

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
October 16, 2007
DRAFT

Members Present: Lisa Poole-Woldring, Chair; Fred Decker, Vice Chair; Jay Bonsignore; Linda DeYoung; Nelson Nave; Bob Oudsema; 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 5:04 p.m.

AGENDA (October 16, 2007)

Ms. Ferraro requested the following changes to the agenda: 810 Elmwood is to be moved to the end of the agenda and Ms. Ferraro will represent the property. Add discussions regarding 940 W. Lovell and 901 S. Westnedge to the end of the agenda.

Mr. Bonsignore, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the October 15, 2007 HDC agenda as amended. 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

902 S. Westnedge (Case #: IHA 07-0402)

Jeff Gernsback, owner, and Steve Bennett, Project Manager, were present to discuss the application. The application requests construction of the roof to standards with a vented drip edge.

The applicants advised that the vented drip edge allows the roof to breathe and saves about \$1,200. Mr. Tribu indicated that due to the age of the house, the proposed drip edge would be a way to provide the necessary air flow. He advised installing a ridge vent also. Ms. Ferraro commented that the vented drip edge would not be visible like soffit vents because the gutters will cover it.

Mr. Nave questioned if ice would build up in the vent. Ms. Ferraro advised that the new deck could be constructed with 1 x 3 furring strips; it will be a “cold” roof so the ice would be minimal.

As a second review, Ms. Ferraro stated that the owners wish to close off the first floor full size double hung window on the south side porch to the left of the steps. This room will be the server room for their computer business and they want no visibility from the outside. The applicants would like to turn the window into a blind window to provide better security. Closed wooden shutters would be placed over the outside.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the new roof with the vented drip edge, and the blind window by the south porch at 902 S. Westnedge. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nave inquired if there will be a ¾” air space under the roof with the vented drip edge in place. The applicants advised that they would find out and provide the requested information.

Mr. Bonsignore advised that it is not a “cold” roof, it is actually a vented roof.

521 Locust (Case #: IHA 07-0402)

Bob Miller was present to discuss the application. The application requests that the rear steps (non-historic) be rebuilt and the 2nd floor rear porch be extended.

Mr. Miller advised that the stairway is too close to the side of the building. Snow and ice fall off the roof and onto the stairs. The stairway is 42” wide and the overhang is only 18”. He presented the following options to remedy the situation:

- #1. Extend the second story utility roof, and eliminate the 18” gap where the 3 roofs come together. The tin roof would be eliminated and the new roof would be extended to the southeast corner of the building.
- #2. Rotate the stairway 90 degrees on the lower portion so the stairway is straight.
- #3. Extend the landing and use it as a deck.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if the deck would be extended over the slider and the “bump-out” area. Mr. Miller advised that he was proposing an 8’ x 12’ extension. The subject property is a 4-unit building with a 6-bedroom unit on the upper floor.

Mr. Nave inquired if it would be possible to turn the stairs to the south. Mr. Miller stated that reconfiguring the stairs in that manner would put them in front of the deck used by

apartment #3 on the first floor. He added that the configuration he suggested would block the back yard lawn from the parking area and keep people from driving on the lawn. There are parking spaces for seven cars.

Mr. Nave inquired about the utility room roof on the second floor – this room shelters the furnace and water heater for the upper unit. Mr. Miller advised that the utility room roof extends off the primary roof line and he would like to extend it along the back/south side to cover the upper flight of steps. Two columns will be added to support the roof at the landing of the steps. Another option might be to extend the deck to the south and put stairs on the extreme south side of the bump out by apartment 3. However, that configuration might cause problems with access to the basement service door in that location.

Mr. Tribu inquired if having covered steps would be an option, and Mr. Miller advised that he would be open to that possibility.

Mr. Nave suggested installing a heavy duty, half-round gutter and a downspout to take care of the rain. Ms. Ferraro added that the downspout wouldn't help remedy the snow issues. Mr. Miller advised that he tried heated gutters on the lower portion, which does help a little.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if the applicant had considered having less space from this structure; it has been added onto several times. Mr. Miller indicated that he was not in favor of reducing the square footage. Ms. Ferraro stated that the 1908 Sanborn maps indicate that it is the original footprint, with the exception of the one-story sections in the back that are part of apartment 3.

Mr. Nave suggested installing an awning that would be attached to the wall and would extend down the stairs. The awnings last an average of seven years with some maintenance. He suggested cleaning it with a brush in the spring time and then applying water proofing once a year to help protect it. If the awning develops a hole, it can be reupholstered, which would be about half the cost of the original awning. Mr. Miller expressed concern that the icicles from the main roof might damage the awning.

