



**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR
Thursday, May 14, 2009.**

Commissioners Present: Diane Giannola, Patrick McCauley, Robert White, Jim Henrichs, Kristina Glusac and Ellen Ramsburgh (6)

Commissioners Absent: Sarah Shotwell (1)

Staff Present: Jill Thacher, Planner and Historic District Coordinator and Brenda Acquaviva, Administrative Support Specialist V, Planning and Development Services (2)

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chair Ramsburgh called the Regular Session to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Quorum satisfied.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: The Agenda was approved without objection.

A - HEARINGS

A-1 HDC09-043 – 620 SECOND STREET - OWSHD

BACKGROUND: This two-story gable-front Colonial Revival house features front cornice returns and a simple full-width front porch. In the 1898 City Directory it's the home of Julius and Otilie Bethke, great-grandparents of the applicant. Correspondence in the file from Maxine Hall, the Bethke's granddaughter and the applicant's mother, explains that she grew up in the house and gives more family history. In 1997, the porch was repaired and rebuilt to match the original.

LOCATION: West side of Second Street, south of West Madison, north of West Mosley Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval after-the-fact to install a new steel exterior door on the side of the house to replace an old wood door.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The house is a contributing structure in the Old West Side Historic District. A city inspector noticed the replacement door when visiting the site for other matters, and informed the owner that it required HDC approval. The owner contacted staff and submitted the enclosed information for the agenda.
2. The old door may be original to the house. It shows deterioration in the photographs submitted, but the extent will have to be determined at the Review Committee site visit before staff can make a recommendation on whether it is appropriate to replace it. If the door is determined to be non-original, replacement with a compatible door is appropriate.
3. If the wood door is non-original, the steel door may be an appropriate replacement. If the wood door is determined to be original, and is beyond repair, replacement with a new wood door that replicates the old one would be the most appropriate, since it would be considered a character-defining feature of the house.

Owner/Applicant/Address: William Hall, 34194 Northland Drive, Livonia, MI 48182

52 **Review Committee:** Commissioners McCauley and White visited the site.

53
54 Commissioner McCauley – Agrees with staff that this door should be replaced with another
55 wooden door. Given the age of the door that was removed and if the applicant had come before
56 us, we would most likely have recommended a wooden replacement. It was in a very
57 deteriorated state.

58
59 Commissioner White – The door that was removed was rather thin and the owner had had a
60 break-in. He had to replace the door and did so by matching it with others that were comparable
61 in the neighborhood. I recommend that he be able to keep the replacement door.

62
63 **Applicant Presentation:** Staff informed the Commission that the applicant would not be able to
64 attend the meeting tonight, so there is a letter explaining the situation. Staff feels that this door
65 should still be replaced with a wooden door. We have approved steel doors in the past, but those
66 were replacements for other modern doors or where there was no door at all.

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68 **Questions of the Applicant by the Commission:** No applicant was in attendance.

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70 **Audience Participation:** None.

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72 **Discussion by the Commission:**

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74 Commissioner Glusac – Is the trim existing? (Commissioner McCauley stated he believed it was
75 the original trim in tact, but altered due to the aluminum siding installation). (*Questions regarding*
76 *the door panels, lights, etc. and if the petitioner could have matched that with a replacement*).

77
78 Commissioner Ramsburgh – Stated that she did not want to set precedent and would not be
79 voting for this.

80
81 Commissioner Henrichs – Stated that the doors in the neighborhood that the petitioner used as
82 ‘comparables’ were probably those that were approved under a prior Historic Ordinance, but
83 aren’t currently allowed – so the comparison isn’t especially valid. Was this done recently?
84 (J. Thacher – Yes – within the past two months, and was caught during a rental housing
85 inspection). So, since the ordinance was well publicized that everything on the outside of the
86 house needs to be approved, they could have come in and had that done. (Yes).

