

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**  
**November 20, 2007**

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

Members Absent: Jay Bonsignore

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 (November 20, 2007)**

Ms. Ferraro requested that 471 W. South Street be moved to the end of the agenda. She referred to 827 Normal Court and advised that the inspector is not available to speak tonight about the issues regarding this property. Therefore, she requested that this item be moved to the end of the agenda for further discussion.

**Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the November 20, 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**

**421 Ranney (Case #: IHA 07-0457)**

No one was present to discuss the application.

**714 W. Vine (Case #: IHA 07-0477)**

James Pejka was present to discuss the application which requests removal of the non-historic 2<sup>nd</sup> story rear porch and repair of the first floor porch. Ms. Ferraro estimated that the existing rails on the lower and upper porches are about 30" tall. The 2x4 handrail off the first floor porch east end will be replaced with an appropriate rail.

Mr. Pejka stated that he would also like to remove the chimney which is separating from the wall of the house. The house is covered in cement-asbestos siding and the original wooden clapboard siding is visible behind the chimney.  
(5:15 p.m.: Mr. Decker arrived.)

Mr. Tribu asked if the upper windows would remain. Mr. Pejka responded in the affirmative. He stated that he didn't think there was a window in the third opening where the door is, and Ms. Ferraro agreed.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the proposed work at 714 W. Vine. Mr. Nave amended the motion to state that the roof should be put back on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor porch. Stair steps and a guardrail to standards are to be added to the back porch. Columns are to be added as shown in the sketch provided, and the original column is to be stored in the house. The roof and trim are to be replaced and should match the existing. With a roll call vote, the motion carried with five ayes and one abstention by Mr. Decker.**

A brief discussion followed with regard to the chimney. Ms. Ferraro advised that the chimney is not original to the house.

**Mr. Tribu, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the removal of the chimney. The siding is to be repaired to standards. With a roll call vote, the motion carried with five ayes and one abstention by Mr. Decker.**

**728 W. Lovell (Case #: IHA 07-0463)**

William and Bev Wissman were present to discuss the application requesting replacement of two windows and covering two windows of what was originally a three season porch on the northwest corner of the first floor. Ms. Wissman said the former porch is being used as a laundry room and she would not consider relocating the laundry facilities to the basement. There are four single pane, four lite windows across the back of the enclosed porch that are not energy efficient. She would like to board up the two end windows and replace the two in the middle with one over one, double hung aluminum clad wood windows. The owners have already purchased the windows. Mr. Oudsema commented that replacing all the windows with something similar could be acceptable but he would not support boarding the windows. It was suggested that the applicants install storm windows inside the double-hung windows. Mr. Wissman advised

that the purchased windows are stock Pella windows with grills that give the appearance of 12 panes of glass. Mr. Nave stated that he would not be able to approve that.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to deny the request for replacement windows at 728 W. Lovell based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines 2 and 6. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Ferraro stated that she would meet with the applicants and help them try to find another solution.

**616 S. Westnedge (Case #: IHA 07-0752)**

Bob Oudsema, a member of the commission, was present to discuss the application to build a replica of a missing corner rail outside the southeast, second floor window on the clipped corner. The railing was at the base of the window and the metal roof above it is shaped like a triangle. Rob Chamberlain will be doing the work. The application also requests permission to replicate and replace deteriorated rear basement windows.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the replicated guardrail, approximately 24" high, to be installed over the left/south side of the front porch. The details of the guardrail should be similar to the other details on the house. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**471 W. South St. – Marlboro Apartments (Case #: IHA 07-0234)**

Mike Sackett was present to discuss the application. The application requests modification of the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007 decision to allow the chimney to be removed completely. The commission reviewed this proposal by email in mid October and this motion and decision will be an affirmation of the informal consideration.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to allow the complete removal of the subject chimney at 471 W. South St. to the roof. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**421 Ranney (Case #: IHA 07-0457)**

The applicant was not present. Ms. Ferraro provided information about the application, to demolish the two car garage facing Osborne. Ms. Ferraro advised that the garage roof is in good condition. She asked building inspector Lee Larson to look at the garage and he thinks that \$500 could stabilize the garage. A 4" x 4" from the northwest corner of the garage is pushing against the back wall of the house, which gives the perception that the house is holding it up. Ms. Ferraro added that the garage dates from the 1920's so it is not original to the house, but it is old enough to be considered historic. It is on footings and has a concrete floor.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to deny the application for demolition of the garage at 421 Ranney St. with the suggestion that the garage be repaired. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**827 Normal Court (Case #: IHA 07-0478)**

The applicant in this matter is the City of Kalamazoo, Dangerous Buildings Board. The owners of the property are Marion & Vernon Laventure.