Gutters work alright until the snow and ice rip them off the house. Mr. Nave suggested using heavy-duty aluminum or copper gutters and a heavy-duty hanger system. Mr. Miller inquired as to the potential efficiency of those gutters with the addition of heat tape. Mr. Nave and Ms. Ferraro referred to properties where this application has been successful. The gutters would only need to be added to the two corners of the house on the south side east end and on the east end, where there is a problem and this would be a less expensive solution.

Mr. Nave requested that if the applicant pursues the option of having a new deck and stairwell that it must meet historic district standards. He mentioned that the horizontal railing is not to code. Mr. Bonsignore inquired if extending the roof on the west side to

cover the stairway would transfer the ice problem to the landing by apartment #3. Mr. Miller stated that the steps are far enough away that the ice should not fall directly on the steps. However, if the precipitation splashes onto the steps it might be necessary to add a gutter to prevent that from happening. Mr. Miller suggested using half-round, heated gutters to remedy that problem. Discussion followed with regard to having the heating element on a timer so it would turn on in the a.m. and off at night. Mr. Tribu suggested starting with the gutters to see if that would help. Mr. Miller stated that he put a gutter with heat tape on the back. This had only satisfactory results, but a larger gutter might be helpful.

Mr. Bonsignore stressed the need to properly insulate the roof. Mr. Miller stated that the vented drip edge would have a 3/4" air space. Mr. Bonsignore stated that having a "cold" roof would require building another roof over the existing roof. There should be a 1 1/2" space for proper air circulation. If there is heat pouring through the roof, then there will still be a problem with ice build-up. Mr. Miller advised that he would try 6" half-round gutters to see if that will remedy the problem. Mr. Nave advised that there are metal straps to support the gutters. The straps can be nailed under the shingles and then tar would be added to seal the area. Ms. Ferraro stated that she could approve the work administratively.

Mr. Nave inquired about the 18" gap where hipped roof over the front part of the house and the roof of the utility room roofs meet. Mr. Miller advised that the previous owner fixed the roof on the north and east wings, but not the west and south portions of the roof. Mr. Bonsignore inquired as to how the fascias would line up. Mr. Miller advised that if the shorter roof is extended straight to the west, it would hit the fascia about 2" below the soffit of the upper roof. The Mr. Nave suggested angling it up to hit the old fascia, since it won't be visible. Otherwise, there will be tar on the fascia.

Discussion followed with regard to the pitch of the roof and Ms. Ferraro advised that the roof has a 3/12 pitch. Mr. Miller expressed concern with regard to the water dumping in the corner and deteriorating the siding. Mr. Bonsignore mentioned that the suggested changes will create a long, shallow valley on the roof where water and ice will build up. Mr. Nave suggested building a collection box to collect water from all three roofs. The box would be attached to a 6" corrugated down spout extended to the lower roof on the back wall away from the window. It should be strong enough to withhold pressure from the ice. Ms. Ferraro suggested the name of a company that might be able to build a box to collect the water in that corner.

Discussion followed with regard to extending the soffit over the utility room. Concern was expressed that it would intrude on the windows. It is difficult to tell from the pictures exactly what is there. Mr. Miller stated that he thought the extended soffit would miss the window and bump into the fascia. Ms. Ferraro stated that she could approve the repairs administratively.

Mr. Miller was agreeable with the idea of installing the gutters and the collection box. Ms. Ferraro confirmed that extending the fascia from the utility room to the main part of the house would be acceptable if it doesn't affect the fascia on the main part of the house. Mr. Miller mentioned the need to proceed as soon as possible since the building season will be over shortly. Ms. Ferraro stated that she could approve the gutter administratively and work out the details of the box.

Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the extension of the landing into the deck at 521 Locust. The stairway is to be extended to the east as discussed. All work to standards.

Mr. Nave advised that the deck must hold 100 pounds per square foot according to code. The joists must be close together. Trex deck might be an option for this application.

Mr. Bonsignore stated that he would be voting against the motion because he is not comfortable with the deck. Also, the stairs should be redone to standards and to code. Ms. Ferraro commented that if the gutters were to be installed, the steps might not need to be moved. Mr. Miller advised that he would have to obtain a building permit and provide detailed drawings if the stairway were to be replaced.

Mr. Nave and Mr. Decker withdrew their motion.

Mr. Bonsignore advised that he was not happy with the deck hanging out over the roof. He stated that he would need to see drawings before he could vote on it. Ms. Ferraro stated that the gutter should take care of the ice and the box will help remedy the gap. She suggested that Mr. Miller return with more detailed plans. Mr. Miller commented that the deck could be dealt with in the spring. His main concern is preventing accidents on the stairway during the winter months.

