

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes**  
**April 21, 2009**  
***DRAFT***

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

Members Present: Bob Oudsema, (Acting Chair); Bob Cinabro; Linda DeYoung;  
Nelson Nave; Erin Seaverson; James Tribu

Members Absent: Jay Bonsignore (Chair)

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Bonsignore had not arrived at the meeting, and Ms. Ferraro requested that Mr. Oudsema chair the meeting.

Mr. Oudsema called the meeting to order at approximately 5:05 p.m.

**AGENDA (April 21, 2009)**

Ms. Ferraro advised that the applicant for 228 W. Vine will not be at the meeting. She requested that the application for this property be moved to the end of the agenda for discussion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**DISCLAIMER**

Ms. Ferraro read the disclaimer into the record.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**A. 133 S. Prairie (IHV 08-0017)**

Gary Gregg was present to represent the property. The application requests replacement of jalousie windows on sun porch with wooden double hung, fixed windows.

Mr. Gregg thanked the HDC and Mr. Nave for providing advice about the windows. Mr. Gregg brought additional information from the manufacturer (Jeldwen Windows ) with regard to what he wants to install; the details are on the 4<sup>th</sup> page of the catalog. He is proposing to install one set of windows upstairs and one set downstairs on the sun porch.

The contractor who is doing the interior repair work advised that the windows are available at Menards and he thinks the HDC would approve them.

Mr. Gregg stated that he hadn't had an opportunity to do comparison shopping. He advised that he would be willing to consider other windows if they are better quality for the same price. The quote Mr. Gregg received was for the downstairs windows only, but the price should be the same for the windows upstairs.

Mr. Nave inquired if there would be muntins in the new windows. Mr. Gregg stated that he would prefer clear panes for the top and bottom. Mr. Nave advised that the clear panes would be appropriate for the style of the house. He suggested matching the trim on the other windows, which is probably a flat piece, with a drip cap on the top.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. Seaverson, moved approval of the application for 133 Prairie. The trim should match the existing trim on the adjacent windows. There should be no muntins on the double-hung windows; there should be mullions between the two windows, similar to the configuration of the pairs of windows on the front of the house. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Tribu inquired if the windows mount flush against the outside or if there is a ledge. Ms. Ferraro advised that she thought they mount flush; there is no stone sill in that location. Mr. Gregg advised that the windows would be mounted flush and framed out.

Mr. Oudsema suggested that the new windows be similar to windows on the back of the house, if possible – with 36+squares of glass in the upper sash. Ms. Ferraro suggested maintaining the similarity between the upper and lower windows on the porch as simple one over one, rather than matching the other windows in the second floor of the house.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

745 McCourtie (Case #: IHA 09-0078)

Janie Albright was present to discuss the application. The application requests the addition of an attached garage with a second floor.

Mr. Nave commented that it would make sense for the siding to come all the way to the ground on the addition. The siding comes all the way to the ground on the front porch. There is a bell curve at the second floor line and at the bottom of the front porch. He suggested adding the curve detail on the addition.

Mr. Nave inquired if the zoning setback is approved for the addition. Ms. Albright advised that she discussed this project with the zoning department and was advised that the setbacks are correct. However, she was recently informed that there is a problem with the setbacks. There is 21 feet between the house and right side of the proposed garage. The problem is on the east side of the house; there should be at least 20 feet

between property lines. Ms. Ferraro suggested going to the Zoning Board of Appeals to obtain a variance regarding the setback.

Mr. Nave mentioned that he didn't see any overhangs on the sketch provided, with regard to the gables. The overhang on the garage addition should match the existing overhang. He referred to the three, second floor windows in the gable on the south side of the house, and suggested they could be moved out to the south wall of the new addition.. Ms. Albright advised that those windows are vinyl. Mr. Nave suggested that the applicant have six inch mullions between the windows if she decides to have three windows. He inquired if there is a roof drainage problem with the design on the west elevation where the gable of the garage addition meets the existing house. It appears that water is coming down against the old gable.

Ms. Ferraro suggested looking at the proposed north elevation, which shows that the garage extends out past the porch. The gable above the garage door is similar to a dormer. The shape of the garage is the gable that extends to the south west. Mr. Tribu suggested extending the porch into the new building and eliminating the hip roof so water will not dump into the side of the house. Mr. Nave stated that the old porch roof is hitting the new wall and there could be a water problem in that location.

Mr. Nave inquired if the garage would have a new, historic-looking door. Ms. Albright stated that she wanted a garage door that would be difficult for someone to break into. Mr. Tribu advised that there are new doors with historic-looking facades that would be secure. Ms. Albright stated that she would defer to Ms. Ferraro on that issue.

