

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 1017 W Liberty Street, Application Number HDC22-1227

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: January 12, 2023

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, January 7, 2023

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Gregory Smith	Same
Address:	1017 W Liberty St Ann Arbor, MI 48103	
Phone:	(414) 303-0641	

BACKGROUND: This stately house first appears in Polk Directories in 1928 as the home of John Huss, who worked in real estate. Mrs. Huss lived in the home until at least 1940. Some of its significant features include brick on the foundation and first floor, wood siding on the second floor, a shallow shed roof facing the street over wall dormers, exposed rafter tails, and a stone 3/4-width front porch supporting square half-columns.

In 2014 a screen porch was approved behind the house (HDC14-061 in Trakit).

In 2022 the HDC approved the paving of a strip between the house and driveway and the replacement of a pair of wood overhead garage doors with steel doors (HDC22-1144 in STREAM).

LOCATION: The house is located on the south side of West Liberty Street, west of Eighth Street and east of Eberwhite Boulevard.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove the two garage doors and convert them to a single opening in order to correct structural deficiencies.



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.

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

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building site so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

District or Neighborhood Setting – Repair

Recommended: Repairing features of the building and landscape by reinforcing the historic materials.

Repair will also generally include the replacement in kind--or with a compatible substitute material--of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of features when there are surviving prototypes, such as porch balustrades or paving materials.

Not Recommended: Replacing an entire feature of the building or landscape when repair of materials and limited replacement of deteriorated or missing parts are appropriate.

District or Neighborhood Setting – Replace

Recommended: Replacing in kind an entire feature of the building or landscape that is too deteriorated to repair-- when the overall form and detailing are still evident -- using the physical evidence as a model to guide the new work.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other guidelines may apply):**Residential Accessory Structures**

Appropriate: Maintaining and restoring historic barns, garages, sheds, trellises, and other accessory structures to match the historic materials and configuration.

Maintaining and repairing historic doors and windows on historic barns and garages to match the existing materials and configuration.

Where elements of historic out-buildings are deteriorated beyond repair, replacing the elements in kind.

Replacing a non-historic or missing garage door with a new door in keeping with the style and period of the existing garage, using the historic opening size.

Not Appropriate: Replacing repairable original historic doors, garage doors, and windows.

Altering historic barns, garages, and sheds by using materials, configurations, and designs that do not match the existing or historic appearance.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The garage is old enough to be a contributing structure in the Old West Side Historic District. Per the previous HDC determination, the current wood overhead garage doors are in unrepairable condition. When a contractor tried to install new HDC approved overhead doors, significant structural defects were found (see application narrative) on the north elevation. A subsequent structural engineer's report detailed the deficiencies, and the proposed solution is to move the east and west vertical columns (on either side of the existing openings) in 3", replace the two openings with one larger opening, and install a beam along the front edge of the garage. (Moving the columns and retaining the two openings would result in garage door openings that are not wide enough for a car to safely enter.) The work would create enough lateral resistance to wind loads and prevent the garage from racking (again).
2. Replacing two garage doors with a single one for the purpose of convenience would not be considered appropriate. In this case, however, the structural integrity of the whole building is in question. If this is the only reasonable way to provide sufficient lateral resistance to wind loads, the work is appropriate.

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 Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 1017 W Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to convert the two garage doors into one opening, 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 and 9 and the guidelines for building site and district or neighborhood setting; and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for residential accessory structures.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 1017 W Liberty in the Old West Side 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: Structural engineering narrative, drawings, photos

1017 W Liberty Street (Survey photos, 2008)

