



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MEETING
Ypsilanti City Hall – 1 S Huron Street
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

Tuesday, October 22, 2019
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Alex Pettit Interim Chair 7:02 PM

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit, Anne Stevenson, Hank Prebys, Jane Schmiedeke, Erika Lindsay, Amy Swift

Commissioners Absent: Ron Rupert

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Slagor: Request to add nominations for Vice Chair to the agenda.
Request to add a Window Fact Sheet discussion to the agenda.

Motion: Prebys (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve the agenda as amended, to add nominations for Vice Chair and to add a Window Fact Sheet discussion.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS- none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS

302 E Cross

**Demolition by Neglect Timeline for Repair.*

Applicant: Maxwell A. Ziebarth- owner, present.

Discussion: Pettit: Referenced the summary prepared by staff and asked for any updates.

Slagor: Stated that the property is a case of demolition by neglect being considered by the

Historic District Commission. Stated that in order to resolve that, owner agreed to set a timeline to repair all the items identified by the Historic District Commission and the Building Department that would bring the property out of demolition by neglect. Stated that the original timeline expired in October; therefore, owner was asked to return to update the Commission on the work progress and to discuss and establish a new time line.

Pettit: Stated that there were a number of things that were prioritized for what needed to be done. Stated that a key piece was the foundation work. Asked owner to give an update on where things are as to that.

Ziebarth: Indicated that the east elevation wall is completed, with just a little bit of work left to do. Stated that there is a stairwell that is still being worked on because it ties into the east elevation – the lower level that extends out. Stated that there is a cistern that is up against that wall that has been an issue to get removed. Stated that he is looking to work through the rest of that through this winter. Stated that he is able to work into November into the early parts of December to complete that section of the foundation. Stated that there is another section of the foundation – the section facing Park on the lower level that ties into the two-story structure where the porch was attached – where water has been leaking for years. Stated that he is continuing to work his way around to that but that it is a little bit further out at this time.

[Discussion continued with owner explaining the extent of foundation issues]

Stevenson: Asked -- so timeline-wise, you believe that the east section could be completed by December.

Ziebarth: Confirmed.

Stevenson: Asked -- and then the Park side foundation would be farther out at some point.

Ziebarth: Confirmed.

Swift: Asked – with the overall timeline having expired this month, if there is a new overall timeline for everything.

Ziebarth: Indicated that he will be able to start on that west elevation in the spring.

Swift: Asked if the property is secured for the winter or if there are things that need to be done to secure the property.

Ziebarth: Stated that there are a few things that need to be buttoned up.

[Discussion as to areas needing to be secured]

Prebys: Asked -- what is going to happen to secure all that area over the side porch that has been removed *[reference material]*.

Ziebarth: Stated that he brought in a sample of the siding. Stated that that wall has been removed to get that porch and the rotted structure away from the attached existing porch.

Pettit: Indicated that photos show that that siding is missing. Asked if it is still completely open.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. Stated -- it's temporary.

[Discussion ensued as to issues that arise from holes/open areas in a home]

Ziebarth: Stated that the time frame for that would be by December. Stated that the materials are on order.

[Discussion continued re: problems that arise from holes/open areas in a home and appropriate coverings]

Ziebarth: Stated -- I get it; I'll make sure to clear it up.

Stevenson: Asked about the sample that was brought in.

Ziebarth: Stated that it is a cedar panel. Stated that it has a smooth side to it. Stated that the idea is to remove the existing siding and install this primed six-inch-by-half-inch siding on all of the exterior.

Prebys: Asked about the existing siding.

Ziebarth: Stated that the existing siding is a six-inch but has a four-inch exposure. Stated that the sample is the exact same size and thickness, give or take a sixteenth of the existing. Stated that it is wood. Indicated that with all the layers of paint on the existing, it is more work to restore it than to replace it. Stated that he will salvage what he can but may be able to use it on a different elevation.

Swift: Asked if the area by the porch is the only area where siding is currently missing.

Ziebarth: Stated that there was an existing balcony/stair on the east side that he could just board up temporarily until he gets to the siding. Indicated that that is another area that is open which he will address.

Swift: Asked if this *[reference material]* will go not over the existing original clap boarding but if all of the original clap boarding will be removed.

[Discussion ensued regarding clap board installation considerations]

Prebys: Stated that the Commission would want to first see what is being replaced before a replacement is done.

Ziebarth: Acknowledged.

Pettit: Indicated that the holes in the building which should be filled have been discussed. Suggested talking about getting those areas sided again where there currently is no siding.

