

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes
February 19, 2008
DRAFT

City Commission Chambers
2nd Floor, City Hall
241 W. South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Members Present: Fred Decker, Vice Chair (Acting Chair); Jay Bonsignore; Linda DeYoung; Nelson Nave; James Tribu;

Members Absent: Lisa Poole-Woldring, Chair; Bob Oudsema

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Decker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

Ms. Poole-Woldring and Mr. Oudsema informed city staff that they would not be able to attend the February 19th HDC meeting.

Mr. Bonsignore, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of the absences of Ms. Poole-Woldring and Mr. Oudsema from the February 19th HDC meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA (February 19, 2008)

Ms. Ferraro advised that the applicants for 161 E. Michigan Ave. are waiting for a final drawing to be submitted. Accordingly, this application will be postponed until the March HDC meeting.

Ms. Ferraro advised that she will be representing the owners for the 232 S. Kalamazoo Mall project.

Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the February 19, 2008 HDC agenda as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

DISCLAIMER

Ms. Ferraro read the newly revised disclaimer into the record:

Chapter 16, Section 22 of the City of Kalamazoo Code of Ordinance States: Historical preservation is a public purpose. To serve that purpose, the Historic District Commission is hereby charged with the following responsibilities:

(1) The Kalamazoo Historic District Commission is empowered to regulate work on the exterior of the historic resources and non-historic resources in historic districts in the City of Kalamazoo and shall otherwise have all powers invested in Historic District Commissions pursuant to the Local Historic Districts Act, MCLA §399.201 et seq. 1970 PA 169, as amended.

(2) To regulate work on resources which, by City ordinance, are historic or non-historic resources located within local historic districts, including but not limited to the moving of any structure into or out of, or the building of any structure in, an historic district.

The following documents are available in the Community development Department located at 445 West Michigan in the Development Center. These documents will help assist property owners in understanding the responsibilities of owning property in a local historic district, MCLA § 399.201 et seq. 1970 PA 169 as Amended 1992 (Michigan Local Historic District Act); Code of Ordinances City of Kalamazoo, Michigan (Chapter 16 – Historic District); Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation & Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, 1990; Standards and Guidelines for Kalamazoo Historic Districts, and maps of Kalamazoo Local Historic Districts. These documents and maps are also available on the City of Kalamazoo website at www.kalamazoo.org/localhistoricdistricts.

OLD BUSINESS

940 West Lovell (IHA 08-0010)

The applicant for this property had not yet arrived and the Commission proceeded to the next agenda item.

133 Prairie (Case #: IHA 08-0017)

Alison Geist and Gary Gregg were present to discuss the application. The application requests replacement of the deteriorated jalousie (NON-HISTORIC) windows on the SW (rear) 1st and 2nd floor sun porch.

Mr. Gregg advised that there are two, small sunrooms/offices on the back of this house. They appear to have been added in the 1950's or 60's. Both rooms have two sets of jalousie windows, which are in disrepair. These windows are not compatible with the

style of the house. The applicants are working with contractor Terry Ferrell. They would like to install windows that are as close as possible to the original windows in the rest of the house. The applicants provided a sample of the Silverline, vinyl windows they are proposing to install.

Mr. Nave commented that at least one of the two rooms in question used to be a sleeping porch. He mentioned that 419 Prairie has a sun porch with casement windows that are probably similar to what was on 133 Prairie originally. He referred to another house on Prairie, which has new casement windows on the sun porch. Mr. Nave suggested that the applicants should install pairs of casement windows, approximately 2 feet wide or less, to look original. The original windows may have had a grid in the top to divide the window into 2 or 4 sections. Mr. Nave advised that he is opposed to the installation of vinyl windows.

Ms. Geist inquired as to the definition of a casement window. Ms. Ferraro advised that casement windows are hinged on the side. Ms. Geist advised that she would like to match the original double-hung windows in the house. The applicants would like to install wood windows, but they would be over \$9,000 as compared to the vinyl windows, which are \$4,200. Installation of the windows is included in the \$9,000 estimate. Ms. Geist advised that she didn't get estimates on casement windows.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if there would be dividers on the upper half of the windows, or if there would just be two, single panes of glass. Ms. Geist confirmed that there would be no dividers. She advised that paint was also included in the estimate for the wood windows. She was not sure if the installation charges would be the same for the vinyl windows as they would be for the wood windows.

Discussion followed with regard to the merits of vinyl windows versus wood windows. Wood windows would be more historically appropriate. Ms. Geist stated that her contractor advised that the vinyl windows should last as long as wood windows. Ms. Ferraro advised the applicants that if they install historically appropriate wood windows, they should be eligible for the tax credit. The HDC would prefer casement windows.

Mr. Tribu suggested that the applicants not try to match the windows in the rest of the house, but to try and match the windows that were originally in that location. The sun porch should look different than the rest of the house. Mr. Nave commented that there are different price ranges for windows, and the applicants might be able to find more affordable wood windows.

Ms. Ferraro suggested postponing the decision on this agenda item until the next meeting. She stated that she would advise the applicants of websites that might be useful. Mr. Nave referred to the sketch of the first floor and suggested installing 2 pairs of windows (4 windows) instead of three. They should each be about 24" across. He offered to assist the applicants if they have any questions.

