

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 317 Koch Avenue, Application Number HDC13-228

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: January 9, 2014

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: January 6, 2014

OWNER

Name: Kevin Belew
Battersea Investments
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Phone: (734) 604-6380

APPLICANT

J. Bradley Moore & Associates
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BACKGROUND: This one and a half story colonial revival cottage features six over one double-hung windows, no eave overhang, gable corner returns, and wood shingle siding. It first appears in the 1931 Polk City Directory as the home of Emil D. Bethke, an employee of Michigan Bell Telephone. Emil C. Bethke (presumably Emil's son) lived in the house until at least 1960. The house is still owned by members of the Bethke family.

LOCATION: The site is located on the south side of Koch Avenue, west of South First Street and east of Third Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to replace the west basement wall and install three egress windows and two wells; construct a two-story rear addition; extend the existing gravel driveway; and construct a two-car garage.

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.

Designing additional stories, when required for the new use, that are set back from the wall plane and are as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street.

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.

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.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

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

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.

Not Appropriate: Designing an addition that overpowers or dramatically alters the original building through size or height.

Designing a new addition so that the size and scale in relation to the historic property are out of proportion.

Guidelines for Paved Areas

Appropriate: On residential properties, retaining and maintaining existing historic driveways and curb cuts, including "two track" driveways and green space between the driveway and house.

Retaining and maintaining historic sidewalks, walkways, driveways, and patios/terraces.

Not Appropriate: Installing driveways or parking areas that are too wide or large for the building site and are out of character for the district.

Guidelines for Residential Accessory Structures

Appropriate: Maintaining and repairing historic barns, garages, sheds, trellises, and other accessory structures to match the historic materials and configuration.

Not Appropriate: Introducing new structures or site features that are out of scale with the property or the district or are otherwise inappropriate.

Removing historic barns, garages, sheds, trellises, or other historic accessory structures.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The applicant seeks permission to construct a two story rear addition on a one-and-a-half story house. The location on the back of the house is appropriate, as is the use of hardie board cladding and trim.
2. The proposed addition is approximately 6' higher than the ridge of the existing house. This dramatically alters the appearance of the house and is very conspicuous. Since the lot next door to the west has no house, this addition will be particularly visible from the street and sidewalk, and is a dramatic alteration from the existing that is out of proportion with the historic house. Possible remedies include utilizing existing unused second floor

space in the rear of the house by installing shed dormers, or constructing a single-story addition off the rear of the house.

3. A new 20' x 22' two-car garage would be accessed via a shared gravel driveway along the east property line (between 315 and 317 Koch). This driveway was originally installed as a two-track on 317's property, and currently ends near the back of the houses. The design of the garage is simple, though large. Because the rear property line has a 12-15 foot concrete retaining wall, no neighbors to the rear will be impacted by the garage. There is an existing garage previously used by this house on the lot to the west, but that lot was not included in the sale of the house.
4. A large area well on the west elevation would encompass two new egress windows. The existing basement is around 800 square feet, and the inclusion of an egress window is appropriate. The size of the well is excessive, however, and staff recommends installing one well and one egress window on the southernmost of the two existing basement windows.
5. Staff believes that the proposed work does not meet the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*, the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitation*, or the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for the reasons stated in the Staff Findings above.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion 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 315 Koch Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to replace the west basement wall and install three egress windows and two wells, construct a two-story rear addition, extend the existing gravel driveway, and construct a two-car garage, 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 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 and building site; and the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for additions, paved areas, and residential accessory structures.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 317 Koch 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, drawings, photos.

317 Koch Street (April 2008 survey photos)

