

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 302 E Liberty Street, Application Number HDC15-156

**DISTRICT:** East Liberty Street Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** September 10, 2015

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

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Tuesday, September 8, 2015

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Matthew Krichbaum	Same
<b>Address:</b>	221 N Main St Ann Arbor, MI 48104	
<b>Phone:</b>	(734) 996-5600	

**BACKGROUND:** This Dutch colonial revival was built in 1908 and first occupied by Joseph Parker and Joe's Saloon. It features a gambrel center gable with a Palladian window and full-width front porch with Ionic columns. The building was occupied for many years by the Herb David Guitar Studio.

Numerous certificates of appropriateness have been issued for the property, most recently HDC approval in 2011 for continuous soffit vents and light-colored roofing, a staff approval in 2008 to replace failed wood siding on the west elevation, porch repairs in 2004, and a rear addition in 1995.

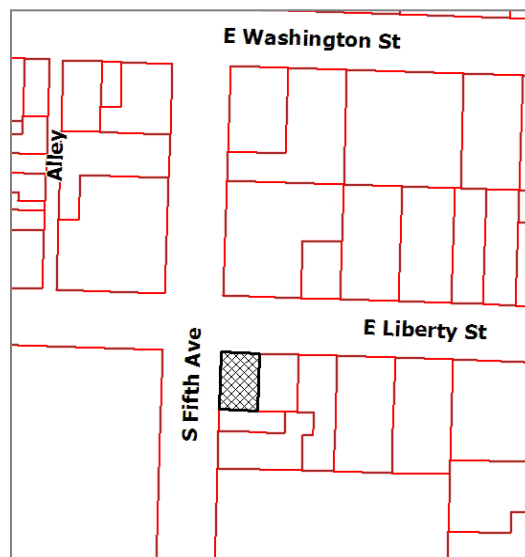
**LOCATION:** The site is located on the southeast corner of East Liberty Street and South Fifth Avenue.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a wood hanging address sign on the front porch and three AC units on the roof of the rear addition.

#### **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):**

**Storefronts**

*Not Recommended:* Introducing a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color; using inappropriately scaled signs and logos or other types of signs that obscure, damage, or destroy remaining character-defining features of the historic building; using new illuminated signs.

**Mechanical Systems**

*Recommended:* Installing a completely new mechanical system if required for the new use so that it causes the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material.

Installing air conditioning units if required by the new use in such a manner that historic features are not damaged or obscured and excessive moisture is not generated that will accelerate deterioration of historic materials.

Installing heating/air conditioning units in the window frames in such a manner that the sash and frames are protected. Window installations should be considered only when all other viable heating/cooling systems would result in significant damage to historic materials.

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

**Signs**

*Appropriate:* Attaching signage through masonry joints, not masonry units, or through materials that can be easily repaired, such as wood, when the signage is removed.

Installing signage that is subordinate to the overall building composition.

**Mechanical Equipment**

*Appropriate:* Installing new air conditioning units and related mechanical equipment in such a manner that historic materials and features are not damaged or obscured.

Using screening such as vegetation and fencing around mechanical equipment.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

1. The building was recently sold. A law office will be occupying the first and second floors, and Ann Arbor Guitars will remain on the third floor.
2. A painted wood address sign is proposed to be hung from the porch roof header above the front stairs. The sign is 12" x 60", simple in design, and appropriate to help drivers

and pedestrians find the businesses in this building. Two existing business signs on the front wall under the porch would remain (the one for Dancing Dog Gallery was recently removed but may be replaced by a new sign with a staff approval).