Ms. Albright advised that that the stucco is falling off the front of the house on the gable. She inquired if she could put "fish scale" details in that location instead of the stucco. Mr. Nave inquired if stucco would be incorporated into the addition to match the existing house. Ms. Albright was not sure if the stucco details would be part of the addition. Mr. Nave suggested that if stucco details are part of the addition, the contractor can repair the original stucco when the new details are added. Ms. Ferraro commented that "fish scales" would be a change in material. The stucco adds to the distinctive look of this Tudor style house. Ms. Albright confirmed that there is not enough room on this site to construct a detached garage.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if the applicant would be applying for the tax credit. Ms. Ferraro advised that the addition would not be eligible for the tax credit, but the house should be eligible. Mr. Oudsema advised that he had been denied tax credits because the addition he put on his house looked too authentic. Mr. Nave commented that the proposed garage addition will not look original.

Ms. Seaverson also expressed concern regarding the roof line by the west-facing gable; the roof line appears to extend further down on the proposed south elevation than on the west elevation. Ms. Albright advised that the garage addition is one foot lower than the original house.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved approval in concept of the application for 745 McCourtie. The Historic Preservation Coordinator will approve the final details. Attention should be given to the water problems regarding the roof and to the stucco. The trim on the addition should match the original trim on the house, and the bell curve detail should match the original house. Mullions should be added between the three windows on the south side. Corrections should be made to the drawing regarding the height of the soffits on the west-facing gable. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**725 West Vine (Case #: IHA 09-0078)**

Janie Albright was present to discuss the application. The application requests removal of the finished, non-historic garage at the rear of the property, and the installation of two windows on the first floor to match the second floor rear windows. The front of the house is to be repaired and resided.

Ms. Albright advised that a garage was added to the back of the property years ago. It was later converted to a bedroom with a loft. The applicant would like to remove the garage. She would also like to add windows in the back of the room that was originally a porch. The back would be resided to match the rest of the house.

Ms. Ferraro commented that it is possible to see where the front porch used to be. There were no clapboards over the sheathing. The water is blowing in between the boards. She suggested installing clapboards over that area to secure it from further water damage. Ms. Albright stated that there is no sheathing in the original, front part of the house; you can feel rain and snow coming in on the inside. The interior has been gutted to the studs, and Ms. Albright would like to have blown-in insulation. Mr. Nave suggested using foam insulation, which is \$2.00 for 2" per square foot, and that is too costly. Ms. Albright expressed concern that the spray foam will not be satisfactory, and that it might be preferable to install sheathing.

Mr. Nave suggested installing Tyvek in that location. Ms. Albright stated that the roofing felt used upstairs by a previous owner held moisture in upstairs. She has an estimate of \$22,000 just to reside the front of the house.

Ms. Seaverson advised that she had no problem with the concept. She inquired if the windows to be installed will match the originals. Ms. Albright stated that the upper level back windows are 28" x 54".

Mr. Nave inquired about the addition that looks like a covered basement stairway at the back of the house. Ms. Ferraro stated that the addition has been there 40 years; it provides access to the basement. Ms. Albright advised that the roof was leaking everywhere and the roof over that addition caved in. Mr. Nave commented that the addition looks new. Ms. Albright stated that new siding was added after the rotted

portion of the addition was replaced. On the other side of the house, when the gravel was removed by the steps, the wall fell out. That area has been rebuilt.

Mr. Oudsema inquired as to the purpose of the addition other than egress for the basement area. Ms. Albright stated that it provides the only access to the basement. There is no laundry area in the basement, but the furnaces, electrical panel and water heaters are in that location. Ms. Ferraro suggested the possibility of putting a Bilco door in that location.

**Ms. Seaverson, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval in concept of the application for 725 W. Vine, with the Historic Preservation Coordinator to work out the details of the windows and siding. The trim should match the original. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Oudsema commented that this property is in a fragile location. He commended the applicant for taking on this project. Ms. Albright stated that she had no idea the house was so severely deteriorated when she purchased it.

**734 Village (Case #: IHA 09-0101)**

Barbara Wilson was present to discuss the application. The application requests demolition of the garage.

Ms. Wilson stated that the garage has been hit and knocked off its foundation. It appears to be hazardous and not safe to park in. She stated that the gentleman who was helping her with this project had intended to accompany her to the HDC meeting to provide further details on why it isn't possible to repair the garage. However, he has not yet arrived. Ms. Wilson advised that the historic materials necessary to repair the garage are not available, and the insurance company won't pay for the repairs. She received an estimate of \$5,000 to repair the garage and an estimate of \$1,500 to demolish the garage.

