CITY OF YPSILANTI

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 24, 2015

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Anne Stevenson	Chair 7:00 PM
Meeting Location:	City Council Chambers, City Hall
Commissioners Present:	Anne Stevenson, Hank Prebys, Ron Rupert, Alex Pettit, Jane Schmiedeke, Erika Lindsay
Commissioners Absent:	Michael Condon
Staff Present:	Abigail Jaske, HDC Assistant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moves to approve the agenda.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - none

PUBLIC HEARING- none

OLD BUSINESS- none

NEW BUSINESS

6 S. Washington

Applicant: Not present- Andrew Epstein – property owner.

Discussion:

Stevenson: States that there is an issue with the awning sagging.

Prebys: States he is concerned about taking the awning and removing it. States he is concerned about the use of the term "replicate" in the application and could not authorize a removal without knowing precisely what is going to be the replacement.

Rupert: States that he has looked at the awning several times and what has to be done is tighten up the chain and replace and put the panel back on; it is repairable. States he communicated this with the owner. States that this is his assessment and that the set of three windows to the right of the awning need repairs, but the rest of it is stable.

Schmiedeke: So it's repairable?

Rupert: Confirms.

Pettit: Asks how deep is the overhang?

Rupert: States about 2 feet.

Pettit: Inquires how does it shed water?

Rupert: States there is an internal gutter.

Rupert: States they would like to see it repaired, rather than torn down and replaced.

Prebys: States that this should be tabled.

Motion: Prebys (second: Petit) Movement to table the application for 6 S. Washington until we can discuss more with the applicant.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

STUDY ITEMS

620 Norris St.

Applicant: Evan Williams – property owner.

Discussion:

Stevenson: Inquires if the home will be built on a vacant lot.

Williams: States that it will be. House will be built as a passive solar house, super insulated, super energy efficient. Concave roof unique style. States he has been a builder for 15 years. Not any other particular reason to have this type of roof. States something he and his wife really wanted.

Stevenson: States she likes the aesthetic and that it is unique. Is concerned how this house will fit in with the other houses around it not that it needs to look historic or match the buildings next to it. States that the Secretary of Standards #3, "do not imitate earlier styles," could apply here. States the issue on Norris, is if it will be compatible with the homes in the neighborhood and if there is a sense of continuity, but do not want to falsify history. Discusses the swooping gables.

Prebys: States that in regards to historicism these swooping roofs kind of evolved in the late 20s and 30s; going back to English Tudor revival.

Rupert: States that on Huron and Normal Park there are swooping buildings.

Williams: States he has not seen a total swooping roof except in Japanese architecture.

Prebys: Inquires if he has talked to the building department at all.

Williams: States that they would be building it themselves.

Prebys: States that the scale fits with the neighborhood, but it's the kind of style that he is unsure of.

Lindsay: States that she noticed a lot of inconsistencies between the various facades on the West elevation; there are circular windows and then you go back to the East there are more square windows.

Williams: States that the round windows are the look he is going for, but the back wall with square windows are necessary to make it a functioning passive solar house.

Pettit: States that the commissioners don't often have an opportunity to look at a new structure in the District so they are working through it.

Rupert: States his concern for the large circular window without framing.

Williams: Window is 6 foot in diameter.

Stevenson: States she would be ok with the design even with the uncommon swooping roof, however the colors of the house will stand out; maybe consider more muted colors.

Williams: States he is not attached to the colors and will consider a more muted scheme.

Schmiedeke: States that in terms of compatibility, there is not a problem as the buildings are nondescript and already a wide variety they are two story one story a bungalow a ranch. States she could accept the overall design, but is concerned with the windows. States there are a lot of them and they are prominent and this is a big part of the design of this building. Approves of the round window in the front, but suggests it be smaller as it is out of scale and that the two front ones next to the round one are too close to the outside wall.

Williams: States he would have to scale them down.

Schmiedeke: Expresses concern for the south elevation as there is a continued line of windows with these two windows and this row.

Williams: States the entire row is needed to be there for the functionality of the house as a passive solar house. However, states he would be open to changing the style of the windows on the ends.

Schmiedeke: Inquires about the casement matches on the side, but the other one does not; then on the East elevation. Inquires about panels.

Williams: States it is a bow window coming out of the back.

Prebys: States that Jane's comment about dealing with those three windows would make a big difference and less dramatic; the side of the arch/roof would look better if they were further away and center them in that space.