Prebys: Stated that there is a big hole on the west elevation where the porch was.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. Stated that that would be a total replacement from that level.

[Discussion continued as to original vs replacement materials; board up/repair issues]

Pettit: Asked when the owner would be able to get the openings covered.

Ziebarth: *[Explained previous work and delays that arose]* Stated that he will do whatever is open immediately, within the next few days. Stated that he will use a strong synthetic felt. Stated that he will staple it to the wall so that it does not look like it is wide open.

Pettit: Asked if owner will have the openings closed up by the next meeting, November 12.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. Asked how he can go about and start installing the siding on the elevations that are wide open, where those transitions are.

Pettit: Asked if this is the area at this elevation here *[reference photo material]*.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. Stated -- where the porch does not exist anymore. Stated that that wall that comes out on the two-story elevation and the wall that is behind where the roof actually ties in -- that lower level of that side porch -- that those are the areas he can tie in within a couple of weeks. Stated that this is a stock material *[reference sample]*. Stated that he can finish whatever is missing -- the next piece below it and that he can clean that area up and go all the way to the top with the new stuff.

[Further clarifying discussion ensued]

[Discussion as to the south face/west wall; porch reconstruction; transition of where the old and new would meet]

Slagor: Asked -- so, to clarify, you would have those areas enclosed and the open areas that have been discussed would have siding on them by November 12th.

Ziebarth: Confirmed.

Schmiedeke: Stated that there is a half post right there *[reference photo material]*. Stated that that is the only thing that remains of that porch. Stated that it needs to be carefully removed and saved so that 1) it can be reused and 2) so that it can serve as a pattern for the others.

[Owner discussed extent of porch damage]

Pettit: Indicated that there has been discussion about foundation, missing siding, windows and doors.

Slagor: Stated that the original plan was to have a date that the owner would come in as a study item with a proposal for what window fenestration needs to be repaired.

Lindsay: Asked if it would be reasonable for owner to have a plan for the windows in two weeks.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. Stated that he can come up with more of a realistic idea of what he wants to do with the existing windows. *[Owner discussed condition of windows]*

Pettit: Stated that the Commission would like to see a very specific plan for each window. Stated that if those plans include replacement, the Commission would want to see some detailed pictures of the condition of the specific window that is planning to be replaced. Stated that the Commission would like to be able to discuss, as a study item, the next steps. Asked if the next meeting would give owner enough time to be able to discuss any part of those things going forward.

Ziebarth: Asked if it would help if he took pictures of each window on the lower and upper elevation.

Pettit: Stated that if the plan is to replace a particular window, the Commission would want to see pictures that would make it clear to us why the window needs to be replaced rather than repaired.

Ziebarth: Stated that he could put something together by November 12th. Stated that he will have an actual brochure on it if he did want to do a replacement.

Pettit: Asked that owner provide his ideas for the specific material planned to be used and if it is going to be a replacement or a sash pack or repair for each of the ones planned to be worked on.

Ziebarth: Acknowledged. Stated that he is always open for recommendations.

Pettit: Stated that that is something that can be discussed.

Schmiedeke/Stevenson: Indicated that it would be helpful to number the windows.

Ziebarth: Acknowledged.

[Owner discussed issues with the east bannister area and possible repair ideas]

Swift: Asked about the door that was taken out and is now an opening in the wall -- if that area was a rental.

Ziebarth: Confirmed.

Swift: Stated that that door opening aligns with a window opening on the first floor. Asked if there is any physical evidence that that was originally framed as a window.

Ziebarth: Stated that he does not know. Stated that it does not really show that it was. Stated -- I know I had to do work to the roof to get that put back into shape because they really cut into the existing rafters; I kind of created an overhang and used existing wood from the lower addition to help tie in to the upper addition because it was all the same thickness.

Prebys: Asked what the plan is for that opening.

Ziebarth: Stated -- to side it.

Prebys: Asked -- closing it off totally.

Ziebarth: Confirmed. *[Further discussed options]*

Slagor: Stated that there was discussion about having windows as a study item at the next meeting. Asked if a tentative date should be set as to the necessary repair/replacement.
[Discussion ensued]

[Discussion as to owner focusing on foundation work, securing the building - boarding up and mothballing the structure]

Slagor: Asked if the Commission would like to select a date that the openings should be sealed and weather tight, that the foundation should be done and then possibly a date in the future where all of the other items can be revisited.