Mr. Nave inquired if the applicant could rent the garages if there were doors on them. Ms. Wilson stated that she thought the renters had been using the garages. She asked them to not use the garage until it can be determined if it is safe. Mr. Nave suggested that if the garage were repaired and the doors were fixed, the applicant could charge more rent for the house. Ms. Wilson stated that the property manager advised her that fixing the garage may not help rent the property since there are already several vacancies.

Mr. Nave stated that the garage can be fixed. Ms. Wilson commented that she is not well-versed in the code regulations, but she was advised that the materials required to repair the garage are almost non-existent. She requested verification of that information, and inquired as to where she could obtain materials to repair the garage if it were possible to do so. Ms. Ferraro stated that the roof is nearly new. The exterior walls are not in bad condition, but they need to be pulled back onto the foundation and re-secured. The damaged siding at the bottom could be replaced with smooth Hardie plank (cement

board). Installing garage doors is an option. If the doors are not installed, the building is technically considered a car port. It could be expensive to repair the garage to meet the 2009 building code, but it should not be difficult to restore it to structural soundness.

Mr. Nave mentioned that a neighbor piled dirt against the east side of the garage. He suggested that the dirt be removed.

Ms. Ferraro advised that structural materials, rather than historical materials, are needed to repair the inside. Hardie plank could be used on the exterior to replace the damaged areas and then painted to match the rest of the garage. The window openings could remain boarded or the windows could be put back in, which would look better and provide more light. Since the roof is relatively new, that would indicate that a crew of workers was on the roof and it must be structurally sound to support that weight.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to deny the application for demolition regarding the garage at 734 Village. It was suggested that the garage be repaired. A skirt board could be placed at the bottom of the garage to replace the damaged siding. It was also suggested that the windows be repaired to match the existing windows. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote. Mr. Oudsema provided the only dissenting vote.**

**763-773 W. Michigan (Case #: IHA 09-0113)**

Darren Bain was present to discuss the application. The application requests a sidewalk café enclosure/fence on Academy Street.

Mr. Bain stated that the fence would be installed along Academy Street and around the front of the building, by the outdoor cafe. Ms. Ferraro advised that the fence will be taken down for the winter months.

Mr. Tribu inquired as to the materials of construction for the wood fence. Mr. Bain stated that the 2" x 4" posts will be stained black, and they will be 41" high. The top piece adds an additional ¾" in height, and it will be 6" wide all the way down.

Mr. Nave inquired if there would be screening any screening material. Mr. Bain approached the dais to point out where the additional boards would be installed between the posts to add stability. Each post is filled with cement half way up; they each weigh about 50 pounds.

Mr. Nave inquired if the fence had been approved by Liquor Control Commission; Mr. Bain responded in the affirmative and advised that Liquor Control Commission requires the fence to be installed before they will make a determination if it is appropriate. The main concern was the height of the fence; which will not have spindles. A horizontal element will be added at the bottom so no one can slip through. The planters will be a galvanized material similar to the containers holding the trees.

Ms. Ferraro stated that the Downtown Design Review Committee approved Mr. Bain's application this morning.

Mr. Nave mentioned that he had provided advice to the applicant, but he was not hired for his consulting services.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved approval of the application as submitted for 763-773 W. Michigan Ave regarding the installing of the fence for the outside cafe. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**608 Minor Avenue (Case #: IHA 09-0124)**

Ted Schnelker was present to discuss the application. The application requests demolition of the deteriorated garage. The original single-car garage was constructed circa 1925; the second bay was added circa 1960. The framing is missing on the interior northwest corner.

Ms. Ferraro expressed concern about the stability of the structure due to the missing corner post. The original wall is still intact, but most of the studs, joists and rafters have been sistered. The style of the garage does not match the house, and there is nothing of architectural interest remaining on the garage. Much of the back left wall of the garage is missing.

Mr. Nave inquired about the possibility of salvaging the siding. Ms. Ferraro advised that Fred Decker would like to have some of the siding. Also, there is a carriage barn on Locust where the siding could be utilized. Some of the siding and bead board appears to be salvageable

**Mr. Cinabro, supported by Ms. Seaverson, moved approval of the application for demolition regarding the garage at 608 Minor. It was suggested that the siding be salvaged. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Nave suggested that the siding be salvaged. Ms. Ferraro stated that the Habitat Restore might accept the siding and the applicant could receive a tax write off for the donation. She informed the applicant that he would need to apply for a demolition permit. Mr. Schnelker stated that he had already obtained the demolition permit.

Mr. Oudsema commented that it is hard to differentiate between this and other garages. The garage at 734 Village continues to deteriorate and will be in this condition soon.

**706 W. Willard (Case #: IHA 09-0127)**

David Hyde was present to discuss the application. The application requests an addition at the rear of the house at 706 W. Willard.

