



**City of Ann Arbor**  
**Formal Minutes**  
**Historic District Commission**

301 E. Huron Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
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Wednesday, May 13, 2015

7:00 PM

Larcom City Hall, 301 E Huron St, Second floor,  
City Council Chambers

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**Rescheduled from 5/14/15**

**A**      **CALL TO ORDER**

*Vice Chair Bushkuhl called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.*

**B**      **ROLL CALL**

*Jill Thacher called the roll.*

*Staff Present: Jill Thacher*

**Present:** 4 - Ellen Ramsburgh, Patrick McCauley, Thomas Stulberg,  
and Benjamin L. Bushkuhl

**Absent:** 3 - Robert White, John Beeson, and Jennifer Ross

**C**      **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**The Agenda was unanimously approved with the removal of Item E  
3. On a voice vote, the Vice Chair declared the motion carried.**

**D**      **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - PUBLIC COMMENTARY - (3 Minutes per Speaker)**

**E**      **HEARINGS**

**E-1**      **15-0571**      HDC15-053; 630 Third Street - Deck, Landscaping -- OWSHD

*Jill Thacher presented the following staff report:*

**BACKGROUND:**

*This one-story gable frontier features a half-width front porch and first appears in Polk City Directories in 1923 as # 632, the home of Frank Marsden, yard manager for Staebler Oil. A large rear addition to the house was constructed between 1988 and 1990, and the two-car garage*

*was built in 1993 or 1994.*

**LOCATION:**

*The site is located on the west side of Third Street, south of W. Madison and just north of West Mosley. Wurster Park abuts the property to the west and south.*

**APPLICATION:**

*The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace a stoop on the south side of the house with a larger one, extend the driveway to the garage and resurface it with gravel, install fieldstone retaining walls in the front yard, replace a rear deck with a concrete patio, install traditional lattice on the front porch, and replace the front porch and front walk stairs with matching.*

**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.*

*(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):*

*Setting*

*Recommended:*

*Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and landscape features of the setting. For example, preserving the relationship between*

*a town common and its adjacent historic houses, municipal buildings, historic roads, and landscape features.*

#### *Entrances and Porches*

##### *Recommended:*

*Designing and installing additional entrances or porches on secondary elevations when required for the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the buildings, i.e., limiting such alteration to non-character-defining elevations.*

##### *Not Recommended:*

*Introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.*

#### *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.*

##### *From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:*

#### *Design Guidelines for Fencing and Walls*

##### *Appropriate:*

*Using brick or stone for new walls. Custom masonry products will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.*

#### *Residential Decks and Patios*

##### *Appropriate:*

*Installing a deck in the rear of the property that is subordinate in proportion to the building.*

*Installing a deck that is free standing (self supporting) so that it does not damage historic materials.*

*Installing railings made of wood. Custom railing designs will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.*

*Installing flooring made of wood or composite wood.*

### STAFF FINDINGS

1. *The side door on the south side of the house was added as part of the 1990s addition. It currently has a canopy and two sets of stairs, and a very small landing. Enlarging the landing into a 7'x9' porch will give the homeowners maneuvering space to get in and out of the door plus room for a couple of chairs. The porch would be located far enough back as to not detract from the original part of the house, and would tie in better than the current stoop. The canopy would remain as it is now. Guardrails would match the current design, which meets the Historic District Design Guidelines.*

2. *The lot slopes down about six feet from the front yard to the sidewalk. Most neighboring houses on this side of the street have some sort of retaining wall system in their front yards. The use of fieldstone for front yard and driveway retaining walls is appropriate and compatible with this particular house, and will replace modern interlocking blocks along the driveway.*

3. *Gravel is a traditional driveway material, so replacing the brick paver driveway with gravel is appropriate, as is extending it to reach the garage.*

4. *The remaining work on the application, including replacing the lattice on the front porch with vertical/horizontal lattice instead of diagonal, replacing the two sets of deteriorated front stairs with new ones to match, and replacing the modern rear deck with a patio are all appropriate.*

5. *Staff finds that the proposed work meets the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines and the SOI Standards and Guidelines, and is appropriate and compatible with the historic house, yard, and neighborhood setting.*

### REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

*Commissioners Ramsburgh and Bushkuhl together with staff visited the site as part of their review.*

*Ramsburgh reported that the report was very thorough and she felt the proposed materials met the standards for landscaping and would address the drainage problems on site. She said the project was quite straight forward.*

*Bushkuhl agreed with Ramsburgh, adding that each component of the*

*application is in response to a direct need on site, as well as added safety and making the house more inviting when entering from the side. He said it was evident that the applicants had spent time on the design making sure that it met the guidelines.*

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

*Rick Schmelz, 630 Third Street, Ann Arbor, Owner, was present to respond to enquiries from the Commission.*

*Noting no further public speakers, the Vice Chair declared the public hearing closed.*