Schmiedeke: States that it would work if the lower inside corner was touching the swoop.

Williams: States the issue with that is if the scale of the windows is changed they are still talking about a chimney. States it would be for a wood stove but it would be on the North Side and it would be a brick chimney.

Rupert: Inquires about the light fixtures on the exterior. Asks about the possibility of a balcony?

Williams: Responds yes, on the East side facing into the lot.

Pettit: Inquires about any other landscaping chances to the property?

Williams: States just that there will be digging out for the basement and then leveling it out.

Prebys: Inquires about posts on the porch and their historic quality.

Williams: States they're open to changing the posts.

Prebys: States if it would make sense to keep them looking more current.

Stevenson: States that he should add more detail on the porch when you submit the actual application as well as plans for gutters.

309 N. Park

Applicant: Not present– property owner.

Discussion:

The commissioners discussed that the application stated a porch replacement of a no longer existing porch. Stated that there might have been a porch along the front based on the photos they have now, but would recommend that the property owner try to find older photos. Also stated that the owner could reference the side porch and balusters for use on a front porch. The side porch would make a good reference point. Painting schemes for siding should be brought in to share with the commissioners and an oil based primer should be used. The owner will still have to come in with their proposals. Staff will communicate to let them know to come in for the meeting on March 10th.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS-

123 W. Michigan Ave:

Staff shared with photographs of the proposed sign change on 123 W. Michigan Ave. with the commissioners. The only change to the signs is the name. Size, color, and amount of signage are to remain the same.

OTHER BUSINESS

Property Monitoring:

169 N Washington: Appears that there was a fire at this location and it needs to be monitored. Staff took photos on 12/2/14 and there was a dumpster on the property and a letter was sent to the owner on 12/11/14 advising that any exterior changes need to be brought to the HDC. Sent out a letter on 2/24/15 inquiring about the work that needs to be done due to the fire and that it will require HDC approval.

525 N Huron: Staff will continue to monitor. Photos were taken on 12/2/14. Staff sent a letter to the owner re: the vinyl windows on the sides, back and front and the metal door on the side. Email response received on 12/24/14 that states that the owner is seeking a loan to finish the work. The HDC requests that a letter be sent to see where they are at with their CO as of February 24th.

214 W Forest: Photos taken 11/6/14, the window on the back has been sided over. Staff sent a second notice on 12/11/14 with no response at this time.

314 E Cross: Staff took photos on 1/22/15 to show work that was completed. Staff sent letter on 1/29/15 to the owner and contractor. Staff spoke with the owner and contractor about the work that still needed to be completed which includes: replacing missing gutter and painting. Stated that they will complete work. Monitor to make sure work is completed.

35 S Huron: Staff took photos on 12/2/14, appears that work is being done. Staff sent a letter on 12/11/14 reminding the owner that any exterior work needs to be brought before the HDC.

106 S Washington: Scheduled for re-inspection by the building department on 1/21/15. The concern is that this structure will only get worse. Staff sent a letter on 12/16/14 advising the owner that the structure needs to be stabilized and recommend immediate action. Received 1/5/15 response from the owner advising that he is still obtaining bids.

613 N Prospect: No update.

221 S Washington: Staff advises that a letter was sent on 10/28/14 to the owner regarding fence needing painting. No response has been received at this time. A second notice will be sent in the spring.

322 E Cross: It was noticed by the HDC that there was a recent outbuilding added to the property. Staff sent a letter on 12/11/14 requesting an application for the additional structure. Staff received a voicemail from the owner replying to the letter and staff left a voicemail advising that the application is still needed.

215 S Washington: The HDC requests that a letter be sent to the owner advising that any exterior work requires an HDC work permit application since it appears that work is in process at this property.

33 E Cross: Staff sent out a letter on 2/24/15 to the owner inquiring about work that needs to be done to maintain the bricks on the West side of the building.

Porch fact sheet:

New porch fact sheet was approved.
Motion: Rupert (second: Petit) moves to approve the fact sheet.
Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

Annual Report 2014:

Annual report for 2014 was approved.
Motion: Prebys (second: Rupert) moves to approve the Annual Report.
Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of January 27, 2015

Motion: Rupert (second: Prebys) moves to approve the minutes as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Prebys (second: Rupert) moves to adjourn.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:57 pm