Mr. Hyde stated that he wants to live at this address. He would like to have three bedrooms on the second floor. The 1970's addition has been removed. The low pitched roof was never flashed and there were mold problems, but that has been resolved. The foundation is sound. He would like to have 9' ceilings on the second floor of the addition to differentiate from the original structure, per historic guidelines. The addition is taller than the roof on the front of the house. Mr. Hyde doesn't want to change the pitch, but the height could be lowered. Because the addition is set back so far, it shouldn't be an issue.

Mr. Nave inquired as to why the gable was oriented to the back and not to the east or west. The one in the middle has an east/west orientation. Mr. Hyde stated that he never considered that idea. At one point, he considered adding a story and half, and that could be where the roof configuration originated.

Mr. Nave inquired as to the rationale for the two-foot overhang at the north wall. Mr. Hyde stated that it provided the room he needs inside. Mr. Nave suggested adding a bracket under the overhang, which would be more historically accurate.

Mr. Tribu inquired as to why the window on the west elevation is against the corner. Mr. Hyde indicated that the drawing does not provide the exact location of the windows. Mr. Nave suggested revisiting this issue if the applicant wants to add a porch on the back. Mr. Hyde stated that he thought there would not be enough room for a porch. Mr. Nave inquired if there would be a stairway from the door in back. Discussion followed regarding the need for a stairway and a landing in that location. Mr. Hyde advised that there may not be a door in that location; the drawing just provides a rough idea of what he wants to do. A lot of people wander though the alley, and it may not be practical to put a door there.

Mr. Oudsema suggested approval in concept since the applicant is still unclear regarding the details of the doors and windows. Mr. Hyde advised that he didn't have time to prepare for the meeting, and that he could return to the HDC with more details.

Mr. Oudsema inquired if the HDC was agreeable with the concept of having the roof line of the addition higher than the rest of the house. Mr. Nave suggested that the roof could be lowered. Mr. Hyde agreed that the ceiling could be 8 feet rather than 9 feet on the second floor. The proposed height increase on the addition creates an issue with the historic district guidelines. Mr. Nave suggested scissor trusses. Mr. Hyde stated that he didn't want a vaulted roof; the ceiling is flat.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval in concept of the application for the addition at 706 W. Willard, per the preliminary drawing. The trim should match the existing trim. A dark drip edge and dark shingles should be installed on the roof, per historic district standards. The owner should have a choice of adding brackets under the overhang of the addition. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote. Ms. Seaverson was the only dissenting vote.**

**609 Elm (Case #: IHA 09-0127)**

The applicants were not present.

**228 W. Vine (224) (Case #: IHA 09-0128)**

The applicant was not present.

**151 Prospect (IHA 09-0129)**

Jeff Panse was present to discuss the application. The application requests repairs to the front porch, possible changes to handrails, and the addition of a rail around the deck above the south sun porch.

Mr. Panse stated that he would like to build a deck with a railing on the porch upstairs. There is an existing upstairs door which appears to have provided access to the porch. He would like to replace horizontal boards on the downstairs porch; some of the boards on the right hand side have rotted. He would also like to replace the stair railing to match the railing on the upper porch. Details of the railing are on page 22 of the information provided.

Ms. Ferraro suggested that the front porch guard rail not be changed because it is so distinctive. The handrails on the steps could be similar to the rail around the sun porch. There would normally be a shadow of the original rail that above the sun porch, but the repairs completed several years ago have obliterated those details. Mr. Panse stated that he originally wanted to mill the wood railing around the front porch, but it would be too expensive to do that. He doesn't have anything finalized, and he requested that the HDC advise as to their preference regarding details.

Mr. Tribu inquired if there was a rail above the sun porch. Ms. Ferraro advised that the door appears to be original, so there was probably a rail in that location.

Mr. Nave inquired if the deck would extend over the wall or to the edge of the roof. The roof overhangs the wall. Mr. Panse stated that the railing will attach to the form around the edge. It will not overhang or go to the sloped part of the roof. The railing is directly above the wall and below the roof.

Mr. Tribu questioned if the structure was too heavy over the roof. Mr. Panse stated that he wanted composite decking but the weight was a problem (170 lbs. per square foot). The squares are removable to facilitate repairs, but it is expensive. Therefore, he is proposing to use cedar over the sun porch, which the builder says would be sound.

Mr. Nave stated that the composite for decking on the second floor would be acceptable because it is not visible from ground level. Mr. Panse stated that the composite costs more money than he wants to spend. If the cedar is sealed every spring it could last longer than usual.

Mr. Tribu inquired if the new railings around the second floor porch would match the existing front porch railings. Ms. Ferraro confirmed that it would be appropriate to have a simple handrail on the front steps that would match the new rail around the second floor porch.