**Moved by McCauley, seconded by Ramsburgh, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 630 Third Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to replace a stoop on the south side of the house with a deck, extend the driveway to the garage and resurface it with gravel, install fieldstone retaining walls in the front yard, replace a rear deck with a concrete patio, install traditional lattice on the front porch, and replace the front porch and front walk stairs with matching and add a metal handrail for the stairs that meets the HDC Design Guidelines and is reviewed by staff. The proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets the Ann Arbor Historic District Guidelines for fencing and walls, and 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 Setting.**

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

*The members of the Commission took into consideration the presented application and discussed the matter.*

**On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Certificate of Appropriateness was Granted.**

**Yeas:** 4 - Ramsburgh, McCauley, Chair Stulberg, and Vice Chair Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 3 - White, Secretary Beeson, and Ross

- E-2    [15-0572](#)    HDC15-059; 415 W Jefferson Street - Addition, Dormer, Egress Window, Skylights -- OWSHD

*Jill Thacher presented the following staff report:*

**BACKGROUND:**

*This handsome 2 ½ story gable-fronter features roof corner returns and a full-width brick and wood front porch. It was constructed between 1925 and 1931 (when it and its garage appear on the Sanborn Fire Insurance map). An earlier one-story structure was removed from this lot and the one at 417 sometime between 1916 and 1925.*

**LOCATION:**

*The site is located on the south side of West Jefferson Street, between Second Street and Third Street.*

**APPLICATION:**

*The applicant seeks HDC approval to add: a 74 square foot rear addition; an attic dormer on the west roof; a basement egress window on the east elevation; and five skylights on the east roof. A non-original rear entry porch will be removed.*

**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.*

*(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.*

*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.*

*Roofs*

*Recommended:*

*Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.*

*Not Recommended:*

*Changing the configuration of a roof by adding new features such as dormer windows, vents, or skylights so that the historic character is*

*diminished.*

#### *Windows*

##### *Recommended:*

*Designing and installing additional windows on rear or other non-character-defining elevations if required by the new use. New window openings may also be cut into exposed party walls. Such design should be compatible with the overall design of the building, but not duplicate the fenestration pattern and detailing of a character-defining elevation.*

##### *Not Recommended:*

*Introducing a new design that is incompatible with the historic character of the building.*

#### *District or Neighborhood Setting*

##### *Not Recommended:*

*Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.*

#### *From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:*

##### *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.*

#### *Roofs*



*Not Appropriate:*

*Adding chimneys, cupolas, or dormers where not appropriate.*

*Windows*

*Not Appropriate:*

*Changing the number, location, and size or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking-in, or installing replacement sash which does not fit the historic opening.*

**STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. *The property owners would like to increase their living space within the existing house by making the basement and attic usable, and adding a small mudroom on the rear of the house.*

2. *The mudroom, which also contains a half-bath, is 7'6" deep by 12' wide. It encapsulates the existing backdoor, which is not original, though the opening most likely is. The addition does not interfere with any other openings on the rear of the house. The mudroom is clad in 4" exposure cementitious lap siding, and the windows are Andersen vinyl-clad three-over-one doublehungs that match an existing non-original kitchen window. The height of the eave matches the existing covered porch eave, and the west wall is inset 13" from the original corner of the house. The non-original back door would be relocated onto the addition, and the new stairs and guardrail would be cedar. The addition's size, placement, design and materials are compatible with the house and neighborhood, and will not be visible from the street or sidewalk.*

3. *The gabled dormer will allow an existing staircase from the second floor to the attic to meet headroom requirements, and provide a casement egress window. It does not interfere with the eave or ridge of the roof. Cladding is 4" cementitious lap that matches the mudroom addition. The dormer will be visible from the public right of way, but the design is not obtrusive and is compatible with the house. A small dormer is an appropriate modification to allow the homeowners to take advantage of a large amount of attic space.*

4. *The five skylights are Velux QPF low-profile (though staff could not find the actual height of the skylight above the roof plane) in a dark color. Each skylight is approximately 1'9" x 3'10". The height and pitch of the roof, combined with the close proximity of the next-door neighbor's house*

*assure staff that the skylights will not be visible from the street or sidewalk. Therefore, the use of skylights to bring light into an underutilized space is appropriate.*

*5. The basement egress window is on the east elevation and matches the width of an existing basement window. There is another basement window closer to the rear of the house, but the location of the furnace and water heater between it and the finishable space makes it unsuitable for egress. The window well would be 4' wide by 3' deep and built of wood timbers. An Andersen 400 series casement window that is 2'4" by 4' would be installed.*

*6. The work is inconspicuous from the public right-of-way, and does not damage or destroy character-defining features of this historic house. If the cementitious siding is smooth, and the skylights do not exceed 6" tall, staff finds the work compatible in exterior design, arrangement, material, and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area, and feels that it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, and the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines.*

