having a retreat to discuss planning for the year. They would like the HDC members to attend the session to be held on Saturday, November 3 in the community room at City Hall. The meeting will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and breakfast and lunch will be served. A speaker from Detroit will be providing a presentation to the group.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Mr. Roche could not get the financing for his proposed addition at 901 S. Westnedge, so he will just be proceeding with the repairs.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the State Historic Preservation Review Board affirmed and supported the proposal for decision from the judge at their meeting on September 14th. The Historic District Commission decision to deny demolition of the property at 531 Eleanor stands.

Handrails and guardrails in the historic district

Most historic handrails are not tall enough to satisfy the requirements of the current building code. There are handrail waivers available for these cases because the housing code states that in the historic district, historic standards prevail. Ms. Ferraro suggested having a subcommittee from the HDC to review handrail standards and propose a set of very detailed standards to provide more choices to property owners and housing inspectors. Mr. Decker and Ms. Poole-Woldring volunteered to be on the subcommittee. It would be helpful to devise standards so there can be more uniform treatment of these cases.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she had no further information regarding 530 W. South Street.

Ms. Poole-Woldring requested an updated regarding the Willis and Willis property on Park St. The City Attorney has advised that Ms. Ferraro can send a letter to the realtor regarding the outstanding violations at that address. Ms. Poole-Woldring expressed concern that the violations should be remedied prior to sale of the property.

Ms. Ferraro stated that rehab funds may be available shortly for properties in the city that have been cited for blight.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to adjourn the September 18, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Dated: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Reviewed by: _____ Dated: _____
(Staff Liaison)

Approved by: _____ Dated: _____
(HDC Chair)