



City of Ann Arbor

100 N. Fifth Avenue
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Meeting Minutes Historic District Commission

Thursday, March 10, 2011

7:00 PM

CTN, 2805 S. Industrial Hwy, Suite 200, Ann Arbor

PLEASE NOTE NEW TEMPORARY LOCATION

A CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ramsburgh called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the CTN Studios, 2505 S. Industrial Hwy, Ste 200, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

B ROLL CALL

Jill Thacher called the roll.

On a roll call, the record reflected the following members present.

Present: 5 - Ellen Ramsburgh, Patrick McCauley, Lesa Rozmarek, Thomas Stulberg, and Benjamin L. Bushkuhl

Absent: 2 - Kristina A. Glusac, and Robert White

C APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made that the Agenda be Approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

D HEARINGS

D-1 11-0301 HDC11-012 - 829 West Washington Street - Rear Stair Addition - OWSHD

Jill Thacher gave the staff report.

BACKGROUND:

This two story Queen Anne appears in the 1894 City Directory as the home of Fred O. Marty, a clerk at HJ Brown. It does not appear in the 1892 street index, so was probably built in 1893 or 1894. The house features intricately cut bargeboards and fish scale shingles in the front gable; two cantilevered, shallow, boxed windows; and turned and bracketed front porch posts.

The guard rails and hand rails on the front porch were added in 1994.

LOCATION:

The site is located on the south side of West Washington between Mulholland Avenue and South Seventh Street.

APPLICATION:

The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove an exterior basement access stair and expand an existing rear addition to accommodate the expansion of two bathrooms, a new basement stair, and a new rear door.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

(2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will 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.

(10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property will be unimpaired.

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

New Additions

Recommended: Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an in-conspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.

Not Recommended: Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

Building Site:

Recommended: Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserve the historic relationship between a building or buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction onto the building site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color and texture or which destroys historic relationships on the site.

Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building site so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1. The existing house consists of a two-story house with a one-and-a-half-story addition (the first addition) behind it (flush with the east wall), and a single story addition behind that (the second addition). All are shown on the 1916 Sanborn map (the first year in which this house appears on a Sanborn).*
- 2. The proposal is to extrude the first addition a little less than six feet to the west while maintaining the same roof pitch. The addition would add 26 square feet to the house's footprint, and result in a roof ridge that is approximately 4 feet higher than the current ridge. An attic vent on the main house and two existing windows on the first addition's west elevation, one doublehung and one square, would be removed (window worksheets documenting those windows are included with the application). Staff has not determined whether the windows are original or not. The new addition would have two composite-clad double-hung windows on the west elevation and a door with a simple awning roof over it on the south elevation. New wood siding would match the existing.*
- 3. Both rear additions were constructed during the district's period of significance, and the proposed alterations would be difficult to remove in the future (per standard 10). Most of the character-defining features of the structure are found on the main house block, however, and as such staff feels this simple addition is an appropriate way to make the house more functional without compromising the integrity of the Queen Anne design.*
- 4. Staff feels that the proposed craftsman-style rear door is not in keeping with the historic Queen Anne features of the house. A door with a single half-lite and one to three panels below would be an example of a more appropriate door. The proposed motion is conditioned on staff approving a substitute door before permits may be issued.*
- 5. With the exception of the rear door, the proposed addition is generally compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular standards 2,9 and 10, and the guidelines for new additions and building site.*

REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT:

Commissioners Rozmarek and Stulberg visited the site as part of their review and gave their feedback.

Rozmarek said she supported the project and felt that the applicant was replacing the

existing additions with a newer addition.

Stulberg explained that the house sits on a very large lot and the proposed addition is a very modest one given the possibilities for the parcel. He agreed with Rozmarek that the addition is a replacement of the combined 3 additions.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Kevin Stanbury, 811 Miner Street, was present to answer the Commission's questions and spoke on behalf of the project as the Contractor.

Rozmarek asked if the attic space from the old house will be connected to the new addition.

Stanbury said, they will be.

Rozmarek expressed her concerns for adequate ventilation in the attic area.

Stanbury reassured the Commission that according to the calculations the venting would be adequate.

Rozmarek asked if the siding on the new addition will be woven into the existing siding on the existing house.

Stanbury responded that they aren't entirely sure how the carpentry will work out, but their intent is to feather the siding so there isn't a hard line in place.

Bushkuhl asked how far in the new face would be set in from the existing.