Discussion followed as to whether or not the decision on this application could be postponed. Mr. Panse stated that he would like to start on this project as soon as possible. The next HDC meeting will be on May 19<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Ferraro mentioned the possibility of meeting with other contractors and formulating a new plan. Mr. Tribu suggested approving the platform and allowing Ms. Ferraro to work out the details of the railing with the applicant. This would allow the contractor to begin work on the deck as soon as possible. Mr. Panse confirmed that the railings by the front steps are sound, he just doesn't like how they look. They don't pose a danger at this point. He wants to repair the deck as soon as possible.

Ms. Seaverson inquired as to how thick the deck will be above the sun porch, and will it be visible from the street? Mr. Panse stated that it might be visible from the street. It will be about 10" plus the decking. It will not extend beyond the plane of the wall below. Ms. Ferraro commented that the neighbors might see it from the second floor of their house, and that's probably the only angle from which it would be visible.

Mr. Nave suggested that the edge of the deck be white to match the house.

**Mr. Tribu, seconded by Mr. Nave, made a motion to approve the application for the platform of the deck above the sun [porch on the south side of the house, with the details of the railing to be worked out by the Coordinator.**

Mr. Nave inquired about the front porch deck. Ms. Ferraro advised that the front porch deck has been repaired at the northeast corner, which is in bad shape. The current decking material is not original to the house, and it needs a lot of work. Mr. Nave suggested repairing only the corner; the rest of the decking isn't in bad shape. Ms. Ferraro mentioned that the first five or six deck boards from the edge inward could be replaced. Mr. Nave stated that the bases of the columns are sitting on the existing floor boards and the water can't drain off. Mr. Panse stated that the paint and maintenance in that location are of concern and he wants to replace any surface that is subject to foot traffic. The new material should be durable; the current surface is tongue and groove decking but the applicant is open to suggestions.

Ms. Ferraro advised that Tendura has been reformulated so that it won't warp in northern climates. Tendura with the original formulation had been installed at 213 Elm, but was removed because it warped. The HDC hasn't had an opportunity to approve a project using the new formulation. Tendura may be an appropriate option for this application.

Mr. Nave commented that rain forest woods, such as Ipe (Iron Wood), may also be an option since it is resistant to deterioration. Ipe was approved this winter for use at 213 Elm to replace the Tendura.

Discussion continued regarding the life expectancy of the decking material. Mr. Oudsema inquired as to how long the existing decking material had been in place. Mr. Panse advised that most of the deck is in good shape. It could be removed, sanded and replaced, except for the pieces that have deteriorated. In response to Mr. Oudsema's question, Ms. Ferraro stated that she was not sure how long the decking material would last if replaced with similar material. She commented that Cypress would be durable, but it is expensive. It takes paint well and is rot resistant. The last house on the south side of Bellevue Place has a Cypress deck installed four or five years ago, and it looks nice. Cypress has the same or better life expectancy as synthetic material. Douglas Fir is not as expensive, but probably won't last as long. The Tendura was installed in 1996, and was removed last year in 2008 because it was in bad shape. The synthetic material is rated for use under a roof; the applicant's deck is not protected by a roof.

**Mr. Nave amended the motion to approve the replacement of the front deck with Cypress or similar, weather resistant wood in tongue and groove material, with fascia boards to match the existing. The bottom of the column should match the existing if it is replaced. Cedar will be used for the upper decking. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Ferraro stated that she would work out the details of the railing with the builder. She will bring a sample of the Cypress decking used at Bellevue Place. If most of the deck is in good shape, it might be possible to replace only the rotten boards on the edge with the more rot-resistant material. Mr. Oudsema suggested that Rob Chamberlain might be able to reproduce the existing boards. Mr. Ferraro advised that she would provide Mr. Chamberlain's contact information.

**1408 W. Michigan (Case #: IHA 09-0134)**

Marty Pone was present to discuss the application. The application requests reconfiguration of the front of the building to allow a gabled roof.

Mr. Pone advised that he has had problems with the flat roof every spring, and he would like to construct a gable roof and trusses over the flat roof. The roof trusses would go over the flat roof and pick up the bearing points on the outside block walls. This is a non-historic building in a historic district. The applicant is trying to make sure the changes will compliment the surrounding area. The intention is to remove the cedar shakes; there is dimensional framing behind the cedar shakes. The arched detail in the front would remain, and a shed roof would be constructed around that. The block wall would continue up to meet the area where the gabled triangle would be. The gable has been drawn with a 6/12 pitch. Mr. Pone would like to match the existing trim, the asphalt roof would match on the back, and the building would be repainted.