87
88 Commissioner Giannola – Stated that she felt the petitioner’s intent was to do the right thing and
89 use homes in the area as a guide of sorts for his replacement. She stated that a painted metal
90 door doesn’t look any different to her than a painted wooden door.

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92 **MOTION**

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94 Moved by Commissioner White, Seconded by Commissioner Giannola, “**that the**
95 **Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 620 Second**
96 **Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to remove a**
97 **wood door and install a new steel door, as proposed. The proposed work is**
98 **compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the**
99 **rest of the house and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior’s***
100 ***Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standard 2.”**

101
102 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO APPROVE - PASSED – 5 YES, 1 NO (Ramsburgh)**
103 **(Application Approved)**

A-2 **HDC09-045 – 713 W. LIBERTY STREET - OWSHD**

BACKGROUND: This two-and-a-half-story, gable-front house appears to have been constructed about 1885 for John Goetz Jr, a grocer, John Goetz & Sons, on South Main Street. John's widow, Dorothea Goetz, lived in the house until 1940. From about 1920 until 1940 a Lydia Henne, a Christian Scientist also lived in the house. Marwood H. Goetz, a student at Cleary College lived in the house in 1941, but by 1943 several members of the Bensinger family who worked at Liberty Food Lockers lived in the house. By 1945 a Ford employee, Herman G. Wieterhoft and his wife Rosa lived in the house. The 1916 and 1925 Sanborn maps show the house in its current configuration with two, one-story outbuildings on the property. One outbuilding had an ice house attached to it.

Previous HDC decisions include HDC08-032, April 2008: remove a chimney and rear door enclosure; HDC08-045, May 2008: remove a sun porch, and add a deck, second story addition, and miscellaneous window alterations

LOCATION: South side of West Liberty Street, between Fifth and Seventh Streets.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace two above-grade basement windows with larger windows with wells.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The house is a contributing structure in the Old West Side Historic District. The two basement windows proposed to be enlarged are on the east side of the house, one on the stone foundation of the turret and one near the back of the house set in a brick wall. The window headers would be in the same location, with the majority of the new, longer windows below grade in a well. The new windows would be 28" by 48".
2. The basement has five reasonably sized windows on the east elevation, two of which are new openings that the HDC allowed to be added when a portion of the stone foundation collapsed, and a sixth near the front of the house on the west elevation. The requested window alterations are not needed to meet required egress.
3. Staff feels that despite the basement's alteration to living space rather than storage, it is still important that it read as a basement from the exterior. In addition, the foundation is a character defining feature of the house, in particular the stone walls of the turret. Under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, it would be appropriate to rehabilitate the existing windows and repair the masonry as necessary.
4. The proposed larger window openings are not generally compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and do not meet *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.

Owner/Applicant/Address: Michael Bielby, 605 N. Fifth Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48014

Review Committee: Commissioners White and McCauley visited the site.

Commissioner White – Concurs with staff's report to deny the application.

Commissioner McCauley – The window in the turret section is unique and should be preserved.

156 **Applicant Presentation:** Mr. Michael Bielby was present to speak on behalf of the appeal. He
157 stated that the windows are in poor shape, won't open and are not original. There are no storm
158 windows and both of these appear to be retrofit windows. There are no other ventilation windows
159 on that side of the building. We have restored 24 windows on this home, but these don't have
160 anything to work with. The frames are rotten from being exposed to masonry.

161
162 **Questions of the Applicant by the Commission:**

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164 Commissioner Henrichs – Have you looked into replacing whatever is there with other windows in
165 the same size? (M. Bielby – Neither window is a standard size, and would also be out of reach
166 for most people to open (Petitioner stated that the windows are 8 feet up from the interior of the
167 home. The increase of the opening will all be below grade and not visible from the outside).

168
169 Commissioner White – This is the window under the deck? (Yes). Are the bricks there newer?
170 Those look like the window might have been larger previously, and filled in with brick? (M. Bielby
171 – They're not that new, but we do think that this was larger at one time and patched).