230-232 S. Kalamazoo Mall (Case #: IHA 08-0036)

The application requests rehabilitation of the north storefront and painting of the façade. This item is on the agenda for discussion or for action if the commission chooses but, the owner will not be present.

Ms. Ferraro advised that this matter has been on the HDC agenda in the past. The applicant has obtained approval from the Downtown Design Review Committee for the requested changes at their meeting on February 5, 2008. The original concept from Bates Architects proposed a façade with glass that could be moved/removed and customers could walk into the store with no doors.

The applicant is now proposing a facade similar to the drawing from Mr. Nave for the Sandwich Express building two doors down. The applicant would like to paint the upper façade in two different colors. There were balconies between the bay windows, when removed, the damaged brick was replaced with non-matching brick. Accordingly, the applicant is proposing to paint the façade in a red brick color with tan accents. The store front would be painted a deep green color. This applies only to the store front, not the Dragon Inn. The applicant is not pursuing the rest of the building at this time, just the store front. Mr. Nave advised that the applicant cannot use his sketch for this project, since architectural drawings remain the property of the architect. The applicant needs a new sketch before he can apply for the building permit.

Mr. Nave moved approval of the store front in concept as depicted in the computer drawing for 230-232 S. Kalamazoo Mall, with final approval pending further details.

There was no support for the motion.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the application would be postponed until the next HDC meeting pending further details from the applicants.

940 W. Lovell (Case #: IHA 08-0010)

The application requests replacement of the deteriorated replacement windows except on the “porch”. The windows were already replaced before the historic district was established.

Ms. Ferraro stated that she spoke with the owner’s son-in-law, who advised that no exterior changes are proposed at this time. The owner wants to replace the interior replacement windows, which were installed in 1987. The windows are cold to the touch and the owners are not happy with them. The top bar (sash) is shattered on one of the east windows and the windows don’t close all the way. Discussion followed with regard to the proposed metal-clad, wood windows.

Mr. Bonsignore inquired as to how this situation is different than 133 Prairie. Ms. Ferraro stated that the windows in the Lovell house should be replaced with windows that look the same. No one is certain as to what type of windows were originally in the house on 133 Prairie St.

Mr. Decker inquired if Ms. Ferraro was recommending that the HDC approve the application for 940 W. Lovell and she responded in the affirmative. She advised that the HDC goes on a case by case basis. This house should look the same on the outside. The HDC could request that the windows on the inside be wood also.

Mr. Bonsignore stated that he was hesitant to approve non-wood windows. The HDC has an opportunity to improve the house at this point. Ms. Ferraro advised that she would check with SHPO (the State Historic Preservation Office) to find out if the applicants could receive the tax credit if they install wood windows.

Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Nave, moved approval of matching, one over one, wood windows to be installed on the “porch” at 940 W. Lovell. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nave stated that he would like to have a discussion in the future regarding wood vs. aluminum-clad windows. Ms. Ferraro advised that she has current samples, but seeing the actual product can make a big difference.

Minutes (January 22, 2008)

Ms. DeYoung referred to page 4, the third paragraph from the bottom (the motion), “proposal” should be “proposals”; add “as presented” at the end of the sentence.

Mr. Bonsignore, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the January 22, 2008 HDC minutes as amended. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Presentation by Sherry Larson from All Season Windows and Nancy Thomas from Polar Seal.

Sherry Larson and Nancy Thomas were present to provide information on vinyl windows. Ms. Ferraro advised that approximately 50% of the storm windows installed in the historic district are installed by All Season Windows, a company that has been in business for 25 years. Ms. Ferraro invited Ms. Larson and Ms. Thomas to do a presentation for the HDC so the commission can see what is currently available in vinyl windows. Ms. Thomas advised that the Polar Seal Window Company has been in business since 1950. Ms. Larson and Ms. Thomas provided color samples and a cut-away section of a window for the HDC to look at.

Ms. Ferraro commented that the HDC may have applicants from the West Main Hill Neighborhood who have already installed some vinyl windows in their houses. That neighborhood was added to the historic district in May of 2007. There may be applications to request replacement of the remaining wood windows with vinyl since the replacement process had already begun. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the vinyl windows that were installed in her house in the late 1980's (before her house was part of the historic district) have already failed.

Ms. Thomas advised that vinyl windows were relatively new in 1984 when she started in the business. Back then, the frames were actually screwed and glued together. Also, vinyl windows were white back then and they were easy to spot when installed in a house. Modern vinyl windows have welded corners and they more closely resemble wood windows. Today there are over 80 wood grain and color combinations available, some of which are paintable and stainable.

Ms. Ferraro mentioned that she heard comments that the darker colored vinyl windows are more susceptible to sun damage than the lighter colored windows. She inquired if the sample window had a coating other than vinyl. Ms. Thomas advised that the chemical component has been increased in the darker vinyl to compensate for damage from the sun's UV rays. The current product has been in production for approximately 12 years.

