

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**Staff Report**

ADDRESS: 419 Detroit Street, Application Number HDC12-202

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward Historic District

REPORT DATE: December 6, 2012

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, December 10 for the Thursday, December 13, 2012
HDC meeting

OWNER**APPLICANT**

Name: E, C and J, LLC
Address: 529 Detroit Street
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: (734) 662-1363

Signature Awning Company
 12283 Merriman Road
 Livonia, MI 48150
 (734) 762-9200

BACKGROUND: This one-story brick commercial vernacular building first appears in the 1922 Polk City Directory as the Ann Arbor Auto Top. However, the building may be older, possibly built as part of the Luick Brothers lumberyard complex. Based on Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, a frame building with the same footprint was being used as a wagon shed in 1908, and for lumber storage in 1916. In 1925 a brick building with a tile roof and cement floor was present. All three reflect the current building footprint. From 1923 to 1957 the building housed Brokaw's Service Garage and Modern Pattern and Machine Works. In 1964, both 417 and 419 Detroit are listed as The Tree, which remained at 419 Detroit until 2006. The building features a stucco exterior (applied at an unknown date) with six-over-six double hung windows

LOCATION: The site is located at the southwest corner of the Detroit Street and Kingsley Street intersection.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to install two new canvas awnings, one on the front and one on the rear of the building.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:**From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:**

- (2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
- (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

Storefronts

Not Recommended: Introducing a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color; using inappropriately scaled signs and logos or other types of signs that obscure, damage, or destroy remaining character-defining features of the historic building.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The applicant proposes installing two new triangular-shaped awnings with open ends to the building, one on the east elevation along Detroit Street, and one on the west elevation along N Fifth Avenue.
2. The proposed awnings measure twenty feet wide, four feet high with an additional six inch valence below the front face of the awning, and two feet deep. The awning frame will be constructed of one inch by one inch square metal tubing. Each awning will be mounted to the building wall by two "z" brackets. If necessary, the bracket on the south end of the front elevation will be adjusted so it does not interfere with the roof of the bay window.
3. The proposed awnings will be purple and contain the words "catching fireflies" in a large yellow decorative font, and "a whimsical gift gallery" in a smaller yellow serif font. Each banner will also have two drawings of a firefly. The photos provided show the building painted green and yellow. Paint colors on previously painted surfaces are not regulated by the HDC, since they are considered reversible.
4. The use of awnings is an acceptable alternative to wall signage. Staff finds the work generally compatible in exterior design, arrangement, material, and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area, and finds that it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 419 Detroit Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to install two new canvas awnings. The proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2 and 9 and the guidelines for storefronts.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 419 Detroit Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District

___ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: application, drawings, photos.

419 Detroit, March 2008