[Discussion as to timeline selection of dates]

Stevenson: Suggested that by the next meeting, November 12th, all the temporary boarding be put up, as well as that one section of siding on the west side that was discussed. Suggested that the east section of the foundation be repaired by the end of December, as owner previously stated.

Ziebarth: Acknowledged.

Stevenson: Suggested that repairs on the foundation be done by the end of March on the Park side.

Ziebarth: Stated that that is fair.

Stevenson: Suggested that that then puts us into being able to make timelines for the other things into April, as we get into spring.

Lindsay: Asked -- as to the roof, I think you mentioned that that is not complete.

Ziebarth: Stated that it is completed up to one elevation that faces the east. Stated that the opposite side, west, is done. *[Owner discussed roof issues and future planning]*. Stated that he will make sure that by November 12th, the next meeting, that will be complete. Stated that the

boarding barriers are to be installed and mothballed, the roof elevation. Stated that he will be working on the foundation, so he can give an update on the continuing progress on that as well.

Slagor: Clarified that we have roof, foundation, closing the house, items done by March, research done during winter. *[Discussion continued as to timeline selection of dates]*

Stevenson: Suggested that the project timeline could be revisited at the next meeting in April.

Prebys/Schmiedeke: Acknowledged agreement.

[Discussion re: owner returning to discuss plans as study items prior to April meeting]

Pettit: Indicated that the next date for owner to return will be discussed at the November 12th meeting.

Ziebarth: Acknowledged. Asked if part of the plan would be that he could continue to replace the siding on the west elevation, on the Park side. *[Commissioner consensus]*

Schmiedeke: *[Initiated discussion as to the existing half post]*

Swift: *[Initiated further discussion as to mothballing considerations]*

Motion: Stevenson (second: Prebys) moved to accept the proposed timeline for repairs of the house at 302 E Cross as follows: temporary boarding and roof repairs shall be completed by the November 12, 2019 meeting; a study item for window repair will be presented at the November 12, 2019 meeting; the property owner may use siding as presented at the October 22, 2019 meeting to clad the open wall areas on the west side of the house. Repairs to the east elevation foundation will be completed by the end of December, 2019. Foundation repairs on the west (Park Street) elevation shall be completed by the end of March, 2020. The property owner will meet with the HDC at the first meeting in April 2020 to reevaluate the timeline.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

46-54 N Huron

**Sign face and rear stoop replacements.*

Applicant: Alexander Munro, owner- present.

Discussion: Pettit: Asked applicant to walk the Commission through what is planned.

Munro: Stated that the plan is to have the sign taken down that is up front *[reference photo materials]* and restored. Stated that the letterboard and one of the sign faces is to be replaced. Stated that it will look very similar to the Jackson Cleaners sign.

Pettit: Stated that work is proposed on the back side of the building replacing some of the stoops that are there. Asked applicant to walk the Commission through that.

Munro: Indicated that the plan is to tear out the concrete and block porch, which is deteriorated and the integrity of it is gone. Stated that it is like a utility access for the shops there. Stated that the plan is to rebuild those as they were. Stated that it is a pretty simple box decking that is there. Stated that once the porch is gone, that footers will be brought in for the decking and then probably just gravel.

Pettit: Asked if that service drive is currently gravel/asphalt.

Munro: Confirmed. *[Discussed grading issues in the alley area]*. Stated that once the porch is out, the area will be graded properly to Code.

Pettit: Indicated that the new structure would be a bit taller.

Munro: Confirmed. Stated that as to the height of the porch, half of it is buried due to the way the alleyway is elevated. Stated that they are not exactly sure where the end of it is until they tear it out and regrade back there.

Pettit: Asked about the wood/metal cable baluster options.

Munro: Stated that it would be great to have them both approved. Stated that the metal cable baluster is preferred but that they are open to the traditional wood balusters.

[Discussion continued re: wood/metal cable baluster options/Building Department considerations]

Prebys: *[Initiated discussion re: sign transparency/opaque]*

Munro: Stated that the existing sign to be restored is a lit sign. Stated that he did not picture it as opaque.

Stevenson: Asked if the letters would be white.

Munro: Confirmed.

Stevenson: Indicated that with white lettering, the light should pass through the lettering.

[Further discussion as to sign considerations]

Pettit: Stated -- so the top half of the sign has got the logo, a dark field with light lettering and the light will pass through the lettering. Asked if the bottom half will remain like the example *[reference photo materials]* where it is white with changeable/removeable letters.

Munro: Stated that he does not think it really needs to be lit. Stated that he can bring that question to the sign company but that either way is fine.