#### *REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS:*

*Commissioners Ramsburgh and Bushkuhl, together with staff, visited the site as part of their review.*

*Bushkuhl reported that they walked the site noting that the owner is trying to make good use of the site and he said the proposed work would be inconspicuous from the street. He said the smaller skylights would be less visible and would be appropriate for the project. He said the paint job makes it blend in much better.*

*Ramsburgh agreed with Bushkuhl as well as the staff report, adding that she had a few concerns with the presentation of the dormer in the plans. She didn't feel that it would read that large in proportion when completed and the proposed changes are modest and meet the guidelines.*

#### *PUBLIC HEARING:*

*James Bevilacqua, 3250 West Liberty Road, Ann Arbor, Designer, was present to respond to enquiries from the Commission.*

*Acar and Kelly Altinsel, 415 West Jefferson Street, Ann Arbor, Owners, were also present.*

*Noting no further public speakers, the Vice Chair declared the public hearing closed.*

**Moved by McCauley, seconded by Ramsburgh, that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 415 W. Jefferson Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to add a 74 square foot rear addition, an attic dormer on the west roof, a basement egress window on the east elevation, and five operable skylights on the east roof, on the conditions that documentation is provided showing that the skylights are 6" tall or less, and that the cementitious siding is smooth (not woodgrained). The work as conditioned is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines and 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, setting, roofs and windows.**

*COMMISSION DISCUSSION:*

*The members of the Commission took into consideration the presented application and discussed the matter.*

**On a voice vote, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Certificate of Appropriateness was Granted.**

**Yeas:** 4 - Ramsburgh, McCauley, Chair Stulberg, and Vice Chair Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 3 - White, Secretary Beeson, and Ross

**F UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**G NEW BUSINESS**

**G-1 15-0574 2015 HDC Awards**

**Moved by Ramsburgh, seconded by McCauley, that the Commission accepts the nominations from the HDC Awards**

**Committee for the 31st Annual Awards. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 4 - Ramsburgh, McCauley, Chair Stulberg, and Vice Chair Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 3 - White, Secretary Beeson, and Ross

**G-2**    [15-0576](#)    July 2015 - June 2016 HDC Meeting Schedule

**Moved by Vice Chair Bushkuhl, seconded by Chair Stulberg, that the July 2015 - June 2016 HDC Meeting Schedule be Approved by the Commission. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.**

**G-3**    [15-0577](#)    415 West Washington Resolution to City Council

*Ramsburgh presented the following resolution:*

**RESOLUTION REGARDING 415 WEST WASHINGTON**

*Whereas, the Historic District Commission confirmed by unanimous vote at their December 11, 2014 meeting that the structures known as the Washtenaw County Road Commission at 415 West Washington Street were built between 1924 and 1934 during the period of significance for the Old West Side Historic District and contribute both historically and architecturally to the District, and*

*Whereas, safeguarding the heritage of the city by protecting resources within historic districts is declared to be a purpose of Chapter 103, the Historic Preservation Ordinance of the City of Ann Arbor, and*

*Whereas, the Historic District Commission and the City of Ann Arbor are charged with preventing demolition by neglect caused by deferred maintenance to this City owned resource within the Old West Side Historic District, be it therefore*

*Resolved, that the Historic District Commission urges City Council to approve funds for maintenance in order to stabilize and prevent further deterioration of the contributing structures at 415 West Washington Street in the Old West Side Historic District.*

**Moved by Ramsburgh, seconded by Vice Chair Bushkuhl, that the**

**Resolution be Approved by the Commission and forwarded to City Council. On a roll call, the vote was as follows with the Chair declaring the motion carried.**

**Yeas:** 4 - Ramsburgh, McCauley, Chair Stulberg, and Vice Chair Bushkuhl

**Nays:** 0

**Absent:** 3 - White, Secretary Beeson, and Ross

**H** **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**15-0578** Historic District Commission Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2015

**The Minutes were unanimously Approved by the Commission and forwarded to the City Council. On a voice vote, the Chair declared the motion carried.**

**I** **REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS**

*Ramsburgh reported that the HDC Awards would be presented at the June 1st, City Council meeting.*

**J** **ASSIGNMENTS**

**Review Committee: Monday, June 8, 2015, at 5:00 pm for the June 11, 2015 Regular Meeting**

*Commissioners Bushkuhl and Stulberg volunteered for the June Review Committee. Ramsburgh volunteered as back-up.*

**K** **REPORTS FROM STAFF**

**15-0579** April 2015 HDC Staff Activities

**Received and Filed**

**L** **CONCERNS OF COMMISSIONERS**

*Bushkuhl noted that enforcement on rental property signs seem to have improved this year.*

**M      COMMUNICATIONS**

**15-0580**      Various Communications to the HDC

**Received and Filed**

**N      ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:32 p.m.**

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