



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Tuesday, November 23, 2021
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Pettit Video/telephone usage instructions given for potential attendees
Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
James Ratzlaff – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Stefan Szumko - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Jeff Muir – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti

Commissioners Absent: Erika Lindsay, Amy Swift and James Chesnut

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to approve the agenda as submitted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut
Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS—none

NEW BUSINESS

214 Oak

**Solar Array.*

Applicant: Andrew Mills, owner – present

Discussion: Staff provided a review citing the following information -- that the property concerns an

Italianate-style house, erected around 1850, that is contributing to the Historic District; that applicant is hoping to install a solar module on the west roof slope that will be six panels mounting flush to the roof using an ironridge system; that the exterior mechanical boxes will go near the electric meter.

Staff outlined the various packet documents and photos showing the details of the proposed installation, and materials, and shared his conversation had with the solar professional regarding the reasoning for the proposed solar array locations.

Mills: Indicated that per the picture shown, which is facing southeast, that the roof is only visible this time of year; that most of the year, the tree has a lot of leaves and you cannot see the roof at all from the sidewalk *[reference packet photo materials]*.

Ratzlaff: Expressed agreement with the proposed work, indicating an opinion that it appears that applicant is updating his home infrastructure with something that is more sustainable; that it is important that solar panels be placed on the sunniest part of the roof in order to be effective. Stated that the panels are removable. Stated a further opinion that they serve a great purpose not just for the applicant but also for the environment.

Motion: Szumko (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 214 Oak as submitted in the application dated November 11, 2021, for installation of a six-panel solar array on the west roof slope as specified, the disconnect box placed near the electrical meter.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

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

#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut

Motion carried.

20 N Washington

**Sign.*

Applicant: Shannon Robinson, business owner - not present

Discussion: Staff provided a review citing the following information — that the property concerns a mid-19th century Italianate-style commercial block; that applicant modified the existing sign structure with new lettering and paint to reflect the change in business; that a battery powered LED light strip was installed *[reference packet photo materials]*; that the strip is shielded by wood pieces, and although a spec. sheet was not provided, the light emitted is likely minimal.

[Commissioners reviewed packet materials]

Szumko: Expressed agreement with the proposed sign, indicating an opinion that it seems traditional, yet modern, and sets itself apart from the building.

Ratzlaff: Expressed agreement with the proposed sign, indicating an opinion that the materials do not appear to have any plastics and it is using materials that fit within the District; that the way the materials are used fits with the area; and that it is set out to look contemporary but does not seem to try to imitate any time period.

Motion: Szumko (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 20 N Washington as submitted in the application dated November 10, 2021, for a sign as installed. Any further modifications to the sign structure or lighting must be reviewed by the Historic District Commission.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:
#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut
Motion carried.

27 E Cross

**Sign.*

Applicant: Adnan (Ben) Hourani, business owner - not present

Discussion: Staff provided a review citing the following information — that the property concerns a mid-nineteenth century commercial block that is contributing to the Historic District; that applicant proposes to install a wood sign, twenty-inches-by-forty inches, which appears to have some built-in trim around it, within a paneled area of the entry vestibule, above the façade entry door *[reference packet photo materials]*; and that there will be some basic window lettering.

Staff explained his understanding of the drawing included in the packet as to the proposed installation location and outlined photos included in the packet materials.

[Commissioners reviewed and discussed packet materials]

Pettit: Initiated discussion regarding the ability of the sign to fit within the proposed area.

Ratzlaff: Stated that the drawing submitted by applicant does not seem to reflect the actual architecture of the building *[reference packet drawing and photos]*.

[Further discussion followed re: ambiguity of proposed work]

Ratzlaff: Stated that because the way the sign is mounted could affect the materials that the sign is mounted on, that it would be helpful for the applicant to be present to clarify the drawing and answer questions as to exact sign placement.

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to table action on the application at 27 E Cross so that the applicant can answer the question as to exactly where on the building the sign will be mounted, because the provided sketch does not clearly answer that. That way, commissioners can understand into which materials the sign will be mounted and how it will be mounted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut
Motion carried.

215 N Adams

**Doors.*

Applicant: Maxwell Landreville and Erin Berger, owners - not present

Discussion: Staff provided a review citing the following information -- that the property includes a Tudor Revival-style house, erected in 1914 according to Assessing records, which is contributing to the Historic District; that applicant would like to replace a pair of rear French doors that are in a deteriorated condition with a pair of Andersen 400 Series doors that are vinyl-clad with exterior muntins; that applicant stated they were limited to what kind of door they could find because the doors have to be custom built to the opening; that applicant stated that vinyl was the material they could find that did not have a faux wood grain finish and that it will be painted so you will not see the plastic effect.

Staff added that when making a site visit to get façade reference photos, that there is an alley behind the house and with the way buildings are arranged, you cannot see the rear of the house, so that the door does not have any kind of public view.

Staff outlined the packet documents and photos as to materials, condition of the existing doors, the doors in context of the elevation, and the building façade.

[Commissioners reviewed and discussed packet materials]

Pettit: Expressed desire for feedback from applicant regarding non-vinyl clad French door options in light of the general posture of the HDC regarding vinyl clad materials. *[Discussion followed]*.

Ratzlaff: Stated that the doors add a lot to the house but that they are in the back, not visible from the alley that goes behind the house. Indicated that it would be helpful for the applicant to be present in order to talk through the questions.

[Further discussion continued re: materials].

Motion: Ratzlaff (second: Szumko) moved to table action on the proposed work at 215 N Adams so the applicant may further research if a non-vinyl door with exterior muntins is feasible. If a wood, metal-clad, or other non-vinyl/plastic door cannot be identified to fit the opening and style of French doors, then documentation must be provided that the proposed Andersen 400 Series doors are the only viable option, along with getting more information from the applicant on any routes to repair the door and considered materials for that.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut
Motion carried.

STUDY ITEMS—none

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS—none

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Property Monitoring

Commissioners/Staff discussed a property issue under review.

2. Updates from Staff

2022 meeting schedule to be reviewed at next meeting.

3. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Pettit welcomed newly appointed commissioner, Jeff Muir, to the Commission.

Commissioner Muir introduced himself and shared background information and interests.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of November 9, 2021

Motion: Szumko (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve the minutes of November 9, 2021, as submitted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Ratzlaff, Szumko, Muir
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Lindsay, Swift, Chesnut
Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

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

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:16 p.m.