Pettit: Stated that it would be more appropriate if that bottom half is not lit.

Munro: Stated that he can specify that to the sign company.

[Further discussion as to sign considerations]

Pettit: Asked if the plan is to work with the existing, whatever is there, as far as any of the attachments to the exterior of the building.

Munro: Confirmed. Stated that the sign company will survey the safety and stability of it and will anchor as necessary.

Motion: Prebys (second: Stevenson) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 46-54 N Huron for work on the façade sign and rear porches. The sign structure shall be repainted in black with the sign face modified per specifications, which would include opaque backing on the major part of the sign and unlit bottom letter board. The rear concrete slab shall be removed and replaced by gravel. The two rear porches shall be removed and reconstructed with painted treated lumber. The porches shall include framed lattice skirts, wood balusters or tension wire cables pending Building Department approval, and a wood guardrail.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

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

#10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

100 W Michigan

**Removal of metal cladding.*

Applicant: Conor Doran, owner representative -present.

Discussion: Pettit: Indicated that the application is for exploratory work. Asked applicant to talk to the Commission about what is proposed.

Doran: Indicated that there have been discussions with different engineers as to the extent of the problems with the exterior. Stated that one of the engineers recommended a full rebuild. Stated that they now have a second opinion and would like to explore the possibility of preserving the exterior. Stated that approval is only being sought to remove the cladding at this time, and then report back to the HDC with the findings.

Motion: Stevenson (second: Schmiedeke) moved to approve and issue a certificate of appropriateness for the work at 100 W Michigan as specified in the application, dated October 15, 2019, for removal of the exterior metal cladding in order to assess the condition of the historic masonry.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#1– Use property for original purpose or provide compatible use with minimal alteration.

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

#5 – Preserve distinctive features.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried

STUDY ITEMS- none

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Larry Yapp, owner of 32-42 N Huron -- Presented a petition requesting the City address code and historic district violations as to the alley behind the first block of N Huron. Mr. Yapp asked to share the language of the neighborhood petition, citing as follows:

"To Ypsilanti City Council:

The below signers express their disagreement with the city attorney's categorizing the blight behind the buildings at the corner of West Michigan and North Huron as a 'private matter'.

From the city attorney's email to Mr. Yapp dated September 19, 2016 – 'I viewed the property and I am in discussions with city staff. As I mentioned earlier, the city is cash and staff short and your issue is essentially a private matter. I will continue to review the matter as time and resources permit.'

It is now three years and the issues caused by the city's failure to enforce its mandatory ordinances remain. Refusal of a property owner to follow city ordinances is explicitly a city matter. Refusal by the city manager to enforce ordinances in accord with the voter approved city charter is unacceptable. The below signers are collectively writing to request city council restore peace and the sense of cooperation to the neighborhood.

- We request the Ypsilanti Historical District Commission review and address historically inappropriate construction & installations in the alley by Jackson Cleaners & 28 North Huron
- We explicitly request the concrete barricades, railroad ties and cattle gate be removed
- We request the removal of outdoor storage and general trash behind 12, 24 and 28 North Huron
- We request the ordinance officer actively monitor these properties to see they are properly maintained

Signed by the owners and tenants of buildings on the corner of West Michigan and North Huron."

[The history of the alley and enforcements were briefly discussed with the Commission]

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. 203 Maple | Roof |
| 2. 409 N Adams | Air Conditioning Condenser Installation |
| 3. 207 W Cross | Fence |

Pettit: *[Commented/Discussed the "Attachment Letter for 207 – 217 W Cross" included in the packet]*

Motion: Schmiedeke (second: Prebys) moved to accept the following administrative approvals: 203 Maple, for roofing; 409 N Adams, for air conditioning condenser installation; 207 W Cross, for fencing.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Window Fact Sheet Updates

Commissioners reviewed and discussed potential revisions of the Window Fact Sheet.

Nominations – Vice Chair

Slagor: Staff discussed procedural options.

Motion: Lindsay/Schmiedeke (second: Swift) moved to nominate Commissioner Stevenson as Vice Chair. Commissioner Stevenson accepted the nomination.

Property Monitoring

422 N Hamilton

Slagor: Staff provided a status update and indicated that it will be an agenda item on November 12th.

Overall monitoring

Commissioner Prebys discussed inappropriate doors throughout the District.

Commissioner Comment- none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of October 8, 2019

Motion: Schmiedeke (second: Stevenson) moved to approve the minutes of October 8, 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 9:05 p.m.