

## MEMORANDUM

To: Ann Arbor Historic District Commission  
From: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator  
Date: March 11, 2021  
Re: Staff approvals of DTE Gas Meter Moveout program

Several months ago, DTE began working on a project to move gas meters out of basements and onto the exteriors of houses in the Old West Side Historic District. From a map provided by DTE, 145 homes are affected. DTE has already applied for staff approvals for about ten of those properties using individual applications for each, but they are anticipating submitting many more.

In order to streamline applications for staff approval that are behind or out of sight from the City right of way or near the back of the house, staff requests the authority to accept multiple addresses on a single submission from DTE. Payment of \$35 would still be made for each lot but submitting site specific photos would not be required. Specific location information would only be required for meters mounted out of necessity at the rear 25% of the house, on a side elevation. The meters would not be attached to the house, they would be located near grade on a low support post, thus reducing the risk of harm to any character-defining features of the house.

As with all work items on the staff approvals list, if for any reason staff has concerns about the application or manner in which these approvals are being carried out, staff may elevate the application to require review by the HDC. A draft of the resolution is below.

**WHEREAS**, The Michigan Local Historic District Act, Being MCL 399.205(10), authorizes the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission to “delegate the issuance of certificates of appropriateness for the specified minor classes of work to its staff or another delegated authority,” and “the commission shall provide to the delegated authority specific written standards for issuing certificates of appropriateness”; and

**WHEREAS**, The Ann Arbor City Code Section 8:414 Administrative Approval authorizes the Historic District Commission to delegate the issuance of certificates of appropriateness for specified minor classes of work to its staff, and says the commission shall provide specific written standards for issuing certificates of appropriateness under this subsection;

**RESOLVED**, That the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission authorizes staff to

review and issue, upon receipt of a complete application, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to the DTE Gas Company in all locally-designated historic districts for the purpose of installing new exterior gas meters and associated leads, provided that the following conditions are met:

1. The meter must be installed at the rear of a building, or in another location not visible from the public right way. If DTE shows that the foregoing are not feasible, the meter may be installed within the rear 25% of a side elevation of the building.
2. The meter must be near grade and not physically attached to the exterior of a historic building (e.g. located on a separate support post).
3. Directional drilling must be used to install gas leads in order to minimize surface disturbance in historic neighborhoods, unless DTE shows it is not feasible for the specific property.
4. If applications for individual properties are combined (e.g. by block) the combined submission may describe the meter size, appearance, and method of installation once (if applicable to all properties in the submission), provided that the submission specifically states the meter installation location for each property and for a side elevation, include a plot plan showing that it is within the rear 25% of that elevation.
5. If applications for individual properties are combined, DTE remains obligated to pay the application fee for each property.