

**ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

**Staff Report**

**ADDRESS:** 120/112 W Washington Street, Application Number HDC21-338

**DISTRICT:** Main Street Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** December 9, 2021

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** December 7, 2021

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	WWSA,LLC	Ann Arbor Art Center
<b>Address:</b>	120 W Washington Ann Arbor, MI 48104	117 W Liberty Street Ann Arbor, MI 48104
<b>Phone:</b>	(734) 604-0977	(734) 994-8004

**BACKGROUND:** 112 W Washington is a two-story brick Italianate commercial building that was constructed in 1869. It features original cornices, segmented arches, and stone trim. It was first occupied by William Herz painting and decorating.

The Goodyear Building at 126 S Main is a three story, brick Italianate commercial building. It was first occupied in 1866 by Philip Bach Dry Goods.

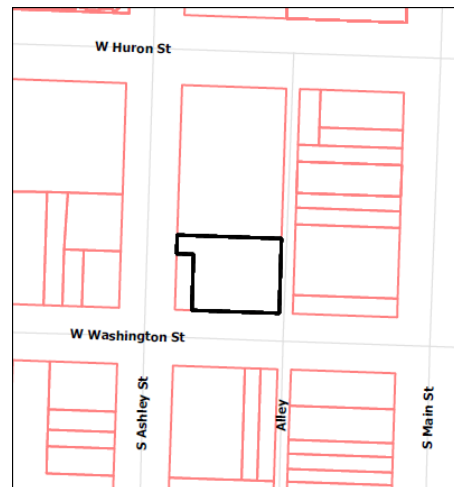
**LOCATION:** The alley is east of 112 W Washington and west of 126 S Main and runs between West Washington and West Huron Streets.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to install five banners that span the alley as part of a one-year public art installation.

**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.



- (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:**

#### **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.

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.

#### **Masonry**

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving masonry features that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as walls, brackets, railings, cornices, window architraves, door pediments, steps, and columns; and details such as tooling and bonding patterns, coatings, and color.

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing masonry features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

### **From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:**

#### **Signs**

Appropriate: Attaching signage through masonry joints, not masonry units, or through materials that can be easily repaired, such as wood, when the signage is removed.

#### **STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. This application is for a public art installation in the alley between 112 West Washington (Café Zola) and the rear of the Goodyear Building at 126 South Main Street (Hooper Hathaway). Five fabric banners are strung between the alley walls about 25' back from the sidewalk, on wires attached to hooks mounted in mortar joints. The longest banner hangs 14'8" (page 3) or 15' (page 1) above the ground. A sheet showing the fabric patterns of each banner shows the longest banner at only 0' 9.6", but it is drawn onto the elevation views at about 5'. When the installation is removed, the application states that the mortar joints will be repointed. Signatures were provided from both property owners and the City of Ann Arbor, which owns the alley.

2. Speaking generally, the A2 Sunset installation will be easily removable and leave the integrity of the buildings unimpaired after the mortar joints are repaired. The project will add interest to the neighborhood and liven up an otherwise utilitarian alley.
3. Staff believes the work is sensitive to the historic building and meets the standards and guidelines used by the Historic District Commission.

**POSSIBLE MOTION:** (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.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 112 West Washington Street and 126 South Main, both contributing properties in the Main Street Historic District, to install five fabric panels on wires mounted through mortar joints, not masonry units, stretched across the alley. The proposed work 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 standards 2 and 10, and the guidelines for building sites and masonry, and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*.

**ATTACHMENTS:** application, project information

126 S Main and 112 West Washington at right. (November 2020 Google Street View)