172
173 Commissioner Glusac – Are your ventilation requirements met by the windows that were installed
174 on the opposite side of the house? (M. Bielby – It does meet all of its egress requirements, but
175 the living room and kitchen probably need additional ventilation).

176
177 **Audience Participation:** None.

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179 **Discussion by the Commission:**

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181 Commissioner White – I would be able to accept the window under the deck.

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183 Commissioner Henrichs – It's my understanding from previous projects that a deck is not a
184 'permanent' part of the house, so I don't think we can take that into consideration since it can be
185 removed and will expose the window openings there.

186
187 Commissioner McCauley – I would be possibly in favor of windows that would open, but
188 something else that is more appropriate with what is already there – not enlarging the openings.

189
190 Commissioner Henrichs – These windows are fairly large for a basement of a house of this age.

191
192 Commissioner Ramsburgh – Concurs with Henrichs and McCauley that the openings on the
193 opposite side are large enough to accommodate egress and light. Even without cross ventilation,
194 you should have plenty of air. Some of the existing window openings should be respected, and
195 this should read as a basement.

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197 **MOTION #1**

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199 Moved by Commissioner McCauley, Seconded by Commissioner Henrichs, **“that the**
200 **Commission deny the application at 713 West Liberty Street, a contributing property**
201 **in the Old West Side Historic District, to replace two above-grade basement**
202 **windows with larger windows with wells, as proposed. The proposed work is not**
203 **compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the**
204 **rest of the house and the surrounding area and does not meet *The Secretary of the***
205 ***Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.**

206
207 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO DENY - PASSED – UNANIMOUS (Application Denied)**

(There was discussion amongst the Commission about putting forth a motion that would allow the petitioner to replace these windows with staff approved wooden replacement windows that would fit the current window openings – if it was shown that the current windows could not be rehabilitated).

MOTION #2

Moved by Commissioner White, Seconded by Commissioner McCauley, “**To Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for 713 West Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to rehabilitate or replace the two above-grade basement windows in similar arrangement and configuration to the existing windows, as proposed by the Historic District Commission with review by staff for final approval.**”

On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO APPROVE – PASSED - UNANIMOUS

A-3 HDC09-046 – 319 S. SEVENTH STREET - OWSHD

BACKGROUND: This one-and-a-half story cross-gabled house features ionic columns on a wrap-around masonry porch. It appears in the 1892 City Directory as 27 Seventh Street, the home of George Boettger, a carpenter. Mr. Boettger is listed at 94 Jewett (the former name of Seventh Street) in 1890-91, which is likely the same house. From 1910 (or earlier) until at least 1940 the home was occupied by members of the Wagner family, Frederick W. and his wife Louise. Frederick owned Wagner and Gauss, a saloon at 213 South Ashley (Schwabens Hall).

In March, 2009 the HDC approved a portion of application HDC09-019 to remove an addition and construct a new addition in its place. The portion of the application dealing with this window was denied because the proposed bay window eliminated the original window opening and was incompatible with the historic character of the house.

LOCATION: East side of South Seventh Street, south of Murray Court and north of West Liberty.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a new window frame and sash into an existing opening, and to add a matching window and opening next to the original.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The house is a contributing structure in the Old West Side Historic District. The existing original window opening has been modified to hold a shortened window sash. The shortened window is installed above an interior kitchen counter. Replacing the shortened sash with one that fits the original opening is recommended and appropriate.
2. The new window opening will have a separate casing and the opening will be distinct and separate from the original opening next to it, per the applicant. It is located on the rear elevation, and the one-over-one design is compatible with the rest of the house.
3. The proposed new frame and sash in the old opening and the new window next to it are generally 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*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.

Owner/Address: Anne Schroth, 319 S Seventh Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Applicant: Rueter Associates Architects, 515 Fifth St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Review Committee: Commissioners White and McCauley visited the site.

