

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 537 Detroit St., Application Number HDC09-062

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward Historic District

REPORT DATE: June 11, 2009

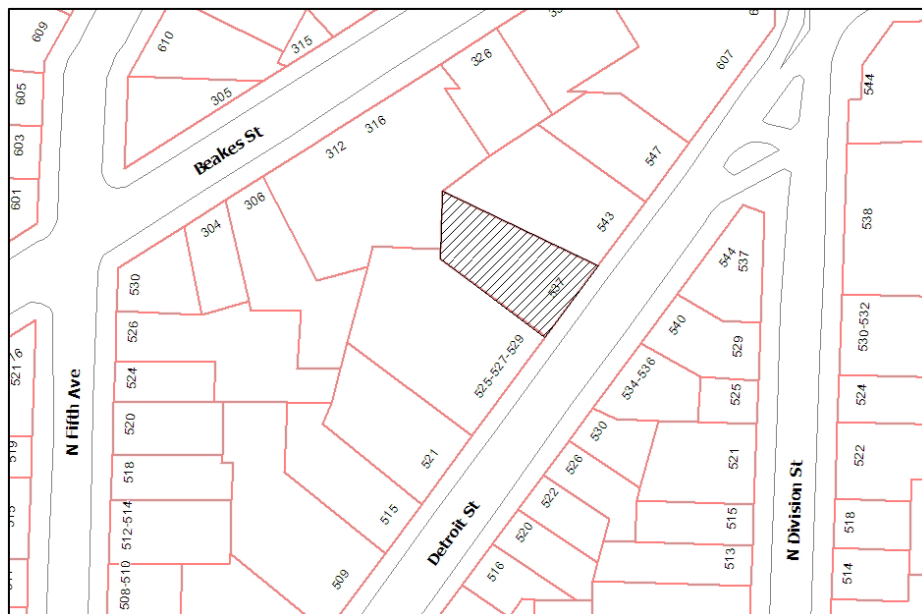
REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, June 8, 2009

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Prudence Spink	Same
Address:	316 West Liberty Street Medina, OH 44256	
Phone:	(330) 723-5450	

BACKGROUND: This one-and-a-half story Queen Anne cottage was built between 1897 and 1899, when it is depicted on the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of that year. It was occupied by William H. and Mina E. Krapf. William worked as a carpenter and machine hand, and later served as foreman for Luick and Brothers Company on North Fifth Ave. (present day Kerrytown shops), a lumber and house parts company. One of William's relatives was Herman Krapf, who owned a planing mill, sash, doors and wood turning business located next door at 529 Detroit Street (present day Treasure Mart). The Krapf mill operated from about 1878 to sometime after before 1910, when it is no longer listed in the Polk City Directory. It seems likely that parts of the house at 537 Detroit were purchased from this mill.

On November 13, 2008 the current owner applied for and received a certificate of appropriateness to demolish a non-contributing garage, and replace three non-contributing windows and one contributing window that was deteriorated beyond repair. In addition, a portion of that application to replace a pair of double-hung windows in the second floor of the east elevation



was denied. (HDC08-038)

On May 18, 2009 the current owner received a staff approval to repair the first floor stained glass windows; install the original front double doors in the original opening, which had been filled in to accommodate a non-original door; install new storms and screens; and replicate the original porch spindles and install them where spindles had been replaced.

LOCATION: The site is located on the west side of Detroit Street, between Madison and Mosley Streets.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace the sash in three second-story wood windows: two on the east elevation and one on the south elevation.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

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

- (6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:

Windows

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving windows – and their functional and decorative features – that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. Such features can include frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, heads, hoodmolds, paneled or decorated jambs and molding, and interior and exterior shutters and blinds.

Making windows weathertight by recaulking and replacing or installing weatherstripping. These actions also improve thermal efficiency.

Repairing window frames and sash by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing. Such repair may also include replacement in kind of those parts that are either extensively deteriorated or are missing when there are surviving prototypes such as architraves, hoodmolds, sash, sills, and interior or exterior shutters and blinds.

