

CITY OF YPSILANTI
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF August 9, 2016

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Anne Stevenson Chair 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Council Chambers, 1 S Huron St.

Commissioners Present: Hank Prebys, Alex Pettit, Jane Schmiedeke, Erika Lindsay,
Mike Davis Jr.

Commissioners Absent: Anne Stevenson, Ron Rupert

Staff Present: Haley McAlpine, HDC Assistant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Schmiedeke (second: Pettit) moves to approve the agenda as amended to
include 301 W Cross St and 64 N Huron St as Study Items.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS—none

NEW BUSINESS

215 N Adams St.

**Application is for reroofing of the house and garage.*

Applicant: Jim and Edward Jackson, owner—present

Discussion: Prebys: Asks the applicant to explain the project.

Jim: States that they are tearing off the existing shingles and installing a new dimensional shingle on the roof. States that there will be new gutter systems as well.

Prebys: Asks the Commissioners for questions.

Pettit: States that there is a question about gutter color.

Schmiedeke: Asks about the style.

Jim: States that the existing is a 5" k-style gutter. States that it will be white. States that that is what they are replacing it with. States that they are installing a ridge vent for ventilation.

Schmiedeke: Asks the color of the downspouts.

Jim: States that they will be white as well.

Prebys: Asks if they will be in the same locations as the existing.

Jim: Affirms.

Schmiedeke: States that she has a suggestion. Asks if brown down spouts would be more appropriate. States that the white is very prominent.

Prebys: Asks the applicant if they had considered brown.

Jim: States that he would be open to putting brown on there if that is what they need to be approved. States that the homeowner wants white.

Edward: States that white is the existing, and he figured that he would go with the white.

Schmiedeke: Asks if they already bought them.

Edward: Affirms. States that if they wanted them brown, they could paint them brown.

Schmiedeke: Asks if there are straps.

Jim: States that there are no straps, that there is a fascia board.

Motion: Pettit (second: Schmiedeke) moves approval for the application for work at 215 N Adams to include the removal of the existing shingles on the house and garage, and replacement with GAF architectural shingles in color Hickory. Drip edge and flashing to be brown. Ridge venting is to be installed. Work to also include the removal the existing gutters and replacement with white K-style gutters. Gutters to be attached by a fascia type hanger, so there will be no strap to consider. The downspout locations are not to be different than the existing.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9—Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

#10—New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

111 Maple St.

**Application is for demolition of the existing garage.*

Applicant: Donald Ure, owner—not present

Discussion: Pettit: States that he wants to know why he checked two boxes on the grounds on which the application should be based the demolition should be done. The second box he checked indicates that it is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will give substantially benefit to the community.

Prebys: States that he is over stating.

Staff: States that she informed the applicant that that criteria wouldn't apply.

Schmiedeke: States that they have used it before, but it does not apply in this case.

Staff: Informs the Commission that the print out passed around includes questions from his contractor about the rebuild.

Lindsay: Asks if this is an application for a demolition or for a rebuild or both.

Staff: States that the application is for demolition.

Lindsay: Asks if that is contingent on that he will build a new structure there.

Staff: States that he appears to be working with a contractor and planning to rebuild the structure in the near future.

Pettit: Asks if this is a multi-step process.

Staff: Informs the Commission that they have two options. They can either decide that the structure has historic significance and call for a public hearing. Informs them that they have enough time to notice for a public hearing at the next meeting if they decide to go that way. The other option would be to find that the structure does not have historic significance and approve the demolition on first review.

Prebys: States that the Commission may approve the demolition with a unanimous vote of all Commissioners present that such structure is of minimal historic significance so that the demo or moving would clearly be compatible with the historic district ordinance which is the demo or moving would have no adverse impact on the area or the historic district as a whole.

Lindsay: States that all they have a photograph of the blight, but not of the structure.

Schmiedeke: States that it is a heap of rubble. States that it looks worse than the last time he was here.

Prebys: States that he and Jane went to see it and they found that it is a hazard.

Schmiedeke: States that should really be a demolition by neglect.

Prebys: Asks if they want to call for a public meeting, or do they think that they could approve its demolition.

Lindsay: States that the trouble is with the precedent. States that this keeps happening, that if they let their property go then they get to demolition that way. States that if someone doesn't want a structure they can just let it go until they ask to demolish it.

Pettit: Asks if this is where the new relationship with the building department comes in.

