

MEMORANDUM

To: Historic District Commissioners

From: Jill Thacher, staff

Date: May 11, 2011

Re: HDC Awards Committee nominations

Attached is a copy of the 2011 awards nominations made by the HDC Awards Committee. Fourteen buildings were nominated, including the home of Matt and Kelly Grocoff at 217 South Seventh as Preservation Project of the Year. The Grocoffs not only restored their 1902-03 gable fronter, but became America's oldest and Michigan's first net zero energy home.

The awards will be handed out at the June 6, 2011 City Council meeting, and a reception will follow at the historic home of Norm and Ilene Tyler at 126 North Division, down the street from City Hall.

At the May 12 HDC meeting I'll ask you to take action on the nominations. As always, let me know if you have any questions.

AWARDS 2011
ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

Susan Wineberg, Chair. Ellen Ramsburgh (Chair, HDC), Patrick McCauley (HDC), Patricia Austin (former HDC Chair), Fran Wright, Louisa Pieper (former HDC Staff), Tom Stulberg (HDC), Kristi Gilbert, Marc Reuter, Jill Thacher (HDC Staff)

PRESERVATION AWARDS

These awards are given to owners of properties for more than 10 years who have maintained their property using good preservation practice.

1. 809 East Kingsley Street - Helen Pappas

This wonderful orange brick Art Deco apartment building, constructed in 1929, has been owned by the Pappas family since 1992. With its Moorish overtones in the pointed arched doorway, this building represents the epitome of Art Deco design and resembles many buildings in Detroit. It was designed by local architect R.S. Gerganoff, who built many buildings in Ypsilanti and also designed the Washtenaw County Courthouse on Main St. Ms. Pappas has done a fine job of maintaining the historic character of this building overlooking the Huron River. It is in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District.

2. 1515 Cambridge Road - Jeff and Marcia DeBoer

This house was built in 1927 and has been owned by the DeBoers since 1997. An article in the *Ann Arbor News* in 2003 pictured Jeff demonstrating the painting techniques he used to maintain the interior of this fine foursquare stucco home. He has also meticulously restored all the windows of the home.

3. 548 South Fifth Avenue - Walter Spiller

Walter Spiller purchased this property in 1977 and has preserved it and four other properties nearby on Madison as well. The house is a vernacular workman's house, probably dating to 1883 when the Kern family is first listed as living here. It has the distinctive round window in the attic, 2 over 2 windows and a heavy eave overhang from the roof. Kern family members lived here from then until circa 1940. This street was occupied entirely by Germans, including Stierle, Haller, and Mann, Stampfler, Gauss, Fiegel, Kern and Seeger families and forms the heart of the Germantown neighborhood.

4. 431 Highland Road - George and Danielle Kuper

This is one of the many homes in this neighborhood designed by Wells Bennett, a former Dean of the UM School of Architecture. It was built in 1927 for A.F. Shull, Associate Professor of Zoology at UM and purchased by the current owners in 1989. The owners have done a wonderful job of maintaining the exterior of this Tudor style home as it was designed by Bennett. It still manifests the pointed Gothic arch doorway, the half timbering and the steep roof pitch typical of this style.

5. 423 South Fourth Avenue - Bethlehem United Church of Christ

The Bethlehem Congregation is one of a handful of downtown churches that has remained on its original site while most of its members have moved away from what had once been an almost exclusively German neighborhood. The church was built in 1895 and designed by Detroit

architect Richard Rasemann under the pastorship of Rev. John Neuman. It is built of fieldstone in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. An addition in the style of the original was constructed in 1935. We applaud the stewardship of this magnificent church with its beautiful stained glass windows, old organ and wonderful interior. The State of Michigan marker on the front lawn reminds us that they are the oldest German church in Michigan.

6. 402 East Huron Street - Firestone/Bridgestone Tire Company

This auto repair and tire store is still in its original 1930 configuration and still has many of its original windows. It is another example of a business that is still serving customers downtown and adds to the pleasure of living in this neighborhood. The friendly onsite manager is proud of his building and it is maintained in excellent repair despite the fact their parent company is in Tennessee. We applaud the continued use of a building designed for this purpose and its continued service to downtown.