Mr. Nave stated that a building permit would be required for the proposed changes. An architect or engineer would need to draw up the plans for the gabled roof. Mr. Pone advised that this is only the first step; more detailed drawings will be submitted. The overhang will be about one foot and it will have ventilation. The insulation is already adequate. Mr. Nave advised that a ridge vent should be added. The roof should have a dark drip edge and dark shingles to match historic district guidelines. The cedar lasted a long time probably because it had an oil stain, but it has been painted now. If it is re-stained, it would probably last another 40 years. Mr. Pone confirmed that the cedar shakes are being removed, but there is a three foot band of cedar around the building that will be restored.

Mr. Nave inquired about the type of stucco to be installed on the front of the gable. Mr. Pone stated that he planned on putting Dryvit or white cedar shakes in that spot, which would be similar to the details on neighboring houses. Mr. Nave advised that the HDC has never approved Dryvit. Ms. Ferraro commented that it is a non-contributing building. Mr. Pone advised that roof is drawn at a 6/12 pitch; could it be an 8/12 pitch to accommodate the mechanicals? There were no objections from the HDC regarding the proposed change in roof pitch.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval in concept of the application for 1408 W. Michigan, with details of the overhang and ridge vent to be added. The dark drip edge and dark shingles should conform to historic district guidelines. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Discussion followed as to whether the applicant should return to the HDC to work out the final details of the project.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved to allow the Historic Preservation Coordinator to approve the details of the proposed project for 1408 W. Michigan. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**1408 W. Michigan (Case #: IHA 09-0135)**

Marty Pone was present to discuss the application. The application requests the installation of a sign on the east face of the non-historic building.

Mr. Pone advised that the sign on the east side is not a Jumbotron, it is a non-flashing (stays on at least five seconds before changing), simple sign. The "W" is a back-lit, block "W". Mr. Nave suggested changing the east sign from 3'4" x 9", to about 8' wide, which would be about the width of the window. The "W" overpowers in the current 5' x 7' size. He suggested making the "W" 4' high by 5' wide. Mr. Pone advised that the large "W" was intended to be reminiscent of a fraternity house sign and mimic the large "W" on the WMU fieldhouse.

Ms. Seaverson expressed concern that it might not be appropriate for the “W” to light up; the “W” on the field house doesn’t light up. Also, the electronic message center faces a residential area, and that may not be appropriate for a historic district.

Mr. Nave mentioned that there is an existing sign on the front, which has been there for years. There is also a Waldo’s sign painted on the east side of the building. Mr. Pone advised that the painted sign on the east may or may not remain, a final decision has not been made at this point. It does conform to the sign ordinance. The electronic message board is set back about 30 feet in front of the residential building.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Tribu, moved to accept the application for the sign at 1408 W. Michigan Ave. with the dimensions of the “W” to be 4 feet high by 5 feet wide. The overall dimension of the sign on the east side of the building should be not larger than 3’ 4” high by 8’ wide or not wider than the windows. With a roll call vote, the motion carried by a majority vote. Ms. Seaverson was the only dissenting vote.**

**608 W. Kalamazoo (Case #: IHA 09-0137)**

Jeff Bertolissi was present to discuss the application. The application requests the addition of rear guardrails on the non-historic porch, and the addition of handrails on the non-historic steps.

Ms. Ferraro commented that the contractors who built the porch owned a welding company, and they welded every detail of the porch that they could. The front porch handrails and steps are concrete and welded steel. The back porch and steps are steel plate. The steps are solid but they are not historic. Ms. Ferraro has been working with the applicants to meet the requirements of the rental housing code, which requires infill on the handrails to the basement stairs, on the handrails by the front steps, and around the back porch. There should be less than 4 inches between the spindles of the rail and there should be a grip rail by the steps.

Mr. Nave requested more details as to what the housing inspector required. Ms. Ferraro advised that the rental housing code states that historic district standards may apply with regard to rails. So far, there has not been a challenge to interpret that language. If the HDC specifies that the rails on this house can remain as long as they are sound, that might be acceptable. If it were an ornate, historic railing there would be no question about keeping it, but the existing railing is not historic.

Mr. Nave suggested taking off the old rail and putting on a new one. Ms. Ferraro advised that the pipe rail is solid, and there is no way to attach the wood to the concrete base. It might be possible to add a metal grill, or something similar to what is on the steps at 151

Prospect. That would not be historic but would provide the required infill. The existing configuration has been there about 40 years. Infill must be added to the side of the steps to meet the housing code requirements.

Mr. Tribu suggested adding a parallel pipe rail with metal balustrade, which would be as unobtrusive as possible.

Mr. Bertolissi stated that he would like to leave the rails as is. He would prefer to have historic rails, but they are not affordable. It would be too much work and expense to deal with the poured concrete footings around the front steps. There is a similar situation regarding the back porch of the house.

