

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 118 W Liberty Street, Application Number HDC22-1249

DISTRICT: Main Street Historic District

REPORT DATE: December 8, 2022

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, December 5, 2022

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Adam Lowenstein	Jeff Myefski
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BACKGROUND: The Schaeberle Block at 112-122 West Liberty is a row of three-story, Italianate-style commercial buildings, built beginning in 1866. Upper floors were used as residences. The buildings have stone basements and one-foot thick exterior brick walls. Some of the buildings were later expanded 22 feet north into the alley, leaving only a walkway dividing the row from the adjacent building. Windows on the upper floors of the front façade have segmented arches on the second floor and round arches on the third. The first occupant of 118 W. Liberty was George Huss Boots & Shoes.

LOCATION: The site is located on West Liberty Street, east of South Ashley and west of South Main Streets.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace three mullioned storefront display windows with a wood four-sash folding window system.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- (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

Recommended: Designing and constructing a new storefront when the historic storefront is completely missing. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, material, and color of the historic building.

Not Recommended: Introducing a new design that is incompatible in size, scale, material, and color.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other guidelines may also apply):

Storefronts

Appropriate: Designing and constructing a new storefront when the historic storefront is completely missing. It may be an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or may be a new design that is compatible with the size, scale, and material of the historic building. New designs should be flush with the façade and be kept as simple as possible.

Not Appropriate: Installing a new storefront that is incompatible in size and material with the historic building and district.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The original appearance of the storefront is unknown. It has been rebuilt at least three times, most recently in the 1980s. Instead of a single display window, the storefront has three fixed windows joined by heavy mullions. The proposal is to replace these three windows with four wood-framed sash that are hinged together to allow the display window to be entirely opened.
2. Transparency is desirable on storefront windows. The simplicity of these four sash is a step in the right direction from the current heavily-mullioned windows that are more reminiscent of a living room than a storefront. Staff believes the proposed design is compatible with the rest of the non-historic wood storefront and surrounding historic district.

POSSIBLE MOTION: (Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will visit the site and make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 118 West Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Main Street Historic District, to replace three mullioned storefront display windows with a wood four-sash folding window system, 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 *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for storefronts, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 1, 2, 9 and 10, and the guidelines for storefronts.

ATTACHMENTS: photos, drawings

118 W Liberty Street (2007 file photo)

