



# City of Ann Arbor

301 E. Huron Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
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## Meeting Minutes Historic District Commission

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Thursday, October 13, 2011

7:00 PM

City Hall, 301 E. Huron Street, 2nd Flr.

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### A CALL TO ORDER

*Ramsburgh called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.*

### B ROLL CALL

*Thacher called the roll.*

**Present:** 5 - Robert White, Ellen Ramsburgh, Patrick McCauley, Thomas Stulberg, and Benjamin L. Bushkuhl

**Absent:** 1 - Kristina A. Glusac

### C APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

### D HEARINGS

D-1 11-1278 HDC11-141 448 Fifth Street - Expand Existing Rear Addition - OWSHD

*Jill Thacher gave the staff report.*

#### **BACKGROUND:**

*This two-story brick Colonial Revival front-gabled house first appears in the 1905 City Directory. The occupant is listed as carpenter Albert Nordsman. The following year bottler George Voelker and his wife Catherine were the residents, and in 1910 widow Marie Dupper and her two daughters were sharing the house with the Voelkers. The house appears to have remained a two-family through the 1940s. The Voelkers lived in the house through 1915, and Mrs. Dupper until 1931.*

*A new dormer on the rear of the north elevation was approved by the HDC in August, 2007. A one-story addition on the front of the house was approved by the HDC in April of 1994.*

#### **LOCATION:**

*The property is located on the west side of Fifth Street, south of Liberty and north of Jefferson (Bach Elementary School is across Fifth Street).*

#### **APPLICATION:**

*The applicant seeks HDC approval to add a 135.5 square foot rear addition to an*

*existing addition that was built in the 1980s, and to cover an existing rear entry door.*

**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.*

*(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):*

**New 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.*

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

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

*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. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.*

**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.*

**District or Neighborhood Setting**

*Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.*

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

*1. The work is being proposed to make the somewhat awkward interior of a rear addition from the 1980s into space that is more usable. Since the addition is behind a*

*previous modern addition, no historic materials on the house will be impacted. The small scale of the project is appropriate, and the design and materials are simple and complimentary.*

*2. The addition's impact on neighboring properties is minimal. To the south at 454 Fifth Avenue, there is a garage just over the property line from the proposed addition. To the north, the lot line is approximately 35 feet away from the proposed addition. See the aerial photo at the end of this staff report.*

*3. Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition since it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for New Additions and District or Neighborhood Setting.*

**REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT:**

*McCauley and Bushkuhl visited the site as part of their review.*

*McCauley agreed with the staff report and was in favor of the proposed project.*

*Bushkuhl agreed and added that the owners have done a fine job of preserving the house.*

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

*None.*

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

*None.*

**A motion was made by Vice Chair McCauley, seconded by White, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 448 Fifth Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a 135.5 square foot rear addition and cover a rear door, as submitted. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house 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, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for New Additions. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**D-2 11-1279**

HDC11-134 527 East Liberty - New Business Sign - SSHD

*Jill Thacher gave the staff report.*

**BACKGROUND:**

*This two-story commercial building is part of the west wing of the Michigan Theater Building. It was built in 1927 in the 20th Century Romanesque style, but underwent significant alteration in the 1950s that destroyed much of its original exterior*

character. All of the original windows and storefronts were changed and a large aluminum signboard was added running the length of the building. The storefronts are now mainly glass, framed in mill finish silver aluminum, with a low ashlar limestone sill and a few vertical panels of dark marble. In 1993, the HDC approved the remodeling of the entrance to 529 by removing the existing single door and squared-off show window and replacing them with a double door and side window.

**LOCATION:**

The site is located on the north side of East Liberty, between Maynard and Thompson.

**APPLICATION:**

The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a non-illuminated commercial storefront sign in the signboard for a second-floor business, Authentic Art Tattoo.

**APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:**

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

(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):*

**Storefronts**

**Not Recommended:**

*Using new illuminated signs; inappropriately scaled signs and logos; signs that project over the sidewalk unless they were a characteristic feature of the historic building; or other types of signs that obscure, damage, or destroy remaining character-defining features of the historic building.*

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. The proposed business sign is appropriately scaled and should be placed at the same height as neighboring signs to the east. No historic features will be obscured.

2. Staff emailed the applicant about concerns with new penetrations into the masonry behind the metal siding. The application was changed via an email to staff on October 4, 2011 to address the problem. The revision says "Inspect how and where the metal siding is attached to the building. Locate sign fasteners as near to those as possible and attach only to the metal siding. Use butterfly or expanding anchors to snug up the new sign to the existing metal siding." See attached email for the entire conversation. The applicant's attention to this detail is appreciated.

