



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING
Ypsilanti Historical Society – 220 N Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Tuesday, September 10, 2019
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Alex Pettit Interim Chair 7:02 PM

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit, Hank Prebys, Jane Schmiedeke, Erika Lindsay

Commissioners Absent: Anne Stevenson, Ron Rupert

Staff Present: Scott Slagor, Preservation Planner
Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Audience: Request to add 412 Oak as a study item.

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the agenda as amended to add 412 Oak as a study item.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS—none

NEW BUSINESS

310 Florence

**Street-side flowerbed.*

Applicant: Melissa Block, owner- present.

Discussion: Pettit: Stated that the application is for some improvements. Asked applicant to walk the Commission through the application.

Block: Indicated that applicant seeks approval for a row of bushes along the front of the property, along Florence street, to improve the garden bed that is on the corner of Florence and the alley. Indicated that the landscaper suggested putting in 2-3-foot boulders along Florence Street and around the corner which would prohibit people from driving onto the property from the alley. Stated that she is not committed to having boulders all along Florence Street, but that she would want them on the corner.

[Commissioners reviewed/discussed materials]

Motion: Prebys (second: Lindsay) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 310 Florence as specified in the application, dated August 22, 2019, for the installation of a rock-lined flowerbed along the south property boundary. The rocks are to be no more than 2' tall.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original materials.

#10 - New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

9-11 S Washington

**Intensive maintenance.*

Applicant: Sim Sethi, owner- present.

Discussion: Pettit: Indicated that there are a number of items proposed. Asked applicant to walk the Commission through the application.

Sethi: Indicated that the wood window frames around the building are deteriorating. Stated that the plan is to replace some of the boards with cedar, and then hand-sand and paint them to match the existing white. Stated that the plan is also to fill in some mortar missing from some of the bricks.

Prebys: Asked for confirmation that staff explained the mortar mix requirement.

Sethi: Confirmed.

Schmiedeke: Asked if the work is for the front façade only.

Sethi: Stated that there are a couple of windows on the side that need to be sanded and painted. Stated that the bricks that need to be filled in are on the side of the building.

Lindsay: Asked if applicant is planning to paint the entire two sides.

Sethi: Stated -- the windows, yes.

Lindsay: Asked if that includes the brick.

Seth: Stated – not the bricks yet. Indicated that he is looking into trying to see if a mural can be done at a later time.

Prebys: Indicated that, particularly with new wood, using an oil-based primer with acrylic paint

for the exterior can increase the durability of the paint because the oil base is absorbed into the wood.

Sethi: Acknowledged.

Motion: Lindsay (second: Prebys) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 9-11 S Washington as specified in the application, dated August 27, 2019, for the reglazing and repainting of windows, repair of wood trim, and repointing masonry. The mortar shall be an appropriate composition for the building, as specified in the Masonry Fact Sheet.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#5 – Preserve distinctive features.

#6 – Repair, don't replace.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

206 N Huron

**The application for fence installation was moved to the end of New Business as the applicant was not present.*

616 Norris

**The application for balcony and egress stair replacement was moved to the end of New Business as the applicant was not present.*

133 W Michigan

**Window Replacement.*

Applicant: Randall Faber, owner- present.

Discussion: Pettit: Asked applicant to walk the Commission through the proposed work.

Faber: Indicated that the second-floor windows are fully rotted out and need to be fixed right away. Stated that he would like to go to the main floor windows next year. *[Provided information re: rehabilitation grant received for repair of the second-floor windows]*. Stated that the main floor does not have authentic windows. Asked – as to replacement or restoration, is anything gained by doing restoration on the second floor, which is more costly.

Prebys: Asked for clarity as to the loss in glass size *[reference staff review notes]*.

Faber: Stated that finding a window that would fit has been difficult. Stated that Andersen, which was the first choice, does not make a size that would fit the opening. Stated that the windows the contractor is showing are bigger and do fit. Stated that he would have to talk with the window company to understand it more. Stated that he thinks it is just a matter of design style.

Prebys: Stated that it seems that the salesman is indicating that something is going to have to be removed. Asked for clarity on just what that is.

Faber: Stated that he thinks that to put the windows in, there is some exterior trim that is going to come out to set it in and that they will put in some new trim that fits but with, substantially, the same kind of look.

Slagor: Stated that when staff spoke to the contractor, it was indicated that there would be a slight loss in glass area in both the height and width of the window and possibly the trim but that the goal was to keep the existing distinctive molding that surrounds the window.

Faber: Stated that the idea was to retain as much of the original look as possible. Stated that the light space was less concerning than to maintain the exterior look.

Schmiedeke: Asked about the rounded molding.

[Discussion clarifying what is meant by rounded molding]

Pettit: Stated that the charge of the Commission is always to retain original materials as much as possible. Stated that the Commission sits in the position of first trying to maintain what is there and finding ways to work with that.

