



City of Ann Arbor
Formal Minutes
Historic District Commission

301 E. Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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Thursday, June 11, 2015

7:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St,
Second floor, City Council Chambers

A **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Stulberg called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

B **ROLL CALL**

Jill Thacher called the roll.

Present: 6 - Robert White, Ellen Ramsburgh, Thomas Stulberg,
 Benjamin L. Bushkuhl, John Beeson, and Evan Hall

Absent: 1 - Jennifer Ross

C **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was unanimously approved as presented. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

D **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)**

E **HEARINGS**

E-1 **15-0727** HDC15-072; 220 Third Street - New Basement Egress Window --
OWSHD

Jill Thacher presented the following staff report:

BACKGROUND:

This 1 ¾ story gable fronter is a fine example of Ann Arbor's most abundant vernacular home style. It features gable end returns on the roof and round half-columns topped with ionic capitals atop a stuccoed full-width front porch. It was first occupied in 1912 by William Dawson of Dawson Brothers druggists.

LOCATION:

The site is located on the northwest corner of Third Street and Krause Street.

APPLICATION:

The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a basement egress window and well in place of an existing basement window, near the rear of the south elevation.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

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

(2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

(9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

(10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

Windows

Recommended:

Designing and installing additional windows on rear or other non-character-defining elevations if required by the new use. New window openings may also be cut into exposed party walls. Such design should be compatible with the overall design of the building, but not duplicate the fenestration pattern and detailing of a character-defining elevation.

Not Recommended:

Introducing a new design that is incompatible with the historic character of

the building.

District or Neighborhood Setting

Not Recommended:

Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:

Windows

Not Appropriate:

Changing the number, location, and size or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking-in, or installing replacement sash which does not fit the historic opening.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1. The homeowners desire to finish a room in the basement as a bedroom for one of their three teenagers, which will require the installation of an egress window. The size of the lot prohibits them from putting an addition on the back (the backyard is only 8' deep).*
- 2. The basement egress window would be on the south elevation under an existing bay window. The egress window is 28" x 46" and matches the width of the existing window. The window swings inward. The well is steel with a white finish and projects out 36" from the face of the window, is 60" deep, and 52" wide.*
- 3. The proposed location is not ideal, since the house is on a corner lot and this elevation is very visible from Krause Street. There is another basement window around the corner on the west elevation of the house that could be converted to egress, but would be considerably more difficult (see attachment from homeowner) – ductwork would need to be relocated on the interior, and the exterior would require modification of the back porch and relocation of its stairs.*
- 4. The proposed well would be a rounded shape (per the submitted information) that would be more complimentary to the shape of the bay window than a rectangular well. Given the slightly larger size of the yard on the south side of the house (10' vs 8' in back), and the interior and exterior alterations that would be needed to access the west elevation window, staff*

feels that the proposed egress window location on the south elevation is less than ideal, but supportable.

REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Commissioners Bushkuhl and Beeson visited the site as part of their review.

Bushkuhl reported that the discussion they held on site echoed staff comments, given the egress window well location not being ideal as well as how visible it is from the street. He said since the location is a corner lot the owners have to deal with this constraint while on another lot, the same project might not be visible from the street and they would be allowed to proceed easier. He said the window is still more preferable to him than adding an addition or changing roof lines if the goal is to create more space for a family.

Stulberg agreed, noting the lot is challenging in widths and setbacks. He said he felt if this project could be done it was the only possible location, given the interior challenges of the house. He said he was in favor of conditioning the motion in case proposed changes would not be possible.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Ron Snyder, 220 Third Street, Ann Arbor, co-owner, was present to respond to enquiries from the Commission.

Harold Remlinger, Design Team Plus Architects, 975 E. Maple Street, Suite 210, Birmingham, cautioned applicants in the placement of the egress window in that it would restrict egress from the well given the location of the existing bay window. He said building permits might not be issued because of the exterior constraints of not enough head room.

Noting no further public speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Moved by Stulberg, seconded by White that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 220 Third Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to add a basement egress window on the south elevation, conditioned upon receiving building permits for related interior and exterior alterations, and staff approval of the grate and final grade elevation, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the

building and the surrounding area and meets the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines, especially those for windows, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for windows.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

The members of the Commission took into consideration the presented application and discussed the matter.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Certification of Appropriateness was Granted.

Yeas: 6 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair Stulberg, Vice Chair Bushkuhl, Secretary Beeson, and Hall

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Ross

E-2 **15-0728** HDC15-060; 1117 W. Washington Street - Second Story Addition over Existing Wing -- OWSHD

Jill Thacher presented the following staff report:

BACKGROUND:

Physician Dr. Thomas Blair was the first occupant of this house in 1927, and Blairs lived there until at least 1940, per the Polk City Directory. It is characterized by a steeply pitched offset roof with swooping eaves, a round-topped front door, and casement windows in groups of two to four.

LOCATION:

The site is located on the southeast corner of West Washington and Buena Vista Streets.

APPLICATION:

The applicant seeks HDC approval to: construct a 15' x 24.5' second-floor addition on top of a 1980s addition attached to the east elevation of the house; replace a window with a person door on the south elevation of the 1980s addition; remove a flat overhang over the south wall of the 80s

addition and install a fixed canopy over the new person door; and move a metal chimney to the east elevation of the new addition.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

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

(2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

(5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

(9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

(10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

Additions

Recommended:

Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to

the historic building.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Not Recommended:

Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

Building Site

Recommended:

Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

Not Recommended:

Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other guidelines may apply):

Guidelines for All Additions

Appropriate:

Placing a new addition on a non-character-defining or inconspicuous elevation and limiting the size and scale in relationship to the historic property.