Commissioner McCauley – This new plan (as opposed to the one we reviewed in March of this year) is more compatible with the building and I would be in favor of approving this and concur with the staff report.

Commissioner White – Concurs with staff and Commissioner McCauley

Applicant Presentation: Ms. Anne Schroth, owner, was present to speak on behalf of the appeal. She stated that she had nothing to add and was available for questions from the Commission.

Questions of the Applicant by the Commission: - None.

Audience Participation: - None.

Discussion by the Commission:

MOTION

Moved by Commissioner Glusac, Seconded by Commissioner Giannola “**that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application at 319 South Seventh Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to install a new window frame and sash into an existing opening, and to add a matching window and opening next to the original, as proposed. The proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the house and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.**”

On a Voice Vote – MOTION PASSED – *UNANIMOUS (Application Approved)*

A-4 HDC09-048 – 312 S. DIVISION STREET

BACKGROUND: The Kempf House’s temple-style Greek Revival architecture has earned it a spot on the National Register of Historic Places. It features heavy square wooden columns supporting a triangular pediment on the gable front and large grilled frieze windows. It was built before 1853 for Henry DeWitt Bennett, who served as postmaster and later as secretary and steward of the University of Michigan. In 1890 Reuben H. Kempf bought the house from A.L. Noble. Mr. Kempf and his wife Pauline taught and offered performances of music in the home. In 1953 when Mrs. Kempf passed away, Earl V. Parker, a neighbor, bought the house, and in 1969 it was purchased by the City of Ann Arbor.

LOCATION: West side of South Division Street, south of East Liberty, north of East William Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove a wooden barrier-free ramp along the south side of the building, install a new stoop for the south side door, install a new gate in the fence at the northeast corner of the lot, and install a sloping sidewalk along the north property line.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1 The proposed walk would require a new gate in the fence along Division Street. The new gate would match the current front gate. The walk would be of concrete, with a gradual rise that meets accessibility requirements, and is designed to get the user onto the north end of the 18" front porch with no steps. The fence along the north property line would be rebuilt to match the rise of the walk and protect users from a large drop down to Liberty Plaza. The proposal results in an enormously less intrusive design than the current ramp on the south side of the house.
- 2 At the side door, the ramp would be replaced by a small uncovered wood porch with four steps and simple handrails that meet current building codes. A 1929 photo in the packet shows the Kempfs standing at the side door on three wooden steps. The proposed porch is an appropriate and safer substitute for those steps.
- 3 The removal of the existing ramp and its replacement with a sloping sidewalk, and the new side door porch, are generally 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*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.

Owner/Address: City of Ann Arbor, 100 N. Fifth Avenue, A2, MI 48104

Applicant: Amy Kuras, Park Planner, City of Ann Arbor, MI

Review Committee: Commissioners McCauley and White visited the site.

Commissioner McCauley – This is a vast improvement for the overall look and historical feel of the Kempf house.

Commissioner White – Concurs with Commissioner McCauley and staff.

Applicant Presentation: Amy Kuras, A2 City Park Planner, Parks and Recreation was present to speak on behalf of the appeal. She stated that they have met with the Kempf House Board to discuss the proposed designs and they were enthusiastically in support of this. Traditionally, the magnolia and garden side was formerly used for garden parties and taking off the ramp drastically improves that space. We're moving the ramp to the utilitarian (north) side of the house and preserves its historic use. Making the barrier free entrance the main entrance to the house is more in keeping with what the barrier free code is trying to accomplish.

Questions of the Applicant by the Commission:

Commissioner Henrichs – When the existing ramp is removed, will there be any repair work required on the house siding or foundation wall? (Kuras – It's hard to tell at this point because the concrete is solid. It seems from what we can see that the brick façade is in good condition, but we can't say with certainty until we remove it). When that is removed, there may be some footings involved – will the landscaping be restored? (Yes. Including the concrete slab areas and the area close to the house will have to be backfilled with some additional soil).