Improvements have also been made to the glass and the spacers between the glass. Traditionally, a metal spacer has been used between the panes of glass but the newer product contains a rubber flexible spacer to prevent sweating and provide a better seal. In the past, seals failed because of the aluminum spacers.

Ms. Larson inquired as to the problems with the vinyl windows in Ms. Ferraro's house. Ms. Ferraro stated that the inner frame/sash has failed. Ms. Larson advised that those windows were likely screwed together; the better quality, new products would be welded together. Ms. Larson stressed the importance of paying attention to the quality of the product since not all windows are the same quality.

Mr. Decker inquired as to the length of the warranty on a good window. Ms. Thomas advised that the vinyl and moving parts have a life time warranty. There is a 20-year non-prorated warranty on the glass/seal. Ms. Larson advised that the insulated glass has a 30-year warranty on the seal. During the time that the foam spacers have been used in the windows, there have been very few complaints about the seals failing. The foam spacers (super spacers) are made by a company called Edgetech.

Mr. Tribu inquired of Ms. Larson if any vinyl windows with metal spacers are available through her company. She stated that there is a basic vinyl window with metal spacers that is sometimes purchased for rental properties. Mr. Tribu inquired if the entire window would have to be replaced if the seal failed. Ms. Larson advised that the glass is always replaceable. On the welded unit there are snap-in pieces that are removable and

allow the glass to be replaced. If the windows are constructed with screws, the screws can be removed and the glass replaced.

Mr. Nave inquired if all of the grills are available on the inside as well as the outside. Ms. Larson stated that the grills are always between the panes of glass on the vinyl windows. She advised that vinyl window manufacturers specialize in custom sizes; they are manufactured within 1/8" of the opening size. Wood windows are generally manufactured in standard sizes.

Mr. Tribu inquired if the windows were constructed of PVC or CPVC. Ms. Thomas advised that it is CPVC. There is more chemical component in vinyl windows today; titanium dioxide is the biggest UV component in vinyl windows to help deter sun damage. Ms. Larson mentioned that the original vinyl windows flexed, and this could cause problems. Newer vinyl windows are constructed to be more rigid so they have fewer maintenance issues. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that most wood windows are made from plantation grown wood, which is not the same as the wood used in construction a hundred years ago. She advised that one of the goals of the HDC is to retain the old, wood windows. The appearance dimensions of the vinyl windows are different than the wood windows.

Mr. Decker inquired as to the prices of windows offered by All Season and Polar Seal. Ms. Larson indicated that it would be less than the quote given to the applicants for Prairie St. address.

Mr. Tribu mentioned issues with PVC as it relates to the plumbing industry. Ms. Thomas advised that she was not sure if the PVC used for vinyl windows would be the same as PVC used for plumbing. Mr. Tribu expressed concern about adding more chemicals to PVC for UV protection. Ms. Thomas stated that the scrap material from the vinyl windows is recycled.

Mr. Bonsignore commented that he was not in favor of the concept of installing a "window inside a window" because it decreases the size of the original window opening. Ms. Larson stated that this method of installation allows for the original trim to remain. Ms. Ferraro referred to the Secretary of the Interiors Standards and Guidelines #6, which states that, "Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of the deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials." She commented that the dimensions are vital. Also, the false muntins inside the glass don't produce shadow lines like the true divided lights.

Mr. Decker mentioned the need to consider prices for window repair/replacement and how much home owners have to spend. Discussion followed with regard to the changes that have been made to improve vinyl windows, including the introduction of low-E glass and argon to improve energy efficiency.

Ms. Ferraro commented that vinyl expands and contracts more than wood. During the summer months, vinyl can expand to the point that it crushes wood fibers. Ms. Larson advised that a layer of foam is wrapped around the vinyl windows to provide a good seal. She stated that she hasn't received any complaints about stress cracks from the vinyl windows that are installed with the foam wrap.

2007 Annual Report

Ms. Ferraro requested that any comments regarding the Annual Report be submitted to her before the end of February. The Annual Report is a statement of what the HDC and the Coordinator have done during the year. The Report is due at the City Clerk's office by March 1st.

Green Workshop

Ms. Ferraro stated that a workshop will be held in Grand Rapids on March 19th. Rhonda Baker, the Historic Preservation Coordinator for Grand Rapids, is hosting a conference to discuss green products and applications in historic districts. Wind turbines and solar panels are some of the topics for discussion. The Preservation Commission will pay the fee to attend the seminar; dinner is included. This is an opportunity to meet historic district commissioners from Grand Rapids and Holland. Commissioners Bonsignore, Decker, Nave and Tribu expressed interest in attending the conference.

Appoint Two Judges for the Annual Preservation Awards.

Ms. Ferraro requested volunteers to help judge the preservation awards. The judges will convene on a Saturday in March to review the properties. Ms. DeYoung and Mr. Nave volunteered to help with the judging. The nominations are due by Friday, February 22nd.

Adjournment

Ms. Decker, supported by Mr. Bonsignore, moved to adjourn the February 19th HDC meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Dated: _____

Reviewed by: _____
(Staff Liaison)

Dated: _____

Approved by: _____
(HDC Chair)

Dated: _____