Lindsay: States that they hope so.

Schmiedeke: States that they have to deal with this in the meantime. States that it is a matter if it has architectural or historical significance. States that if they agree unanimously that it does not have significance then they don't have to go through a public hearing.

Davis: States that it is his first meeting, but that he doesn't know if it is fair to determine the historical significance based on a photo of a caved in roof.

Schmiedeke: States that they could have a property owner come in requesting a demolition with the structure in this condition but it could've been built in 1800 and could have been proven to be part of the underground railroad, then it would be historically significant.

Lindsay: Asks if they know when the garage in question was built.

Staff: States that they think the pyramid roof is consistent with 1920s architecture, but they do not know for sure.

Prebys: States that it was built into a hill side, which accounts for the concrete bulk heads.

Lindsay: Asks if he is planning to rebuild it as is.

Schmiedeke: States that she thinks he was planning on bringing it forward.

Staff: States that she spoke with the applicant and he expressed a desire to rebuild the structure "as is." States that she informed him of the Secretary of the Interior standard noting that history should not be imitated. States that she told him this would be a discussion to have with the Commission.

Pettit: Asks what their options are procedurally. States that before they consider anything else, they have to make the decision if it is historically

significant. States that they have to ask if they have enough information to go forward with a decision if they decided it does not have significance. States that they typically require more information.

Schmiedeke: States that she was thinking along the same lines. States that assuming they decide it does not have significance, that they should not take action tonight and that they should request more information.

Prebys: States that they will be asking for more information about what will replace it.

Lindsay: Asks if they would be voting tonight to see if demolition would be possible.

Schmiedeke: States that they would be voting to decide whether the building has historical significance or not. States that they will then request more information on what will replace it.

Prebys: Asks if that decision would allow them to go forward with the demolition without the Commission knowing what the new structure will be.

Schmiedeke: *reviews the manual* States that they would be voting to approve the demolition.

Prebys: States that they could table the entire application and request more information about what is going to replace it before we allow the structure to be demolished.

Pettit: States that after reviewing the questions just handed to them, they may want to give him some guidance.

Staff: States that the applicant was wondering the HDC had a preference for a poured concrete wall as opposed to a concrete block wall.

Lindsay: States that the trouble is that even if he does remove the existing structure, he will have to put in a retaining wall or something to hold the earth back. States that the structure has been holding the earth back.

Pettit: States that they need a comprehensive site plan. States that they know he wants to move it slightly, so they will need a plan for that.

Lindsay: Asks if there will be any other structures effected.

Pettit: States that it would not be on his property.

Prebys: Asks if that is where they are going now, that they are concerned with what will happen in the space after the demolition. States that they could table this, requesting more information about what will happen with the bank that will be exposed with the demolition and what will be built. States that they don't want to design it, but they do what to know what they are planning.

Lindsay: States that they want to see some designs.

Schmiedeke: States that if someone came to them wanting to build a garage, they would require detailed plans.

Lindsay: States that she is concerned with the lack of cost estimate. States that demolition is not free. States that the contractor may tell them it is much more than he was expecting to hold that earth back. States that for a demolition the applicant needs to be present.

Pettit: States that their questions are about what kind of structure would go back there. Asks what would their requirements be replacing structure. States that if it is a replacement, might they have a different set of requirements.

Prebys: States that he doesn't think so. States that unless they are replicating the garage, what is the point. States that it seems to him that it would be a modern garage. States that they would have a modern garage that is amenable to the house and neighborhood.

Pettit: States that they would be looking for proportion, scale, and massing. States that when he asks about windows and siding, we would give him our standard requirements.

Lindsay: States that he would probably want to match the house. States that the design should be cohesive and complimentary.

Motion: Lindsay (second: Schmiedeke) moves to table the application at 111 Maple St pending more detailed information, such as materials, massing, proportions, and scale of the replacement; a site plan, and cost of proposed work. Also, a proposal from a contractor for the demolition plan and a plan for dealing with the grade change, such as a retaining wall and details on how that will be dealt with during demolition.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

314 E Cross St.

**Application is for removal of a non-functional chimney.*

Applicant: Michael Overdier, owner—present

Discussion: Prebys: Asks the applicant to state what he would like to do.

Overdier: States that he would like to remove the chimney on the rear of the structure. States that it is weighing down on the structure. States that it is a nonfunctioning chimney, that it does not provide any function to the interior of the house at this time. States that a contractor told him it is adding about 2,000 lbs of weight, making the roof bow on the inside. States that he would like to remove it, that it is nonfunctioning.

