

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 224 & 226 South Main Street, Application Number HDC22-1075

**DISTRICT:** Main Street Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** June 9, 2022

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Alexis DiLeo, City Planner

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, June 6, 2022

**CONTACTS:** David Nims, Hobbs & Black Architects – Applicant  
A2 Curtis LLC – Property Owner

**BACKGROUND:** This application to add two stories above the existing one-story building at 224-226 South Main Street and replace the 224 South Main Street storefront with a shallower one was postponed by the Historic District Commission at its meeting of May 12, 2022. The applicants have revised the proposed design, see page 3 of the attached submission packet. The project remains an application to add two stories above the existing one-story building at 224-226 South Main Street, but now without any proposed changes to the 224 South Main Street storefront.

The May 12, 2022 Staff Report is attached, providing a detailed background description, location and original application description, and the applicable regulations from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines.

### STAFF FINDINGS

1. **General:** The one-story building on this site is from the period of significance for Ann Arbor's historic districts and retains its integrity from that time. It therefore is a contributing historic structure, and its character, historic materials, and architectural features must be maintained. It is a unique example of Art Moderne architecture in Ann Arbor, of which there are few remaining examples.
2. **Building Restoration:** The application proposes to restore metal cladding in a grid pattern that matches the original 1940 building. The cladding would cover all of the currently exposed brick. Drawings showing the method of attachment through the bricks is included in the attachments. The cladding has been revised to reflect a color/tone that will align the volume with the traditional brick tones of the district. It remains unclear to staff based on the submitted materials whether it is possible to install the panels through mortar joints instead of masonry units.

3. **Storefronts:** No changes are proposed to the existing storefront at 224 S Main or the main entry of 226 S Main. The storefront display windows at the corner were previously shortened from the original height and would remain in their current configuration (with metal panels below).
4. **Addition to Roof:** The footprint of the pre-1945 building is 5,304 square feet. No change is proposed to the footprint of the building. The current floor area is also 5,304 SF. The proposed floor area is 13,500 SF, for an increase in floor area of 254%.
5. **Addition to Roof:** On page three of the application attachments, the project architect lists the modifications made since the proposal to the HDC at their May 2022 meeting.
6. **Addition to Roof:** [Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns, from the National Park Service](#), provides guidance on new additions, including rooftop additions to commercial buildings (near the end of the document). Staff believes the proposed addition meets Preservation Brief 14 in the following ways:
  - a. The design is distinguished in design and materials from the historic building.
  - b. Construction materials are modern but harmonious with the historic building materials.
  - c. Adjacent buildings are currently taller than this one and the resulting building would be similarly-sized to adjacent buildings.
7. **Addition to Roof:** Staff believes the proposed addition does not meet Preservation Brief 14 in the following ways:
  - a. The addition is highly visible from the public right of way.
  - b. The addition is not subordinate in size or design to the historic building.
  - c. The addition is not minimally visible.
  - d. The rooftop addition is not set back at least one full bay from the primary elevation(s).
  - e. The addition is more than one story in height.
8. **General:** While the work to the exterior of the historic building is commendable, staff believes the building addition is incompatible with the existing building based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines, and guidance offered by the National Park Service in Preservation Brief 14 for additions.

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motion 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 Historic District Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 224 and 226 South Main Street, a contributing property in the Main Street Historic District, to construct three additional floors to the building, install replica metal cladding on the first floor, and install a new storefront at the west end of the building on the south elevation. As proposed, the work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for All Additions and for Additions to Commercial Structures and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for additions, windows, and district/neighborhood setting.

**MOTION WORKSHEET:**

I move that the Historic District Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 224 and 226 South Main Street in the Main 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:** May 12, 2022 Staff Report; Revised Application.

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