

ANN ARBOR HOUSING BOARD OF APPEALS

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: December 13, 2016

Type of Request: VARIANCE

Housing Board of Appeals Request HBA16-009 at 335 CATHERINE ST, ANN ARBOR, MI 48104.

(Parcel Identification Number: **09-09-29-116-024**)

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION

Property Owners Name and Address:

Louis A Breskman
617 W Madison
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

BACKGROUND

The house at 335 Catherine St was built prior to 1901 and has 2 bedrooms on the first floor and 3 bedrooms on the second floor. The third floor is finished space with access by an interior spiral stair with a clear width of 21 inches.

The owner of the residence located at 335 Catherine St., Ann Arbor, MI requests the following variance:

(1) Spiral stairs to the third floor.

Variance from 8:504(4)(b)(1): The stairway must have a clear width of at least 27 inches.

Section 8:515 (2) of the Ann Arbor Housing Code: The City of Ann Arbor Housing Code allows the Housing Board of Appeals to grant variances from the requirements of Chapter 105.

Standards for Approval:

- 1. Practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship;*
- 2. The variance does not violate the intent of this chapter; and*
- 3. The variance does not jeopardize public health and safety.*

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the variance may be granted contingent upon maintaining interconnected smoke alarms throughout the unit and setting the maximum occupancy of the third floor bedroom to one occupant.

PROPOSED MOTION

I move to approve the following variance at 335 Catherine St:

Spiral stairs to the third floor have a clear width of 21 inches, which does not comply with section 8:504(4)(b)(1); contingent upon:

- (1) Maintaining interconnected smoke alarms at the top of each flight of stairs and
- (2) Limiting the occupancy of the third floor to one person.

The board finds that:

- (1) Practical difficulties or unnecessary hardship exist because the stairs were constructed around 1978, the correction would entail a substantial remodel at significant cost and the health and safety benefit is not proportional to the cost.
- (2) The variance does not violate the intent of the chapter because the deviation from the requirements is not excessive, will not cause deterioration of the building, and saves costs to the owner and renter.