Ms. Seaverson inquired if the housing code also requires changes to the steps. Ms. Ferraro advised that the steps are still sound and there are no requirements to change them at this point. The issue is finding infill for the rails on the steps that lead up to the front porch, infill for the rail around the entrance to the basement and infill for the rail around the back porch.

Mr. Nave suggested a wood, half wall from the ground to the railing. That would allow Ms. Ferraro to provide an infill waiver for the wing wall. The grip rail is acceptable as is. Mr. Nave suggested that the wing wall could be constructed in the back also. It could be 8" off the ground and constructed of 2" x 6" material, which would extend up to the concrete porch on both sides of the steps.

Mr. Oudsema mentioned that his house has brick wing walls but not the railing. Ms. Ferraro commented that the proposed concept would be narrower and build of wood. It could be painted to match the color of the block foundation to be as invisible as possible. It would serve as infill and could be built under the existing grip rail. It would also be neutral and meet the requirements of the housing code. Ms. Seaverson suggested that the wing walls could be constructed of block. Discussion followed regarding the possibility of the HDC allowing the rail to stay as is, and if the housing inspectors advise that it is not acceptable, the issue could be revisited. These details are at issue because the house is being used as rental property. If the house were owner-occupied, it could remain as is.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Ms. Seaverson, moved to accept the application for approving the existing configuration of the rails at 608 W. Kalamazoo based on historic district standards. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Ferraro advised that she would contact the housing inspectors regarding this issue.

**828 W. South Street (Case #: IHA 09-0138)**

Jeff Bertolissi was present to discuss the application. The application requests that the front porch handrails remain as currently installed.

Discussion followed with regard to the possibility of deferring this application since it is a similar situation to what exists at 608 W. Kalamazoo.

Mr. Nave requested details about the rear porch. Ms. Ferraro referred to photos 3 and 4 for this application. The infill under the upper rail is missing and there is no lower rail. Ms. Ferraro talked with the contractor about building a simple wood rail similar to the front design, but without the turned details. The height of the rail would not change. Ms. Ferraro can provide a height waiver for the back porch rail once it is in place. The current application applies to the handrail on the front porch only.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved to accept the application to allow the existing historic pipe rail to remain as is. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Oudsema inquired as to what it would cost to replicate the guard rail (newel post) and details by the front steps. Mr. Bertolissi estimated that it would cost approximately \$500, and Mr. Nave advised that it would cost more than that. Ms. Ferraro advised that the horizontal pieces are turned, which would add to the cost. There should be a minimal grip rail similar to what currently exists.

**250 E. Michigan (Green Top) (Case #: IHA 09-0139)**

Nelson Nave, Architect, and the owner, Sherry Lee were present to discuss the application. The application requests restoration of the store front of the Green Top Tavern.

Mr. Nave advised that the applicant would like to restore the façade to its 1920's appearance. The original doors are in the basement. The aluminum top would be removed and a transom window would be added. The planter would be moved to the front, and a new sign would be installed. Mr. Nave advised that the design for the sign has not been finalized yet, and that will likely be on a future HDC agenda. The new sign will likely be a wooden sign that extends out over the sidewalk. Small, goose neck lights would be focused on the sign and the facade. The façade will be built of wood and insulated glass will be installed. The doors are 7' high and 3" thick; they will swing out. The second floor windows would be replaced if the budget allows. The windows are not in bad condition. The brick and stone will be cleaned and the stone sill will be repaired. Part of the fee is coming from a DDA grant for the façade work and the design fee. The façade will extend out to its original location, which will increase space inside the tavern and the vestibule.

**Mr. Tribu, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved approval of the design for 250 E. Michigan as submitted. With a roll call vote, the motion carried with five ayes and one abstention. Mr. Nave abstained from voting.**

**810 Grant (Case #: IHA 09-0140)**

The applicant was not present. The application requests five new windows.

Ms. Ferraro advised that most of the windows at this address have been replaced with vinyl windows except the ones the applicants are proposing to replace now. There are two additions on the rear of the house; the applicants would like to replace five severely deteriorated windows on the additions. The windows are about 80 years old, but they are not part of the original house. The proposed replacement windows are wood.

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved to accept the application for the five new wood windows to be installed in the rear additions of 810 Grant, subject to review by the Historic Preservation Coordinator. The trim should match the existing trim. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**609 Elm (Case #: 09-0127)**

The applicant was not present. The application requests replacement of five windows in the southwest second floor master bedroom.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the sills are badly deteriorated, and the applicants would like to replace all of the windows eventually for energy savings. Review of the application could be postponed until a later date to allow time for Ms. Ferraro to examine the windows.