[Discussion as to repair vs replacement considerations]

[Discussion/review of materials as to loss of glass space/circular molding]

Faber: Stated that he is perfectly okay taking the time needed to make sure it is done right.

Pettit: Stated that seeing the specifics would be very helpful.

[Discussion as to possible contractor resources]

[Discussion as to rehabilitation grant considerations/timelines]

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to table the application for work at 133 W Michigan to allow the applicant to explore other window options that result in no reduction of glass area.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original materials.

#10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

206 N Huron

**Fence Installation.*

Applicant: Ian Greenlee, owner- present.

Discussion: Pettit: Stated that the application is for fence work. Stated that the applicant appeared as a study item at the August 27th meeting. Asked applicant to update the Commission on the proposed work.

Greenlee: Stated that he has two ideas. Stated that the first idea is for a four-foot aluminum fence for the front yard and also a fence in the parking lot but not the other driveway. Stated that his thought is to also do a hedge around the front of it. Stated that he will be meeting with a nursery to get some ideas and quotes for installation and some different species that would fit. Stated that there was also some question of having the parking lot, with it being on Huron, having a ten-by-ten-foot area to pull out and not block vision.

Prebys: Asked if that accounts for the slanted sides.

Greenlee: Confirmed. Stated that only the south side driveway would be fenced in with a thirty-inch hedge around that corner. Stated that that would not block vision.

Prebys: Asked if it is "either/or" – that applicant would either do a hedge or a fence.

Greenlee: Confirmed.

Prebys: Stated that this application is for a fence.

Greenlee: Confirmed.

Prebys: Stated that it can be tabled until applicant makes a decision.

Greenlee: Asked if the fence would be approved in itself *[referenced photos]*.

Slagor: Stated that applicant sent revised photos for a different proposed gate. Stated that the initial proposed gates were with spiked finials, which would not meet the Zoning Ordinance.

[Discussion/review of reference materials and revised gate photos]

Prebys/Lindsay: Indicated having no problem with the fence.

Slagor: Asked the Commission about the possibility of applicant amending his application to include either installation of a hedge or the fence as drawn.

Prebys: Stated that he would want to have more information on the type of hedge.

[Discussion re: appropriate hedge-shrubbery types/maintenance considerations]

[Discussion re: gates not matching the fence]

[Procedural discussion]

Motion: Lindsay (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 206 N Huron as specified in the application dated August 29, 2019 for installation of a 4' tall aluminum fence. The fence shall be black and include gates at pedestrian and vehicular access points. Fence to match photos submitted at the meeting on September 10, 2019. Approval also includes an alternative option of vegetation at the same height, of a typical nature- such as boxwood or evergreen.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original materials.

#10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

616 Norris

**The application for balcony and egress stair replacement was moved to the end of the agenda as the applicant was not present*

STUDY ITEMS

504 N River

**Solar array.*

Applicant: Amy Strutz

Discussion: Pettit: Asked applicant to discuss what is planned.

Strutz: Stated that everything is in the back of the house. Indicated that the solar array is going to serve as both a rear step awning and solar. Stated that it will be attached to the house under the gutter. Stated that it will not be attached to the roof. Stated that it should end up just above the gutter, all the way from the bottom to the upper part on the angle back there *[reference sketch]*.

Prebys: Stated that the structure is what is going to be the main construction in this. Asked about the structure of the supports and what they are made of.

Strutz: Stated concrete piers, made of concrete, into the ground, and then four-by-four or six-by-six posts.

Prebys: Asked -- so it would be wood.

Strutz: Confirmed.

Lindsay: Asked if there is a plan for conveying the water away from the house.

Strutz: Stated that it is not going to change the amount of water that filters down. Stated that there will be gaps between each of the panels. Stated that water will run off in between the panels.

[Discussion continued as to water run-off considerations]

Pettit: Stated that wood needs to be painted in the District, which would need to be specified in the application.

Strutz: Acknowledged.

[Discussion as to structural considerations]

Prebys: Stated that seeing actual plans about what the structure is and how it is to be supported is preferred. *[Commission consensus]*

[Discussion as to a metal structure]

[Discussion continued as to structural considerations]

Lindsay: Stated that the biggest concern is how it attaches to the house and where the water goes because these all have significant impacts on the existing structure -- to show the Commission what that looks like.

Slagor: *[Passed out the "Alternative Energy" Fact Sheet for review/discussion]*

Lindsay: Asked applicant to have details listed in the application. Stated that the details will make it clearer and assist the Commission in making its decision.

Schmiedeke: Asked if it is aluminum.

Strutz: Stated that the framework under the panels is extruded aluminum. Stated that the XR-1000 would be aluminum in color. Stated that the panels themselves would be all black - top, bottom and frame. Stated that if posts are put in, they would be an aluminum color. Stated that if Wolmanized posts are done, those would be painted the color of the house.