3. Staff recommends approval of the proposed sign since it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Storefronts.

*REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT:*

*McCauley and Bushkuhl visited the site as part of their review.*

*McCauley said that he agrees with the staff report and said that it fits into the surroundings. He added that while on site they noticed serious deterioration of parts of the building that needs attention by the owners.*

*Bushkuhl agreed and said that the sign meets the GUIDELINES in that it isn't lit.*

*AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:*

*None.*

*COMMISSION DISCUSSION:*

*None.*

**A motion was made by Chair Ramsburgh, seconded by White, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 527 East Liberty Street, a contributing property in the State Street Historic District, to install the proposed business sign on the condition that the mounted sign aligns with signs to the east and is attached to the metal signboard, not the masonry. The work as conditioned is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, in particular standards 9 and 10 and the guidelines for storefronts. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried**

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**D-3 11-1280**

HDC11-142 544 Sixth Street - Chimney for Woodstove - OWSHD

*Jill Thacher gave the staff report.*

*BACKGROUND:*

*This red brick upright and wing house with Italianate influences features a cut stone foundation, raised brick lintels that are gently arched over four-over-four windows, enclosed rafters with a fairly wide band of frieze trim below, and a partial front porch on the wing with paired brackets on the posts. It appears in the 1886-87 Polk City Directory as 16 West Sixth Street, with the owner listed as Roth. Later directories indicate that Christian (who was deceased by 1894) and Caroline Roth resided there.*

*LOCATION:*

*The property is located on the west side of Sixth Street, south of West Jefferson and north of West Madison.*

*APPLICATION:*

*The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a metal chimney for a woodstove behind the ridge of the one-story wing.*

**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.*

*(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):*

**New 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.*

*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.*

*Placing new additions such as balconies and greenhouses on non-character-defining elevations and limiting and size and scale in relationship to the historic building.*

**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.*

*Duplicating the exact form, material, style, and detailing of the historic building in the new addition so that the new work appears to be part of the historic building.*

*Designing and constructing new additions that result in the diminution or loss of the historic character of the resource, including its design, materials, workmanship, location, or setting.*

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. *The applicant would like to supplement this home's existing radiators with heat from a woodstove. The location chosen is to maximize heat circulation, and on the application the owner indicates that it was also the historic location for a stove.*

2. *The chimney would extend 3' above the sloped roof and 2' above the ridge, though less would be visible to a person on the street because of the angle. The applicant would paint the chimney matte black upon installation. These details are contained in an email from Evan Hall (the applicant) that is attached to the end of the application form.*

3. Staff believes the work is inconspicuous and reversible, and recommends approval of the proposed addition since it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for New Additions.

REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT:

McCauley and Bushkuhl visited the site as part of their review.

McCauley said that he felt the chimney would have a minimal impact on the house and won't stand out since they propose to paint it black.

Bushkuhl agreed, saying that it won't take away from the character of the house and will be minimally visible from the street.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

None

COMMISSION DISCUSSION:

None.

None.

**A motion was made by Bushkuhl, seconded by White, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 544 Sixth Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to install an 8" diameter capped stainless steel chimney as proposed by the applicant. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets 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 New Additions. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**D-4 11-1281** HDC11-140 115 West Liberty Street - Stair Enclosure and Deck on Roof - LSHD

*Jill Thacher gave the staff report.*

BACKGROUND:

*This building and its neighbor to the west (117-119 W Liberty) make up the Christian Walker and Brother Buildings. 117-119 was built in 1886 to accommodate the Walker brothers' growing carriage works. 115 was added in 1893 as a carriage showroom, and served as such until 1921. It was designed as a modified copy of the Haarer building to the east at 113 West Liberty, and features round-arched windows in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The storefront details reflected the style and proportions of 117-119 next door, which have since been replaced with a modern storefront. These three buildings (113-119 West Liberty) make up the Liberty Street Historic District.*

*The storefront retains its original columns and kick plate moldings (which are currently behind flowerboxes), and the large display windows are in their original proportions. In a very early (but undated) photograph, the double doors appear to match the current ones in style and dimension. Originally, the doors and transom were flush with the large display windows at the street front. The transom and double doors were recessed to their current location (door hinge marks and transom window latches are still visible on the front columns) between 1973 and 1981.*

*In 2009 an application to replace the double front storefront doors was denied.*

**LOCATION:**

*The site is located on the south side of West Liberty Street, east of Ashley and west of South Main.*

**APPLICATION:**

*The applicant seeks HDC approval to construct an 11 ½' x 22' deck with a pergola and an 8' x 12' stair enclosure on the roof.*