Mr. Nave advised that there are no storm windows on the house. He suggested that the applicants get aluminum storm windows and use the money they save to rebuild the existing windows.

Mr. Tribu mentioned that \$7,000 for 5 windows seemed to be a high quote. Mr. Nave commented that All Season Windows could do storm windows for approximately \$150 per opening.

**Mr. Cinabro, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to postpone the decision on the application for 609 Elm, pending further information from the applicants. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**228 W. Vine (224) (Case #: IHA 09-0128)**

The applicant was not present. The application requests removal of the upper porch and rebuilding of the deteriorated porch.

Ms. Ferraro advised that the work was done without a building permit. The engineered beams are sitting on the edge of the trim, rather than the posts. The applicant would like to remove the upper porch. There is a hinged window that was meant to be egress onto

the porch. The upper porch did not exist in 1908. The double porch has been there since the 1920's or earlier.

The recent work done by the contractor is not structurally sound. Ms. Ferraro advised that the applicant needs an architect or engineer to provide information on how best to proceed. Frank Springer, one of the city's building inspectors reviewed the work, but didn't put a stop work order on the project. Ms. Ferraro provided approval for the roof repairs, but the contractor never obtained a building permit. The porch may have been built as a two deck porch, but the upper deck was not roofed. This building appears to have been built as a duplex because it is symmetrical on the first and second floors.

**Ms. Seaverson, supported by Ms. DeYoung, moved to postpone the decision regarding the application for 228 (224) W. Vine pending further information from the applicant. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

#### **VI. Minutes (March 17, 2009)**

Ms. DeYoung referred to page 5, paragraph 3, and questioned the spelling of "halide." Mr. Nave confirmed that the spelling was correct.

Ms. Seaverson referred to page 5, paragraph 2, the motion is for approval of the current phase of the project only. Page 7, with regard to the Supertherm product, the HDC would like to see "samples" of this product on wood. Page 10, with regard to Mr. Nave's comments about the Dutton St. entrance, strike, "to promote drainage."

**The amended March 17, 2009 HDC minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.**

#### **X. Discussion**

##### **Item S - 411 Douglas**

Ms. Ferraro advised that this is a consultation. The porch was removed in the 1950's and a solid concrete porch and deck were added at that time. In the 1990's the HDC approved a rail that extended from the center support post back to where it blocked tenants from accessing the porch. The current owner removed the deteriorated rail, and the inspector is requesting that a new rail be installed. There should be a rail around the entire non-historic porch. Would a metal rail be acceptable on a temporary basis (the rail would be removed when the porch is restored)?

The general consensus among the HDC members was that a simple, metal rail would be appropriate.

Ms. Ferraro suggested that the rail should be white; the house is trimmed in white. It is currently used as a rental property. Mr. Oudsema suggested adding columns similar to what originally existed. Ms. Ferraro stated that the owners would not be able to afford the columns. Also, the porch deck is concrete and the footprint of the porch is bigger than the roof.

## **XI. Other Business**

### **A. Election of Officers**

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved to nominate Jay Bonsignore to serve another term as Chair of the Historic District Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Nave, supported by Mr. Cinabro, moved to nominate Bob Oudsema as Vice Chair of the Historic District Commission. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.**

### **B. FYI report (Item T)**

Ms. Ferraro advised that the Assessor's Office added foot print plans to the city's website, which may be useful for the HDC and city staff.

Ms. Ferraro provided the HDC with a preliminary draft newsletter. The full draft will be provided next week. Part of the news letter is information from the National Trust regarding window replacement and repair. Ms. Ferraro is waiting for budget approval to include an additional page with the newsletter so the window information can be mailed with every newsletter.

Mr. Cinabro mentioned that the March HDC minutes reflect information discussed regarding proposed noticing procedures for the HDC. Ms. Ferraro advised that she consulted with the city attorney's office regarding this topic. She was advised that, due to the added expense of sending meeting notices and the fees for demolition and new construction, there would need to be an ordinance amendment to reflect the proposed changes. She requested that the HDC provide input at the next meeting with regard to guidelines for meeting notices.

Ms. Ferraro inquired if any of the commissioners were interested in attending a training session for historic district commissioners. Mr. Tribu and Ms. Seaverson expressed interest in attending the training.

Mr. Oudsema requested an update regarding the wall at 530 W. South Street. Ms. Ferraro stated that the city attorney's office may be writing a letter to the owners of that

property. Mr. Oudsema suggested that this matter be finalized before the end of the summer.

Ms. Seaverson mentioned that Preservation Month is coming up in May. In conjunction with this event, Mike Jackson will be speaking at the Methodist church downtown on May 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm regarding preservation and “green” energy saving practices and how they relate. The presentation is free.

**XII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

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

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

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

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

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

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