Replacing in kind an entire window that is too deteriorated to repair – if the overall form and detailing are still evident – using the physical evidence to guide the new work. If using the same kind of material is not technically or economically feasible, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Not Recommended: Retrofitting or replacing windows rather than maintaining the sash, frame, and glazing.

Replacing an entire window when repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.

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

Installing new windows, including frames, sash, and muntin configuration that are incompatible with the building's historic appearance or obscure, damage, or destroy character-defining features.

Health and Safety Code Requirements

Recommended: Complying with health and safety code, including seismic codes and barrier-free access requirements, in such a manner that character-defining spaces, features, and finishes are preserved.

Working with local code officials to investigate alternative life safety measures or variances available under some codes so that alterations and additions to historic buildings can be avoided.

Not Recommended: Altering, damaging, or destroying character-defining spaces, features, and finishes while making modifications to a building or site to comply with safety codes.

Making changes to historic buildings without first seeking alternatives to code requirements.

Energy Retrofitting

Recommended: Installing interior storm windows with airtight gaskets, ventilating holes, and/or removable clips to insure proper maintenance and to avoid condensation damage to historic windows.

Installing exterior storm windows which do not damage or obscure the windows and frames.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. Two of the windows (the pair on the east elevation) were rejected for complete window replacement on November 13, 2008. The commission determined that the windows were not deteriorated beyond repair, and that their replacement would not comply with the Secretary of the Interior's standard number 6 (shown above).
2. Jill Thacher visited the site on April 3, 2009 with City of Ann Arbor Housing Inspector Nancy Sylvester. Sylvester was asked to inspect the condition of the two windows on the east elevation. (At the time, the third window on the south elevation was not under discussion.) She submitted the following written comments:

At the request of Jill Thatcher, I inspected two second floor windows at the front of the building, in a room which is to be used as a bedroom. I was asked to comment on whether these windows could be repaired to a properly operating condition or if they were beyond repair. The sash cords are in place and there is

no rotted wood. These windows do not meet the requirements of sections 8:509 and 8:503 of the Ann Arbor Housing Code and the following corrective actions should be taken to bring them into compliance:

1. Replace the cracked window pane in the right side window. 8:509
2. Break the paint seal so that the left side window can be opened. 8:509
3. Provide operable sash locks for both windows. 8:503

Please note that screens must be installed for the minimum required ventilation area from May 1 through September 30.

3. At the April 3 site visit, Thacher completed an existing window condition survey for the two east windows, which is attached. It identifies the following problems: three of the four sash painted shut; difficulty operating the fourth sash; sloppy glazing putty; non-working latches; and delaminating/splitting stops.
4. Weatherstripping, making the windows weather tight, and installing storm windows are recommended for thermal efficiency and to protect the wood windows. Storms are not considered an impediment to egress by rental housing inspectors.
5. The two east elevation window sash are in generally sound condition, can be repaired, and are not deteriorated beyond repair. Staff has not inspected the south window, and will do so at the Review Committee visit on June 8.
6. The proposed window sash replacement for the two east elevation windows is not compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the remainder of the house and surrounding area and does not meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standard number 6. Staff will make a recommendation to the commission on the south elevation window at the June 11 meeting, after inspecting it on June 8.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion supports staff findings and 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.)

For the pair of windows on the east elevation:

I move that the Commission deny the application at 537 Detroit Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace the sash in two second story windows on the east elevation, as proposed. The proposed work is not compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the house and the surrounding area and does not meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standard number 6 and the guidelines for windows, health and safety code requirements, and energy retrofitting.

For the south elevation window:

After the Review Committee visit, staff suggests modifying the above motion to include the window on the south elevation, or making a separate motion to approve that window, depending on staff and commission findings.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission

____ Issue a Certificate of Appropriateness

____ Deny the Application

For the work at 537 Detroit Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District

____ As proposed.

____ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) 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) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

____ Is not generally compatible with the size, scale, massing and materials, and DOES NOT MEET the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 for the following reason(S): 1) REASON(s)

ATTACHMENTS: application, letter, sash specs, photographs