Placing new walls in a different plane from the historic structure in a subordinate position to the historic fabric.

Designing a new addition in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Limiting the size and scale of the addition in relationship to the historic

building so that it does not diminish or visually overpower the building or the district. The addition's footprint should exceed neither half of the original building's footprint nor half of the original building's total floor area.

Not Appropriate:

Designing an addition that overpowers or dramatically alters the original building through size or height.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1. The house is on a corner lot, and thus has two fronts (on West Washington and Buena Vista). This complicates adding on to the house, since any addition will be highly visible. This application keeps both the new and 1980s addition stacked in one area. Since the original house is characterized by large, steep roof surfaces, the existing 1980s flat-roofed addition is stark and unflattering. Stacking a new addition atop it allows the addition to be redefined in a manner more complementary to the house.*
- 2. Per assessor records, the house is currently 1743 square feet. Of this, 1359 square feet is original floor area and 384 square feet is the 1980s addition. The new second floor addition adds approximately 368 square feet, for a total between both additions of 752 square feet or 55% of the floor area of the original house.*
- 3. The proposed addition features a front-facing gable. The ridge of the roof matches the height of the roof ridge of the existing front-facing gable. The addition is inset a little over seven feet behind the front face of the original house. On the south elevation the new addition is inset a few inches to maintain the original second-floor corner. (The first-floor corner has already been obliterated by the flush addition.) The addition is further differentiated from the original house by the use of one-over-one vinyl-clad double-hung windows throughout the addition. These new windows on the front (north) and rear (south) are proportioned to be complementary to the original casements. The entire house is to be clad in 6" exposure wood lap siding. Staff believes the location and massing of the addition will read clearly as an addition, and that further differentiation beyond the windows and corner are not necessary.*
- 4. Three windows on the east elevation of the original house – a pair of casements and small window on the second floor, and a small attic window – will be obliterated by the second floor addition. An existing metal*

chimney for a woodstove will be relocated from this east elevation to the east side of the new two-story elevation. The new location is in an inconspicuous place near the back corner of the house.

5. Staff believes the work is complementary and sensitive to the house and neighborhood, and generally meets the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Commissioners Bushkuhl and Stulberg visited the site as part of their review.

Bushkuhl reported that he had the opportunity to visit this site twice since they had come before the Commission earlier; he said that several of his original concerns had been addressed and with the proposed work they will have made several nice improvements to the house.

Stulberg said that this house has several strong angles in the back of the house and the proposed project will preserve several of those character defining features, that can be seen from the street, noting that the lot is a corner parcel. He said he is good with the massing and the configuration of the proposed addition on the lot, noting that he felt it was the best way to square off an addition.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mike Mahon, Adaptive Building, 2288 S Industrial, Ann Arbor, Applicant and Contractor, was available to explain the proposed project and answer enquiries from the Commission.

Noting no further public speakers, the Chair declared the public hearing closed.

Move by Bushkuhl, seconded by White, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 1117 W Washington Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a 15' x 24.5' second floor addition on top of a 1980s addition attached to the east elevation of the house; replace a window with a person door on the south elevation of the 1980s addition; remove a flat overhang over the south wall of the 80s addition and install a fixed canopy over the new person door; and move a metal chimney to the east elevation of the new addition

and have the option of installing a pair of windows in place of the French doors; replacement of existing siding on the 80s addition with new fiber cement siding, and option to omit the skylight from the application. As proposed, the 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, 5, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for additions and building site; and the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines for additions.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

The members of the Commission took into consideration the presented application and discussed the matter.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

Certification of Appropriateness was Granted.

Yeas: 6 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair Stulberg, Vice Chair Bushkuhl, Secretary Beeson, and Hall

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Ross

F UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G NEW BUSINESS

H APPROVAL OF MINUTES

15-0729 Minutes of the May 13, 2015 Historic District Commission Meeting

The Minutes were unanimously Approved by the Commission, with correction on page 5, and forwarded to the City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.

I REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

J ASSIGNMENTS

Review Committee: Monday, July 6, 2015, at 5:00 pm for the July 9, 2015 Regular Meeting

Commissioners Ramsburgh and White volunteered for the July Review Committee.

K REPORTS FROM STAFF

15-0730 May 2015 HDC Staff Activities

Received and Filed

L CONCERNS OF COMMISSIONERS

M COMMUNICATIONS

15-0731 Various Communications to the HDC

Stulberg welcomed newest HDC Commissioner Evan Hall and asked him to introduce himself.

Hall said he moved to Ann Arbor in 2008 to attend the Master's program in Architecture which was followed by him taking a job with Hopkins Burns Studio in Ann Arbor that specializes mostly in historic work. He said he lives with his wife and young daughter in the Old West Side in a historic house and has been before the Commission on a project as well as having worked with Jill on administrative approvals. He said he looks forward to working with everyone.

Beeson reported that former Commissioner and author Patrick McCauley would be presenting at the Downtown District Library [if re-opened after renovations] on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. The topic would be how to research your historic home.

Received and Filed

N ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Working Session Immediately Following Regular Meeting

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Live Web streaming is one more way, in addition to these listed below, to stay in touch with Ann Arbor City Council and board and commission actions and deliberations.

- *Video on Demand: Replay public meetings at your convenience online at www.a2gov.org/government/city_administration/communicationsoffice/ctn/Pages/VideoOnDemand.aspx*
- *Cable: Watch CTN Channel 16 public meeting programming via Comcast Cable channel 16.*

The complete record of this meeting is available in video format at www.a2gov.org/ctn, on "The Meeting Place" page (<http://www.a2gov.org/livemeetings>), or is available for a nominal fee by contacting CTN at (734) 794-6150.