

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 637 Fifth Street, Application Number HDC21-152

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: May 13, 2021

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, May 10, 2021

OWNER

APPLICANT

Name: Timothy Hall	DTE/Rijvana Patel
Address: 637 Fifth Street Ann Arbor, MI 48103	
Phone: (734) 657-5670	(313) 409-4034

BACKGROUND: This

LOCATION: This unique house is located on the east side of Fifth Street, south of Princeton and north of West Davis Streets. It first appears in City Directories in 1911 as the home of Louis Thews, a paperhanger for Koch Brothers. The house is constructed of structural clay tiles with intricate color patterns, an ornate brick chimney, full-width front porch of structural clay tile and brick, and clipped front and side gables.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a gas meter on the south elevation, one foot from the southwest (front) corner of the house.

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):

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.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:

Mechanical Equipment

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

Using compatible screening around outdoor mechanical equipment such as vegetation and fencing.

Attaching mechanical equipment so historic fabric is not damaged or destroyed.

Installing mechanical equipment and wiring in locations on the roof, rear elevations, or in alleys, so they are not visible from the street.

Painting mechanical equipment to blend with the historic building.

Not Appropriate: Installing new mechanical equipment systems or wiring in locations that change or destroy character-defining features and materials.

STAFF FINDINGS

1. DTE is undergoing a construction project to move all gas meters in basements to exteriors of houses. In this work the damage to historic materials in meter installations is minimal – there is typically one penetration through the wall above the foundation, and the meters themselves can be mounted on small posts to avoid touching historic materials. A meter on or near the front of a house is visibly undesirable, however, and detracts from the historic integrity of the home. For this reason, staff may not approve new meters or other mechanical units on or near the fronts of buildings.
2. The application states that the location would “maximize 10’ of fuel line placed as far back as possible.” Also that the meter manifold would have minimum visibility due to an existing tree. It should be noted that the brick front porch extends 8’ toward the street and reads more like a wall than a porch.
3. The application includes a photo of a post mounted meter. The post mount is appropriate because it does not touch historic materials the way a bracket (the alternative) installed on the house does.
4. The meter work is assumed to be necessary and post mounted meters appear to not destroy historic materials. The commission must weigh the proposal against the SOI standards, SOI guidelines, and Ann Arbor design guidelines. Questions to consider

include:

- a. Does the work cause the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material?
- b. Does it damage, destroy or obscure historic materials or features?
- c. Is there visual screening by vegetation or fencing?

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 637 Fifth Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to install a gas meter on the south elevation, one foot from the southwest (front) corner of the house, as shown in the application. 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 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 mechanical systems.

MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 637 Fifth 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, drawing, photos

637 Fifth Street (2008 Survey Photo) (Note that the bushes in this photo are no longer present)





HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

City Hall: 301 E. Huron St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6120

Mailing: P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647

Phone: 734.794.6265 ext. 42608

jthacher@a2gov.org

Fax: 734.994.8460

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Permit Number	HDC# _____
	BLDG# _____
DATE STAMP	

APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY

PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNER INFORMATION

NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER HALL TIMOTHY L		HISTORIC DISTRICT OLD WEST SIDE	
PROPERTY ADDRESS 637 FIFTH ST		CITY ANN ARBOR	
ZIPCODE 48103	DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER (734) 657 5070	EMAIL ADDRESS hallt@umich.edu	
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)		CITY	STATE, ZIP

PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE

SIGN HERE	PRINT NAME Tim Hall	DATE 3/13/21
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APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME OF APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) DTE (Rijvana Patel)			
ADDRESS OF APPLICANT			CITY
STATE	ZIPCODE	PHONE / CELL # (313) 409-4034	FAX No ()
EMAIL ADDRESS			

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (if different from Property Owner)

SIGN HERE	PRINT NAME X	DATE
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BUILDING USE -- CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL	<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> INSTITUTIONAL
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PROPOSED WORK

Describe in detail each proposed exterior alteration, improvement and/or repair (use additional paper, if necessary).

Relocate inside meter to outside. Install meter 1' East of the West building wall on the South side of home.

DESCRIBE CONDITIONS THAT JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

Maximized 10' of fuel line placed as far back as possible. Meter Manifold will have minimal visibility due to existing tree.

For Further Assistance With Required Attachments, please visit www.a2gov.org/hdc



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

FEE CHART

DESCRIPTION	
STAFF REVIEW FEES	FEE
Application for Staff Approval	\$35.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$50.00
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FEES	
All other proposed work not listed below	\$100.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$250.00
RESIDENTIAL – Single and 2-story Structure	
Addition: single story	\$300.00
Addition: taller than single story	\$550.00
New Structure - Accessory	\$100.00
New Structure – Principal	\$850.00
Replacement of single and 2-family window(s)	\$100 + \$25/window
COMMERCIAL – includes multi-family (3 or more unit) structures	
Additions	\$700.00
Replacement of multi-family and commercial window (s)	\$100 + \$50/window
Replacement of commercial storefront	\$250.00
DEMOLITION and RELOCATION	
Demolition of a contributing structure	\$1000.0
Demolition of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00
Relocation of a contributing structure	\$750.00
Relocation of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00

FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS:

- Application withdrawals made before public notice is published will qualify for a 50% refund of the application fee.
- Application withdrawals made after public notice is sent but before the public hearing will qualify for a 25% refund of the application fee.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

All HDC applications must be signed by the property owner and the applicant, if different, with the exception of staff approvals, which may be signed by only the applicant.

