

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 317 South State Street, Application Number HDC12-219

DISTRICT: State Street 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

Name: Hogarth Management LLC
Address: 115 Depot St
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: (734) 994-5050

APPLICANT

Kurt Beleck
31850 Northwestern Highway
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 419-6334

BACKGROUND: This two-story, Art Moderne brick commercial building features tapestry brick and fixed-pane ribbon windows that give the building a horizontal flow, an entrance in the southwest corner with a large curved glass display window, a sign band above the entrance with non-original brown-red tiles, a rounded southwest corner with a curved window in the second story, and an aluminum covered fluted column in the entrance. It was built in 1937 and was occupied by Kresge's department store from then until the 1980s. Michigan Book & Supply was located here from 1989 to 2012.

LOCATION: The site is located on the northeast corner of the South State Street and North University Street intersection.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace 23 sections of steel windows on the second floor in 15 openings, with aluminum replicas.

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 (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

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.

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.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The steel windows proposed to be replaced are all on the second floor of the building. There are 14 single windows in two widths, each in three horizontal sections. There are 9 9-pane windows in a ribbon along the south elevation (facing North University). They are similar to the 14 single windows, with the addition of two vertical muntins on each window. The dimensions of each window type are given on the information sheet attached to the application. All windows except the corner were operable at one time, some with hoppers and some with pivots.
2. The muntins are applied to the interior and exterior of the glass. No interior spacer strip is proposed between the applied muntins because they are wide enough to shadow themselves. That is, someone looking up at the windows from the street will not be able to see daylight between the muntins because they are so wide.

3. The two sections of black tiles on the ribbon window row will remain unchanged (south elevation).
4. The contractor, BlackBerry Window and Door Systems, Inc., provided a window worksheet and supplemental measurements (since the worksheet is set up for doublehangs, not commercial steel windows). The dimensions listed meet the design guidelines for windows. The approximately 5" wide vertical steel panels between window sections on the ribbon windows (they look almost like a mullion) would be fabricated from aluminum and installed to match the existing.
5. The contractor, after inspecting the windows, reported to staff that the dimensions are non-standard and that none of his steel suppliers could match the unusually wide 3" muntin width. He was unable to identify the original manufacturer stamped on the windows themselves, and speculated that the windows may have been built locally (which, the contractor explained, would explain some non-standard patches on the windows). This is important because if the window manufacturer can be identified, replacement parts can often be tracked down or replicated. The biggest problem with restoration, according to the contractor, is that the windows need to be removed in order to do the job correctly. On the 13 single windows especially, it would not be possible to do this without destroying a substantial amount of the original material. Without a source to replicate these pieces in steel, restoration is not plausible. Aluminum may be an appropriate substitute material because it closely emulates the appearance of steel and is long lasting.
6. The contractor provided a letter describing the condition of the windows. He recommends replacement of all windows except the corner curved window, which is not as deteriorated, probably because it has always been a fixed window.
7. After visiting the site and talking on the phone to the window contractor about the restoration prospects of these windows, staff believes that replication of the windows in aluminum is appropriate, with the exception of the curved corner window, which is not deteriorated beyond repair and should be restored.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motions are 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 317 South State Street, a contributing property in the State Street Historic District, to replace 21 of 22 steel windows with aluminum windows, as proposed, on the condition that the curved corner window is not replaced and is restored. The work as conditioned is 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 and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standard 6 and the guidelines for windows.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 317 South State Street in the State Street 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.

March 2007 photos (see application for additional window photos)

