

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 315 Koch Street, Application Number HDC13-229

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** January 9, 2014

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** January 6, 2014

#### OWNER

**Name:** Kevin Belew  
Battersea Investments  
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#### APPLICANT

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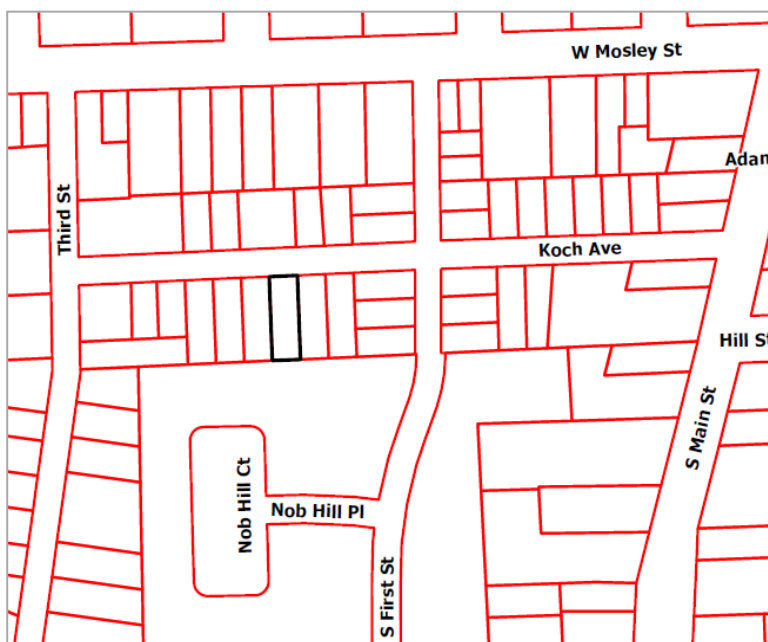
**BACKGROUND:** This one and a half story craftsman features a full width front porch clad in shingles with tapered square columns, front and rear shed dormers, exposed rafter tails under the eaves, a brick chimney, wood clapboard siding on the first floor, and wood shingles on the second floor. Most of the original three-over-one double-hung windows are present. It first appears in the 1922 Polk City Directory as 315 John K. Avenue (which was changed to Koch Avenue in 1928) as the home of William F. Bethke, a painter. Edwin Bethke lived here until 1934, when he moved into the new house two doors east at 311 Koch Avenue. The home is still owned by the Bethke family. It has been converted into an up-and-down duplex with two front doors.

**LOCATION:** The site is located on the south side of Koch Avenue, west of South First Street and east of Third Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to: construct a two-story rear addition to the house; infill one of two front doors with a window; install an egress window on the rear of the existing house; construct a two-car garage and extend an existing shared gravel driveway.

#### 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.
- (6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- (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.

Designing additional stories, when required for the new use, that are set back from the wall plane and are as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street.

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.

### Guidelines for Paved Areas

Appropriate: On residential properties, retaining and maintaining existing historic driveways and curb cuts, including "two track" driveways and green space between the driveway and house.

Retaining and maintaining historic sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and patios/terraces.

Not Appropriate: Installing driveways or parking areas that are too wide or large for the building site and are out of character for the district.

### Guidelines for Residential Accessory Structures

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

Not Appropriate: Introducing new structures or site features that are out of scale with the property or the district or are otherwise inappropriate.

Removing historic barns, garages, sheds, trellises, or other historic accessory structures.

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. The first floor of the addition is inset nine inches on the west wall, and a little over four feet at the corner on the east wall. The second floor is indented to the shed dormer walls, where a connection the width of that dormer runs south 4'10" then joins a wider hip-roofed second floor room that matches the width of the first floor below it. The two story addition is clad in hardi-plank.
2. The addition features square and double-hung windows. The windows have interior applied muntins in four-pane or four-over-one patterns. Staff would prefer no muntins at all to further simplify the addition, but does not feel strongly enough to suggest conditioning the motion.
3. Two basement egress windows are located in the southeast corner formed by the new basement and existing one. Both windows utilize the same well, which is a clever way to provide egress to two different rooms.
4. Infilling one of the two front doors using siding salvaged from the rear of the house is appropriate. Installing a square wood window in that space is also appropriate, though it should not have three divided lights in order to distinguish it from the original windows on the house. Staff feels that even with matching window trim dimensions, the slightly unusual placement of the window right next to the front door will read as non-original if it does not have muntins.
5. An existing small garage/shed located behind the house on the east side of the lot is not proposed to be altered or removed in this application. The shed is assumed to be a contributing structure because a structure of approximately the same size appears on 1931 Sanborn maps in this location. A concrete two-track driveway leads to the shed. This is a historic site feature and must be retained and maintained per the *Design Guidelines*.
6. A 20' x 22' two-car garage located behind the existing shed would be accessed via a shared gravel driveway along the west property line (between 315 and 317 Koch). This driveway was originally installed as a two-track on 317's property, and currently ends near the back of the houses. Staff is not opposed to extending the driveway since the existing shed is presumed to be contributing. If the shed is beyond repair, staff would recommend removing it and reorienting the new garage to access it from the existing driveway along the east property line. The design of the garage is simple, though large. Because the rear property line has a 12-15 foot concrete retaining wall, no neighbors to the rear will be impacted by the garage.
7. There is a discrepancy in the submitted drawings, with one showing the rear addition's ridge higher than that of the existing house, but the others showing it lower. Staff suggests conditioning the motion on the ridge height matching the original or lower.
8. Staff believes the work 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*.

**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 315 Koch Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a two-story rear addition to the house; infill one of two front doors with a window; install an egress window on the rear of the existing house; construct a two-car garage and extend an existing shared driveway on the condition that the infill window has no muntins but otherwise matches the window on the west wall as proposed, and that the roof ridge of the addition does not exceed the height of the roof ridge of the original house. As conditioned, 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, 9 and 10 and the guidelines for additions and building site; and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for additions, paved areas, and residential accessory structures.

### MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 315 Koch Street 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:** application, drawings, photos.

315 Koch Street (April 2008 survey photo)



315 Koch Street (April 2008 survey photo)