All completed HDC applications and their attachments may be submitted to Planning and Development Services by mail, in person (paper or digital), faxed, or via email to building@a2gov.org.

We accept CASH, CHECK, and all major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to "City of Ann Arbor"

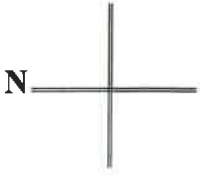
HDC applications that are incomplete or not submitted with the required documentation or payment will not be processed or approved.

APPLICATION EXPIRATION

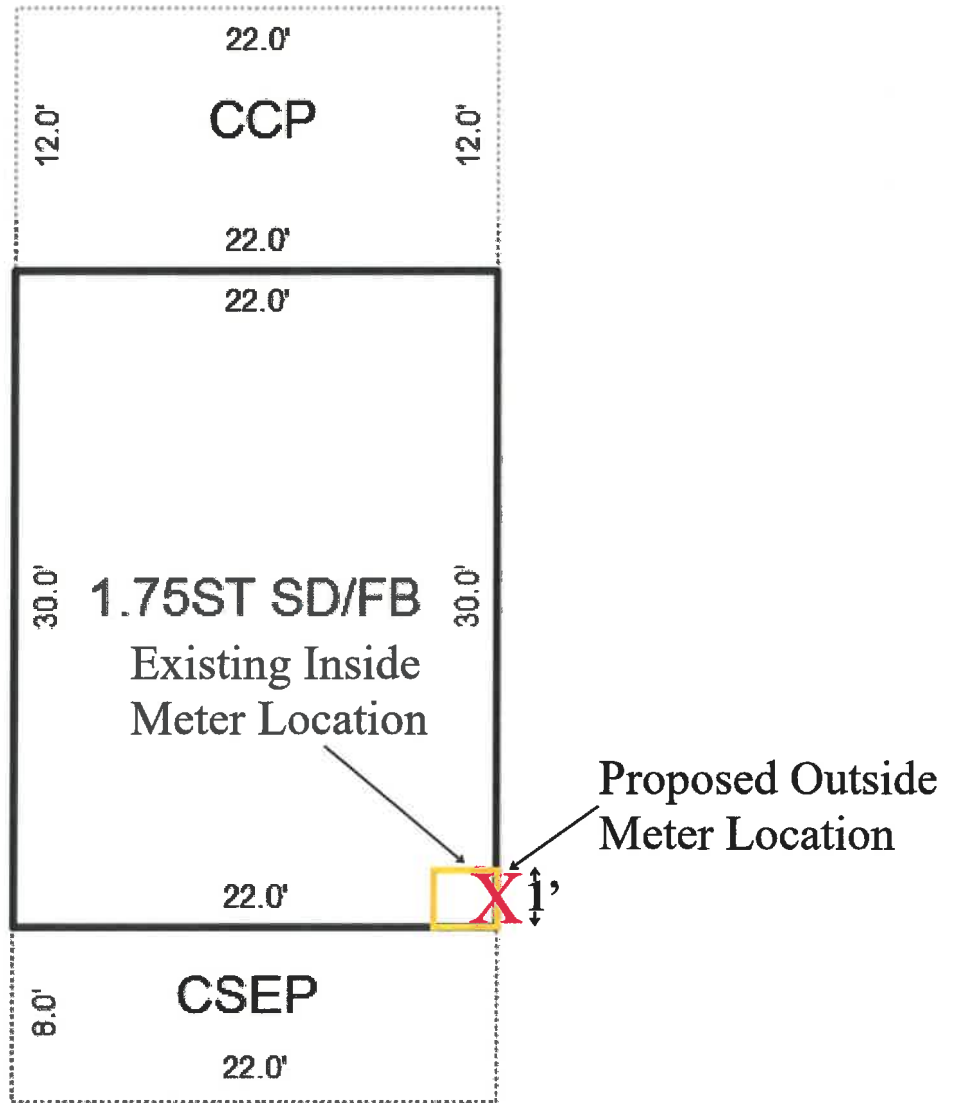
HDC applications expire three (3) years after the date of approval.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Hearing:		
Action	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC COA	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC Denial
	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC NTP	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff COA
Staff Signature		
Comments		
Fee:	\$ _____	
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Check: # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	



637 5th Street



Front of House

637 5th St











POST
EXAMPLE