Ms. Ferraro advised of the dismal condition of this house. She stated that house is infested with cockroaches. Mr. Laventure has had a stroke and his wife and two sons are developmentally disabled. There are several dogs and cats living at this address and there are animal droppings throughout the house and a general state of neglect. The Dangerous Buildings Board ruled to have the house demolished to abate the blight.

Mr. Nave commented that the condition of the house must be severe for the DBB to ask for demolition. Ms. Ferraro advised that the process may be on hold for a while to allow the family to move out completely and for exterminators to kill the insects so they don't migrate to adjacent homes and to notice the mortgage company.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Decker, moved approval of the demolition of 827 Normal Court. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**763 West Michigan**

Darryn Bane 203 Allen Blvd. was present to discuss the property. This is a discussion of concepts and no decisions are to be made today. The applicant is looking for comments on his proposal to extend the usable space into the attic of the building. The exterior work will in large part be limited to expanding the size of the existing vents in the 3000 sq.ft. attic to accommodate windows. Ms. Ferraro advised that the only existing window is approximately 18" x 3' and faces north across Michigan Avenue. Mr. Bane stated that the attic level would be a restaurant called the Cuddle Fish.

She stated that the applicants would like to have a two-story deck and a second floor staircase on the alley.

Mr. Nave inquired as to what will need to be done to the building to bring it up to code. Mr. Bane stated that he would like to open up the ceiling inside and add a stairwell, a wrap around porch and a deck for seating at the east end of the building. He has an architect working on the project. Mr. Bane stated that he might need to install an elevator. Mr. Nave advised that the applicant would need an enclosed interior fire stair directly to the lobby or outside. Mr. Bane mentioned that there are two main entrances/exits out of the building and onto the deck and a full set of stairs inside. Mr. Nave mentioned that the deck is over the alley and there is an apartment building next

door. The property line is 6 or 7 feet from the back door. Mr. Bane advised that another door in the same style would be installed.

Ms. Ferraro commented that the round topped vents are original to the 1915 building, but they are in bad shape. Mr. Oudsema stated that he would be open to changing the vents to windows as long as the changes incorporate details from the rest of the building.

Mr. Oudsema stated that he would need to see a drawing of the deck. He commented that the applicant could create a win/win situation by having a more economically viable building. This building is located in an area that is a gateway to downtown Kalamazoo. Mr. Bane advised that he has many ideas for making the building more viable. He wants to make improvements without ruining the look of the building. Ms. Ferraro requested more details on the project. She added that there is 8 feet between the subject property and the building next door.

### **Minutes (October 16, 2007)**

There were no changes to the minutes.

**Mr. Oudsema, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the October 16, 2007 Historic District Commission minutes. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### **Other Business**

Ms. Ferraro advised that she hasn't received any new information about the appeal on 531 Eleanor.

Mr. Oudsema requested an update regarding the 530 W. South Street property. Ms. Ferraro stated that she had no further news regarding this property. She is planning on having the City Attorney's office send a letter to the owners of this property.

Mr. Nave inquired if Ms. Ferraro had granted permission for the owner to replace the roof at 620 West South (The Todd House). Ms. Ferraro responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Tribu would like have a discussion regarding garage demolitions and the standards that people are given. Ms. Ferraro advised that she has a form to evaluate the condition of garages and that unless a garage has collapsed, demolition should not be considered in the winter. Mr. Tribu commented that applicants requesting demolition should have the burden of proof and should present the evidence to the HDC

Mr. Oudsema suggested that the city should take steps to make sure garages survive. The reality is that neglect works; the outcome is the same as demolition, it just takes 10 or 15 years longer. Ms. Ferraro advised that some of the city's inspectors have been designated to look at owner occupied houses. This garage had not been cited; it was the owner's insurance company that wanted something done.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Tribu, supported by Mr. Decker, moved to adjourn the November 20, 2007 Historic District Commission meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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