Schmiedeke: Stated that she would like to see consistent materials.

Prebys: Indicated agreement.

504 N Huron

**Solar array.*

Applicant: Amy Strutz

Discussion: Strutz: Stated that behind the house is a carport which is a newer structure with gutters. Stated that that would be one location for solar. Stated that the other location would be down towards the river, down the hill, which would be totally invisible even from the house. Stated that the other location being looked at would be alongside the pool - either the north side or at the far east end of the pool.

Pettit: Asked -- so along the north side of the pool as in creating an awning.

Strutz: Confirmed. Stated that metal probably would not be used because of the pool.

[Discussion continued as to the location options]

Prebys: Stated that he would want to see precise drawings about where and what the structure would look like.

406 E Forest

**Solar array.*

Applicant: Amy Strutz

Discussion: Strutz: Stated that she is not certain if the south facing roof will be able to be used, structurally. Stated that the building was built in the 1800s. Stated that it depends on what they find. Indicated that another option would be to go off the back-porch roof, and then also do some east and west. Stated that they will do some east and west regardless of the back-porch roof.

[Discussion as to structural considerations]

Prebys: Stated that with any construction, the Commission would want to see where and how it interfaces with the rear of the building and where it is going to be located -- something more structurally informative than the sketch.

Pettit: Stated that the data in terms of how it harmonizes or not with the house and then the structural details as well, goes a long way to help the Commission make a decision.

412 Maple

**Porch repair.*

Applicant: Gary Turner

Discussion: Turner: Stated that it is a duplex. Stated that the plan is to restore the porch on the east side of the house. Stated that it has a walk-out balcony from the second-floor unit. Stated that it has a simple wood framed railing, two-by-two pickets – top row/bottom, with corner posts. Stated that there is progressed rot in the southeast corner of the structure. Stated that the plan is to open it up and see what needs to be done to make it structurally sound. Stated that this is in concert with the Building Department, Rental Inspection. Stated that the plan is to remove and replace with same-for-same for everything that is there presently, except for the roofing. Stated that the plan is to use a polyurethane pedestrian walkway system which is coated on a plywood deck *[Reference information as to 121 E Forest]*.

[Discussion re: railing/Code requirements]

412 Oak

**Detached garage.*

Applicant: Gary Turner

Discussion: Turner: Indicated that the study item is for a proposed detached garage. Stated that the plan is to use a basic Chelsea Lumber detached single car garage package, seven-and-a-half twelve-pitch gable, fiber cement siding *[reference materials]*. Indicated possibly double hung windows. Stated a painted aluminum fascia with gutters is proposed. Stated that as to colors, the existing house would be like this lower one here *[reference materials]*. Stated that Ice Formation would be the siding color. Stated that Polar Frost would be the trim color. Stated that the plan is for a standard overhead door, sectional insulated white.

Prebys: Asked about location.

Turner: Stated that it would be about thirty feet from the back of the house, into the back yard. Stated that there is no plan to have a driveway to it. Indicated that in terms of the fiber cement siding, it is noted as textured *[reference materials]*.

Prebys: Indicated that the preference is to not use textured.

[Discussion as to appropriate materials]

Schmiedeke: *[Initiated discussion re: the pitch of the garage matching the pitch of the house]*

Turner: Stated -- so just smooth siding would be preferable.

Commissioners: Confirmed.

Turner: *[Initiated discussion regarding window type that would be appropriate]*

Lindsay: Suggested that applicant bring in more than one option for the windows.

Turner: *[Updated the Commission on 217 N River - application for rear addition, new roof, solar array and replacement of garage windows approved at the August 13th meeting]*

NEW BUSINESS

****Returned to New Business***

616 Norris

**Balcony and egress stair replacement.*

Applicant: Timothy Woods, contractor- not present.

Discussion: Pettit: Asked if there is enough in the submission materials to make a decision.

[Commission and staff reviewed and discussed submitted materials]

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 616 Norris as specified in the application, dated August 30, 2019, for the installation of a new balcony and egress stair. The structure is to be built to spec. The wood components of the structure shall be painted or stained an opaque color.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original materials.

#10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

40-44 E Cross

**Balcony replacement*

326 E Forest

**Reroofing*

326 Maple

**Painting*

Motion: Prebys (second: Lindsay) moved to accept the administrative approvals for 40-44 E Cross for balcony replacement; 326 E Forest for reroofing; and 326 Maple for painting.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Property Monitoring

302 E Cross

Slagor: Provided an update. Indicated that staff advised owner, via voice mail message, to come in by the first October meeting and work out a new time line for repairs.

Commissioner Comments- none

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2019

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the minutes of August 26, 2019 as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2019

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the minutes of August 27, 2019 as submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Interim Chairperson Pettit adjourned the meeting, citing the end of the agenda with no further items to discuss.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:40 p.m.

Full Minutes Prepared By: Nancy Hare-Dickerson