Commissioner White – You are removing the railing. The grade and slope will be enough that you won't need a railing? (Kuras – The slope will be approximately five percent and won't require a handrail).

363 **Audience Participation:** None

364 **Discussion by the Commission:**

365 **MOTION**

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369 Moved by Commissioner McCauley, Seconded by Commissioner White, “**that the**
370 **Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the application at 312 South**
371 **Division Street, a contributing property in the Division Street Historic District, to**
372 **remove a ramp and install a sloping sidewalk and new gate, and install a porch at**
373 **the side door, as proposed. The proposed work is compatible in exterior design,**
374 **arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the house and the**
375 **surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for***
376 ***Rehabilitation*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10.**

377
378 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION PASSED – *UNANIMOUS (Application Approved)***

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380 **B - OLD BUSINESS – None.**

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382 **C - NEW BUSINESS – None.**

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384 **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION – GENERAL (Limited to 3 Minutes per Speaker) – None.**

385
386 **D - APPROVAL OF MINUTES –**

387
388 **D-1** Draft Minutes of the February 12, 2009 Regular Session – (Corrections -
389 ~~Line 854 states Commissioner Glusac voted~~ (but she was not present), change to:
390 ~~absent~~, Line 337 ~~EXAMPLES~~ should be singular - change to: ~~example~~.
391

392 **MOTION #1**

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394 Moved by Commissioner Henrichs, Seconded by Commissioner White, “**to**
395 **approve the February 12, 2009 Regular Session Minutes as Amended.**”

396
397 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO APPROVE – PASSED - *UNANIMOUS***

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400 **D-2** Draft Minutes of the March 12, 2009 Regular Session – Corrections – Line Month
401 and Year in Title; Line 792 AND 704 – ~~atypical~~ not ~~“A” TYPICAL~~ Same as line 794.
402

403 **MOTION #2**

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405 Moved by Commissioner White, Seconded by Commissioner McCauley, Seconded
406 by Commissioner “**to approve the March 12, 2009 Regular Session Minutes as**
407 **Amended.**”

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409 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO APPROVE – PASSED - *UNANIMOUS***

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412 **D-3** Draft Minutes of the April 8, 2009 Regular Session – Accepted as Presented.
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415 **MOTION #3**
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417 Moved by Commissioner White, Seconded by Commissioner McCauley, “to
418 approve the April 8, 2009 Regular Session Minutes as Presented.”
419

420 **On a Voice Vote – MOTION TO APPROVE – PASSED - UNANIMOUS**
421

422 **E - REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS –**
423

424 **E-1** – J. Thacher asked the Commission if they had all received a post card inviting them
425 to the Historic District Awards to be held at the Michigan Theater.
426

427 **F - ASSIGNMENTS**
428

429 **F-1** June 2009 Review Committee
430

431 Review Committee for June 8, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. – Commissioners White and McCauley
432

433 **G - STAFF ACTIVITIES REPORT**
434

435 **G-1** The April report was handed out to the Commission.
436

437 **H - CONCERNS OF COMMISSIONERS – None.**
438

439 **I - COMMUNICATIONS**
440

441 **I-1** Communication from The Manitowoc Historical Society in Manitowoc, Wisconsin –
442
443 J. Thacher – Reported receiving a letter in which the sender states (which has a picture
444 enclosed) that “Due to the inscription on the photo we feel it may be more valuable to you.
445 This is a Civil War Photo and the inscription states “Gibson Photo, Ann Arbor, MI.” If you
446 Google that, you’ll find a former Gibson Art Studio around the same era. J. Thacher asked
447 the Commission about donating it to the Bentley Historic Library for their Civil War Photo
448 Collection. (Agreed).
449

450 **ADJOURNMENT**
451

452 *The Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. without objection.*

453 **SUBMITTED BY: Brenda Acquaviva, Administrative Service Specialist V, Planning and**
454 **Development Services.**