Schmiedeke: Asks if it is on the rear wing of the house.

Overdier: States that if they look at it they will see that it doesn't have any special characteristics.

Pettit: Clarifies that this is a one-story extension on the rear of the house.

Overdier: Affirms. States that this would've been the original stove pipe for the kitchen.

Prebys: Asks if they have questions.

Pettit: Asks if they are going to match the shingles to the existing.

Overdier: Affirms. States that it is basically a composite shingle, states that the color is Bark Wood and that is basically the same color that is on the house.

Lindsay: Asks when the house was last reroofed.

Overdier: States that it was done in 1989. States that it will need a new roof in the next few years.

Lindsay: States that it will be hard to match the color with the degradation.

Overdier: States that it is a composite shingle.

Pettit: Asks for the shingle specs.

Overdier: States that it is a Timberline shingle in color Bark Wood.

Motion: Pettit (second: Lindsay) moves to approve the application for work at 314 E Cross St. to include the removal of the nonfunctioning masonry chimney located at the south end of the south extending, one story extension of the house. The hole created by removing the chimney is to be patched and shingled with shingles to match the existing roof, Timberline shingles in color Bark Wood.

Standards:

#2 - Do not destroy original character. Do not remove or alter historic material or features.

#5 - Preserve distinctive features.

#10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

47 N Huron St.

**Application is for masonry work.*

Applicant: Mike Condon, contractor Ypsilanti Restoration LLC—present

Discussion: Prebys: Asks the applicant to tell them what they are planning to do.

Condon: States that the wall was repaired three or four times in the past, and that this will be a continually on-going project as it was originally an interior wall. States that the bricks are of a lower fire and as a result are degrading over time with exposure to the elements. States that the owner wants them to patch the 300 or so most offending bricks and then scrape the wall, rinse it off, and paint the same color. States that there maybe some possible stucco repair at the bottom.

Prebys: Asks for questions. [sees none]

Prebys: Asks if there is anything that can be done to stabilize the wall.

Condon: States that if it wasn't painted, they could potentially use a commercial masonry consolidant that could be applied. States that there is no end-all solution other than to replace the brick. States that some of them are so soft you can scratch away at the surface and tear it to pieces. States that this is because it was an interior wall, so they used the softer bricks from the outside of the beehive kiln in that location. States that every ten years they will replace 300 bricks.

Motion: Lindsay (second: Schmiedeke) moves approval for the work to be done at 47 N Huron St as described in the application, to include new brick to be matched as closely as possible, a mortar mix of 1 part Portland cement, 5 parts hydrated lime, 10 parts sand, primer, and exterior satin paint. No power washing or sandblasting is to be done. The wall is to be painted to match the existing.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#2 - Do not destroy original character. Do not remove or alter historic material or features.

#5 - Preserve distinctive features.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

307 N Hamilton.

**Application is for sign installation.*

Applicant: Barry Levin, owner—present

Discussion: Levin: States that he would like to install a sign on the front of the house. States that the packet includes graphics for the sign. States that the sign showing the S3B Properties is the only part that attaches to the structure. The smaller signs will attach through clips and pre drilled holes. States that

the smaller signs are only out temporarily during leasing times. States that the main sign will be attached to the property and the smaller signs will attach to the main sign.

Prebys: Asks for the size of the sign.

Lindsay: States that it is 36" wide by 24" tall.

Levin: States that he has provided a photo of a sign on another of his properties that is not in the historic district. States that it shows what is on there and how it is attached. States that he puts a piece of pressure treated wood behind it so that it stands off from the wall and doesn't damage any siding. States that the wood also provides an air space behind to allow water to go through and not rot back there. States that they have a sample of the material, it is an aluminum composite type sandwich. States that it is held on with screws and that if it ever needed to be removed, you could just take the screws out and that is it.

Prebys: Asks if the lettering is vinyl.

Levin: Affirms. *shows sample*

Pettit: Asks if there is a name for the material.

Levin: States that he does not know but that it was made by Fast Signs in Ann Arbor. States that there are other rental companies on the block with rental company signs on the street. States that it is the same size as Barnes and Barnes, but their sign is vertical. States that his sign will be horizontal. States that he wants his closer to the ground. States that the property also needs towing signs that he did not want to put on the house. States that in order to have unauthorized cars legally towed from the house he would have to have signs posted visible from the front and the back. States that they will be post mounted and easily removable.