Ms. Poole-Woldring suggested that this matter be turn over to Ms. Ferraro to handle administratively. Ms. Ferraro stated that she could work with the building inspector to make sure the changes meet code.

Mr. Bonsignore referred to the 18" gap and stated that a catch basin would be acceptable but, if framing is involved, he would like the applicant to present more details to the HDC. He cautioned against dumping the rain/snow from the catch basin onto the roof because that would cause the roof to deteriorate rapidly. Mr. Miller stated that he would consult with Classic Gutter about how best to approach this project.

810 Elmwood (IHA 07-0390)

Ms. Ferraro will represent the property on behalf of owners Sarah and Aaron Bacalia. The application requests removal of the south facing door on the east addition. Siding to match the house is to be placed over the area where the door is removed.

Ms Ferraro stated that the steps and handrail are deteriorated. If the door is removed and covered and the opening is covered with siding, there would be no need for the steps and handrail. The door, steps and handrail are not original and are not necessary for a single family home.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Bonsignore, moved approval of the removal of the south facing door on the east addition at 810 Elmwood. The opening is to be sided over. The drip edge and fascia are to remain. The porch and steps are to be removed. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

526 Locust

Mr. Nave mentioned that the white drip edge and silver roof do not meet historic district standards.

940 W. Lovell

Ms. Ferraro stated that the windows were replaced in this house before it became part of the historic district. The owner would like to have wood windows and wonders if the HDC would consider allowing vinyl-clad wood windows. Should the owner attend an HDC meeting to present a proposal for the windows? She is requesting replacement of the sash, not the frame.

Mr. Nave stated that he would consider approving aluminum-clad windows. Mr. Bonsignore advised that he would need to see what was being proposed before approving it. The general consensus among the commissioners was that it would be best to bring the proposal to the next HDC meeting.

901 S. Westnedge

Ms. Ferraro advised that the owner of this property, Mike Roche, is requesting French doors (instead of the 4 existing small square casement windows) to open onto the fenced garden. If he proceeds with the French doors, he will no longer need the door facing Westnedge Court on the south side of the building.

Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the French doors proposed for 901 S. Westnedge. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

530 W. South Street

Ms. Ferraro advised that she has no further updates on this property. The building season is coming to a close for this year. She stated that she would send out notices to people on

the violation list requesting that they provide remedies for the violations. The owners of 530 W. South Street advised that they would remedy the violation in 2008.

Mr. Oudsema stated that he thought the City Attorney would send a violation letter to the owners of 530 South Street. Ms. Ferraro advised that she has not had the time to do the paperwork. Mr. Oudsema expressed concern that the owners wouldn't remedy the violations without a court order. Ms. Ferraro stated that she received a letter from the owners in July 2007 stating that they would proceed with the work next year. Mr. Nave encouraged Ms. Ferraro to contact the City Attorney's office about proceeding with a fine against the property owners for failure to remedy the violations.

444 W. Vine

Mr. Nave requested an update on this property. Ms. Ferraro stated that she informed the owner in a Violation letter that he needs to shorten the rail and paint it.

MINUTES (September 18, 2007)

Ms. DeYoung referred to page 3, the last paragraph, 4th line from the bottom, the sentence should read, "A majority of the front windows are double-hung, double-paned windows." Page 4, last paragraph, 1st line, remove the extra "n." Page 5, middle of the 1st paragraph, the sentence should read, ".....Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines which would not use details which mimic historic features." Page 7, next to last paragraph, "updated" should be "update." Mr. Bonsignore referred to page 2, under 1615 Grand Ave., 2nd paragraph, he requested that language be added to indicate that he was speaking as an applicant, not as a commissioner for that address.

Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the September 18, 2007 HDC minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried by a majority vote. Mr. Oudsema abstained from voting on the minutes due to his absence from the September meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Nave advised that the canopy from the former jewelry store address has been moved to 813 W. South St. He stated that he wrote a letter to Pete Eldridge in the city's zoning department. Mr. Eldridge advised that 813 W. South St. is zoned for office use not retail use. The owner of the property is collecting signatures with the intention of going to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Meanwhile, the owner has put up a Spaman Jewelers sign at this address.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Oudsema, moved to adjourn the October 16, 2007 meeting of the Historic District Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Dated: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Reviewed by: _____ Dated: _____
(Staff Liaison)

Approved by: _____ Dated: _____
(HDC Chair)