Stanbury answered that it would be 3 1/2 inches, which is basically the dimensions of the corner trim on the original house.

Romarek asked if they had decided on a bracket yet and if they were planning on matching the existing metal one on the garage.

Stanbury said that they would probably end up making a bracket rather than purchase it, since it had to be structural, and they didn't have metal in mind.

Stulberg asked about the color scheme for the windows.

Stanbury said that they hadn't discussed any colors yet, but the owners hadn't planned on painting the existing house so the colors would most likely be very neutral to match the existing.

Rozmarek asked what a 'composite' material consisted of.

Stanbury responded that it was a vinyl based product, like one would find on Anderson Windows. He said it wasn't wood or metal.

Seeing no further public speakers, the Chair closed the public hearing at 7: 23 PM.

DISCUSSION BY THE COMMISSION:

Rozmarek thanks the owners of the house for taking such good care of the house and said the condition of the house is in miraculous shape.

Stulberg said he was very much in favor of the project and made a comment regarding consistency on unholding the standards on additions.

Ramsburgh stated that she agreed with Stulberg and said her concerns were alleviated since the project was an addition and had no strong character defining elements to it. She agreed that the Commission needs to keep the issue in mind but felt that in this situation the proposed project was a very efficient way of solving the existing problems.

Rozmarek said that she felt it was a fine line in referencing Standard 10, since the project was a proposed addition that wouldn't be damaging anything specific on the original house, it was acceptable. She also noted that they didn't know what the configuration of the back wall was before they added the multiple additions.

Thacher thanked the Commission for having the discussion on the record, noting that it would be very helpful in the future.

A motion was made by Rozmarek, seconded by Bushkuhl, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 829 West Washington Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to expand a one-and-a-half story addition on the rear of the house on the condition that an appropriate rear door be approved by staff before building permits may be issued. As conditioned, the work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the house 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, 9, and 10 and the guidelines for new additions and building site.

On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 5 - Chair Ramsburgh, Vice Chair McCauley, Rozmarek, Stulberg, and Bushkuhl

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Glusac, and White

E OLD BUSINESS

None

F NEW BUSINESS

F-1 11-0302 Revisions to Staff Approvals List

Thacher said she has been getting many requests for HDC Review and approval of exterior PVC piping on furnaces and other equipment. She explained that she has been approving these requests under the Staff Approval List, item 29, and would like to add that the associated vents or other work such as collars be finished to blend into the building, where appropriate.

McCauley asked if she had received requests for radon vents.

Thacher said she had never received as much as an enquiry on radon venting.

Stulberg, said it raised an interesting issue of enforcement since even though permits might not be required for certain installations a historic review and approval is required.

Thacher said without a control mechanism such as a permit, there wasn't any way they could stop them before the installation occurred. She explained that most often neighbors alert the department after the work has been done.

A motion was made by Chair Ramsburgh, seconded by Vice Chair McCauley, that the Revised Staff Approvals List be Approved as presented. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 5 - Chair Ramsburgh, Vice Chair McCauley, Rozmarek, Stulberg, and Bushkuhl

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Glusac, and White

F-2 11-0303 Sign Policy Resolution

Thacher gave the staff report and reviewed the Sign Guidelines Resolution.

A motion was made by Chair Ramsburgh, seconded by Vice Chair McCauley, that the Sign Guideline Resolution as presented be Approved. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

Yeas: 5 - Chair Ramsburgh, Vice Chair McCauley, Rozmarek, Stulberg, and Bushkuhl

Nays: 0

Absent: 2 - Glusac, and White

G PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)

None

H APPROVAL OF MINUTES

H-1 11-0306 Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes of the January 13, 2011

A motion was made that the January 13, 2011 HDC Meeting Minutes be Approved . On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

I REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

J ASSIGNMENTS

Review Comittee: Monday, April 11 at 5 pm for the April 14, 2011 Regular Session.

Commissioners McCauley and Bushkuhl volunteered for the April 2011 Review

Committee.

K REPORTS FROM STAFF

K-1 11-0307 February 2011 Staff Activities

Received and Filed

L CONCERNS OF COMMISSIONERS

Ramsburgh said she was very pleased with the HDC Retreat, and appreciated the helpful information that was provided at the retreat.

Bushkuhl asked about sign enforcement of historic buildings in historic districts.

Thacher responded that the department is working on the issue, even though there isn't a resolution to the issue yet and requested that he give her a month and then bring the concern at next month's meeting.

M COMMUNICATIONS

N ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:50 PM.