Prebys: States that these signs are not on the application.

Levin: States that they are not. Asks if they can be added to his application now.

Schmiedeke: States that she doesn't know how the building department would feel about it.

Pettit: States that they don't typically add work to applications.

Levin: States that he can apply again.

Prebys: States that the building department relies on their motion. States that it gets confused.

Lindsay: States that they could discuss the signs as a study item.

Levin: States that there is a towing sign in front that is post mounted. States that there is a parking lot and a back alley. States that there is also a city parking lot west of the alley. States that people come to avoid the meters in the city parking lot and think this is a part of the city lot, and they end up parking there. States that he wants to put legal towing sign and a permit parking only sign to clearly delineate that.

Prebys: States that they will need an application for that.

Levin: States that he will submit an application. States that everything is totally removable. Asks if there is a preference for the north side or south side for the rental company sign.

Pettit: States that they don't have a preference and that he will leave it up to him. Asks how the sign will be set off from the wall.

Levin: States that it will be mounted on pressure treated wood to set it off from the siding.

Motion: Pettit (second: Davis) moves to approve the application for work at 307 N Hamilton. Work to include the installation of one sign, 36" wide by 24" tall sign of a metallic composite sign board material. Sign is to be located on the front elevation of the property as indicated in the submitted photos. Sign is to be attached to the siding with rust resistant screws. Sign to be mounted on boards to stand off from the siding using treated lumber. Sign is also to have allowance for removable, smaller signs attached to the bottom of the sign. These will hang from the bottom of the sign as shown in the submitted drawing. Sign is to be white with black lettering as shown in the submitted drawings.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:
#5 - Preserve distinctive features.
#10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

STUDY ITEMS

301 W Cross St.

Applicant: Terrick Ahmad, owner and Abdul Nhimer, contractor

Discussion: The applicant wanted to discuss the possibility of building an exterior patio for dining. The applicant wanted feedback on the preferred decking—either an asphalt lot or a raised, composite wood deck. The applicant also was interested in installing a pergola. The HDC said that they would be OK with the deck or the asphalt. The HDC said they may consider the composite for the decking, since it is new construction and not replacing something that was existing. The HDC did not want to see wood grain on the composite decking—it would have to be smooth. The HDC suggested having fencing to delineate the dining area.

64 N Huron St and 64-76 N Huron St, rear alley walls

Applicant: Alita Warren

Discussion: The applicant was present to discuss the possibility of having students paint a colorful mural on the rear half-wall behind the DTE transformer bin. The HDC was in favor of the project. The applicant also discussed the possibility of having a second mural painted between the buildings along the RAC wall. Again, the HDC was in favor of the project.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS—none

OTHER BUSINESS

This Place Matters/ Michigan Places Matter Update:

Staff presented the finalized promotional pictures from the group photo at the Towner House on July 21, 2016. Both photos were circulated on social media, one of which was for the National Trust for Historic Preservation "This Place Matters" campaign. The other photo was sent to MHPN to be included in their "Michigan Places Matter" campaign.

Staff wanted to thank Barbara Barber, the Preservation Planner for Oakland Township, and the Oakland Township Historical Society and HDC for inspiring the photo. This group executed a similar group photo very successfully. This photo inspired staff to organize the Ypsilanti preservation groups for the Towner House photos.

HDC Policy Review

Staff presented the HDC with a proposed policy document to consolidate all existing policies and update them. The HDC had suggested revisions and edits. The HDC requested to see a second draft at the next meeting.

Property Monitoring

213 N Hamilton St.:

Staff informed the HDC that work was being done without a permit. Large sections of siding were in the process of being replaced with cement board when Staff approached the contractors at the site. The owner has submitted an application for the next HDC meeting on August 23.

Several Commissioners voiced their concern with the habitual violations of the property owner, Barnes and Barnes. They inquired about the possibility of enforcing against these violations. Staff informed the HDC that the proposed ordinance amendment will go before Council at their first meeting in September. Staff informed the HDC that if council approves their recommendation, the new enforcement policy will go into place and there will be a continued conversation with the Building Department.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of July 26, 2016

Motion: Pettit (second: Schmiedeke) moves to approve the minutes from July 26, 2016.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Pettit (second: Davis) moves to adjourn.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:15pm