**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.*

*(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):*

**New 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.*

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

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

*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. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.*

*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.*

*District or Neighborhood Setting*

*Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.*

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. *The work is being proposed to allow roof access to a new deck for a condominium conversion on the third floor of the building. The design and materials are simple and compatible. The massing is minimal, and the pergola and stair enclosure are set back from the parapet (14' and 25' respectively) to insure their invisibility from the sidewalk across West Liberty Street. Staff agrees with the applicant's statement that the new construction will be barely visible (from any location), if at all. The addition's impact on neighboring properties is minimal.*

2. *Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition since it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for New Additions and District or Neighborhood Setting.*

**REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT:**

*McCauley and Bushkuhl visited the site as part of their review.*

*McCauley said that in visiting the site he realized that the site line would make it almost invisible from the street noting that it was a very sensitive way to adapt the building to new uses. He was in favor of the proposed project.*

*Bushkuhl agreed and said that the addition would be fully reversible. He said that it wouldn't be a rooftop condo that was highly visible and stuck out from the street.*

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:**

*Thomas Douds with J. Bradley Moore, 1062 Dhu Varren, Ann Arbor, was present to answer enquiries from the Commission.*

*Rishi Narayan, 113 W. Liberty Ave, Ann Arbor, Owner, was present to respond to any questions.*

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

*Ramsburgh asked if it is easy to get to the other rooftops. She asked if someone could fall off onto the other neighboring rooftops.*

*The applicant responded, no, that there are guard railings on the deck to prevent someone from falling off onto the Art Center roof by accident.*

A motion was made by Stulberg, seconded by White, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 115 W Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Liberty Street Historic District, to construct a construct an 11 ½' x 22' deck with a pergola and an 8' x 12' stair enclosure on the roof, as submitted. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to 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, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for new additions and district or neighborhood setting. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**E UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**F NEW BUSINESS**

**F-1 Discussion of Greyhound Station - 116 West Huron Street**

*Bob Gates, 115 Depot Street, Ann Arbor, made a presentation of their rehabilitation plans.*

**F-2 Election of Officers**

*The Nominating Committee proposed Patrick McCauley as Chair, Tom Stulberg as Vice Chair, and Ben Bushkuhl as Secretary.*

**A motion was made that McCauley be elected to Chair, and Tom Stulberg be elected to Vice Chair, and Ben Bushkuhl as Secretary to the Historic District Commission. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**G PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)**

*None*

**H APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**H-1 11-1275** Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2011

**A motion was made by Chair Ramsburgh, seconded by White, that the Minutes be Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council. On a roll**

call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**H-2 11-1282** Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes of the September 8, 2011

**A motion was made by Chair Ramsburgh, seconded by White, that the Minutes be Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 5 - White, Ramsburgh, Chair McCauley, Vice Chair Stulberg, and Secretary Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Glusac

**I REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS / COMMISSION PROPOSED BUSINESS**

*Stulberg informed the Commission that there would be a Hallo Harvest event at Cobblestone Farms on October 22.*

**J ASSIGNMENTS**

**J-1 Review Committee: Monday, November 7 at Noon for the November 9, 2011 Regular Session**

*Stulberg and McCauley volunteered for the November 7, Review Committee to meet at noon.*

**K REPORTS FROM STAFF**

**K-1 11-1276** September 2011 Staff Activities

**Received and Filed**

**L CONCERNS OF COMMISSIONERS**

*Ramsburgh brought up the issue of historic signs, such as the Beer Depot sign, that aren't protected by historic districts. She referenced the City of Ypsilanti's recently updated sign ordinance. She said although there is no action required by the HDC, since the sign isn't in a HDC district, it is possible for the HDC to consider a resolution to indicate that replacing the sign would not have a detrimental affect on the historic building.*

*Stulberg said that they would need to keep in mind what's historic within the period of significance and what's not. He added that some signs may be outside of the Historic Districts, but the information on these signs may be useful to other bodies.*

*McCauley said he would volunteer to gather information on which signs might qualify under a similiar ordinance for the City.  
White volunteered as well.*

*McCauley raised the issue of the building with the mural that the Alley Bar is in. He said that the sign is mounted through the brick and not raised above the surface as was required by the Certificate of Appropriateness. Discussion followed.*

*Ramsburgh asked staff to follow-up with the Building Staff on the signage installation.*

**The Commission resolves that "The reinstatement of the iconic sign, "The Beer Depot", at 114 E William Street would not be detrimental to the historic character of the historic building on the site".**

**Resolution Passed on a vote of 5-0.**

**M      COMMUNICATIONS**

**N      ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:22 PM.**