7. 808 Lawrence Street – Tom and Linda O’Brien

Members of the O’Brien family have lived on this site since the 1920s, shortly after it was built in 1917. The current owners have continued the tradition and raised their children here. We applaud their maintenance of owner occupancy in what is primarily a student neighborhood. The O’Briens have maintained this lovely Craftsman house with its details of overhanging eaves, stone foundation porch, and different materials for the first and second floors—all features of the style. We applaud them for living downtown and maintaining their property as well as others nearby. The house is located in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District

8. 513 Second Street - Alison Marsh

This is one of the first buildings constructed in this neighborhood when it was platted as William S. Maynard’s Second Addition in 1846 and may date to circa 1850. We find David Rupp, a cabinet maker, living on the east side of West Second in 1868 and living at #17 in 1872. It was later renumbered to #37 and is associated with the Gakle family in the 1890s, an early pioneer family. The house exhibits the features of the domestic Greek Revival, with the long portion of the house facing the street and tiny eyebrow windows in the upper storey. We applaud the Marsh family for restoring this house. It is in the Old West Side Historic District

REHABILITATION AWARDS

These are awarded to owners who have rehabilitated their properties in accordance with good preservation practice as established by the US Department of the Interior.

1. 306 South Main Street - Edward Shaffran/Shaffran Equities- Pratt Block

Over fifteen years ago Shaffran began the process of removing the false front on the former Kline’s Department Store. This year he finished by restoring the elaborate cornice using the Detroit Cornice and Slate Company, who had built the original over 100 years ago. Constructed for a corset factory in 1896, it has seen many uses over the years but was Kline’s for almost 70 of them. This rehabilitation sparked the renovation of other buildings in the 300 block of S. Main which resulted in the removal of all the false fronts that had been added in the 1950s. Today this is the liveliest block in downtown Ann Arbor. It is in the Main Street Historic District.

2. 711 Catherine Street - Inter Cooperative Council (ICC)

The ICC at UM is one of the biggest holders of historic homes in downtown neighborhoods and last year focused on the complete renovation of the Linder Co-op. With the approval of the

HDC, they replaced the windows with more energy efficient ones, removed asphalt siding, replaced the clapboard with Hardie plank and restored the late 19th century porch. Built in 1894 in the Second Empire style (note the Mansard roof) with elaborate turned porch posts and cutouts, this house was originally a boarding house but quickly became the Phi Chi fraternity. This medical fraternity was prominently featured in the 1896 Ann Arbor Headlight magazine. It became Linder Co-Op in 1989. We applaud the ICC's commitment to the rehabilitation of its 19 homes in the downtown. This building is in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District.

3. 1701 Hill Street - Jean and Randolph Perry

Jean and Randolph love to restore old houses and this one was sorely in need of their care and skills. It was built originally for J. Playfair McMurrich, a Professor of Anatomy and is believed to have been designed by Irving Pond, of the Chicago architecture firm Pond and Pond, in 1894. Pond and Pond are best known as the architects for the Michigan Union and Michigan League. It was built by contractor John Copeland who bragged about it in one local publication. The house is built in a Colonial Revival style with elements of Craftsman in its massing and details.

SPECIAL MERIT AWARDS

These are awarded to projects that focus on an unusual aspect of a historic property.

1. 536 Third Street - Scott Kunst/Jane Rayburn - Old House Gardens

We applaud the adaptive reuse of the former barn-like garage in the rear of their home for the operation of their internationally famous antique bulb business. They gave up looking for a historic farm and decided to stay in town and create new green office and shipping space and expand their network of urban micro-farms. This business is in the Old West Side Historic District.

2. 300 South State State - Jeff Hauptmann - 312 S. State LLC

The mural of famous authors and film makers, which has graced this corner for almost 25 years, was restored by the original artist. The mural depicts Frank Kafka, Anais Nin, Thomas Mann, Woody Allen and Edgar Allen Poe. It remains a landmark for a college town and is in the State Street Historic District.

PRESERVATION PROJECT OF THE YEAR

217 South Seventh Street - Matt and Kelly Grocoff

This “net zero” house shows how preservation and sustainability can work in concert to be good both for the environment and the community. The home was built in 1902-03 and the first occupant was George Ristine. The Gauss family lived here from 1920 to 1940. The Grocoffs purchased their home in 2006 and immediately started restoring it. To save energy, they started small, just changing to more energy efficient light bulbs. By the end, they had placed solar panels on the roof, restored every window, insulated their home, installed a geothermal heating and cooling system, and more. These efforts reduced their energy bills to nothing, and in fact, the power company pays them for the excess energy they produce. Their accomplishments have garnered national attention and articles have appeared in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's magazine *Preservation* and in *Detroit Hour* magazine. In the process, Kelly and Matt became advocates not only for sustainability but for historic preservation as well. This house is in the Old West Side Historic District.