3. There are currently three air conditioning window units on the building: on the second floor north elevation (facing E. Liberty) and first and third floor of the west elevation (facing S. Fifth Ave). The application proposes to remove these three window units and replace them with three new condensers to be located on the roof of the modern one-story rear addition of the building. An existing minimal guardrail required by code would be extended to the west behind the new condensers. The new cabinets would be visible from across South Fifth Avenue, but are definitely preferable to the three street-facing window AC units. See the very complete set of before and after drawings for more information.
4. Note that the south lot line for this building runs along the rear wall of the structure, making placement of the new condensers impossible on the ground behind the building. The owner is working on plans for a new accessible ramp along the east side of the building, which will preclude their placement on the ground along that side.
5. Staff recommends approval of the new sign and air conditioning condensers. The sign is an appropriate size, design, and material, and is compatible with the historic structure and neighborhood. The air conditioning condensers replace three inappropriate window units and are located at the rear of the building on top of a non-historic addition. No character-defining features of the building will be impacted, and their locations on the building are appropriate.

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motion below 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 302 East Liberty Street, a contributing structure in the East Liberty Historic District, to install a non-illuminated wood sign and three air conditioning condensers, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the building and the surrounding area and meets *The City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for signs and mechanical equipment, 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 storefronts and mechanical systems.

## MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 302 East Liberty Street in the East Liberty Street 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, specs



302 East Liberty Street Survey Sheet (1973)

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE SURVEY SHEET NUMBER

SURVEY DATE 7-12-73 BY G/6 ADDRESS 302 E. LIBERTY

HISTORIC NAME CURRENT NAME

LOCATION SECTION BLOCK 11151463 PARCEL 10 BUILDING 1

TYPE BLDG USE PRIMARY 1-2-3? SECONDARY ORIGINAL ZONING C2A/R

SURFACE MATERIAL wood No. of FLOORS 2½ No. OCCUPIED 2½ FRONT DIRECTION N

ITEMS TO BE GRADED - PUT CHECK OR "X" IN APPROPRIATE SQUARE SPACE

EFFECT OF THE SURROUNDINGS ON THE BUILDING UNKEAT WEEDS

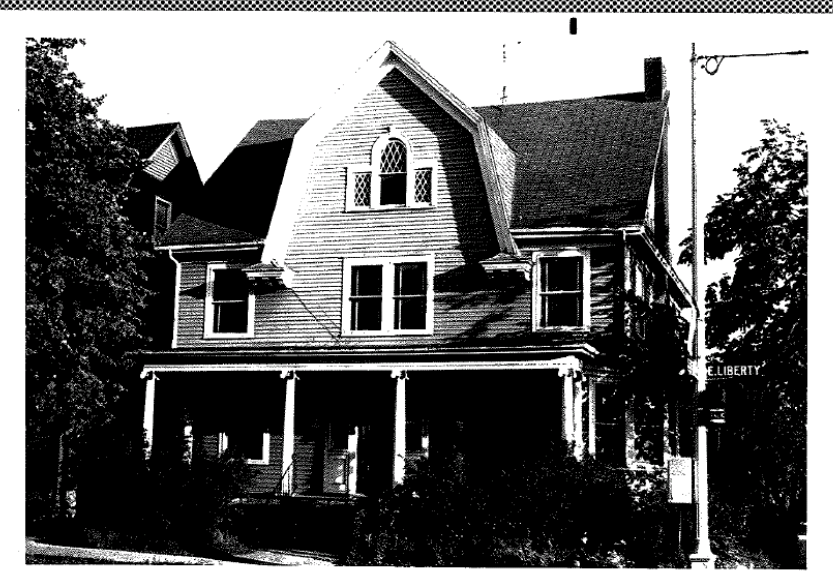
GOOD MODERATE NEUTRAL DETRIMENTAL

STRL CONDITION GOOD FAIR  POOR 5

MAINTENANCE GOOD FAIR  POOR 5

ALTERATIONS NONE or MINOR  MODERATE EXTENSIVE 15

APPROPRIATE  INAPPROPRIATE



REPAINTED & REMODELED IN 1974

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PERIOD or STYLE	A.C.
DATE	1920 ADDN
NATIONAL IMPORT.	
LOCAL EXCELLENCE	
NOTABLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 25
WORTHY OF MENTION	
POOR	

INCIDENCE	
RARE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20
MODERATE	
COMMON	

TOTAL	70
CATEGORY	B

PHOTO DATE	3 Jul 73
BY	KM
ROLL	2
FRAME	6