

CITY OF YPSILANTI
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES of SEPTEMBER 4, 2007

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Jane Schmiedeke Chair 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: City Hall Meeting Room

Commissioners Present: Jane Schmiedeke, Hank Prebys, Brenda Rigdon,
Christian Overland, Joe Schultz, Ed Penet

Commissioners Absent: Ron Rupert

Staff Present: Richard Murphy, Planner I
Cristin Moody, HDC Assistant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Prebys (Second: Penet) moves to approve the agenda as
submitted.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None

PUBLIC HEARING - None

OLD BUSINESS

One South Huron, Action Item

Applicant: Bill Bohlen, Director, Ypsilanti Department of Public Works
(Present)

 Dave Strenski, Ypsilanti Solar Initiative (Present)

Discussion: Application is for the installation of twelve solar panels on the
south wall of City Hall, just below the parapet wall. The applicant
has not yet had a structural engineer analyze the proposed installation method,
but will proceed with that step when/if approval is granted. Commissioners
would like the analysis completed before they approve the installation since they

are primarily concerned with how it will impact the historic materials and structure. Mr. Strenski explains that the brackets could be attached using quarter inch fasteners rather than the larger ones previously proposed. This approach would require more of the fasteners, but the smaller fasteners could be used in the mortar joints and would avoid damaging the bricks.

Mr. Bohlen notes that repairs to the masonry wall are planned within the next five years, as well as re-roofing. When these projects are undertaken, the panels could be moved to the roof, and the masonry wall repaired and repainted so that the installation would be reversible and would have no lasting affect on the wall.

Commissioner Prebys states that he is concerned with the "sail effect" of the panels mounted at the proposed angle. Mr. Strenski reviews his own wind load analysis, as illustrated in the application materials. He states that he believes it will not be a problem due to the positioning of the panels slightly away from the wall to allow wind to pass behind the panels. He notes that the loads will also be evaluated by a structural engineer. Commissioners emphasize the need for a structural engineer who understands historic materials. Applicants indicate that they hope to use Fitzpatrick Structural Engineers in Ann Arbor. Commissioner Rigdon states that she knows the firm and would be comfortable with its familiarity with historic materials.

Commissioner Prebys asks about the educational value of a project that has a thirty year payback. Mr. Strenski states that the calculation for this time frame assumes that the cost of electricity will remain the same. If the cost increases, the payback time would shorten. Mr. Bohlen notes that the cost part of the equation is less applicable in this project because the installation and material will be paid for by grants and donations.

Commissioner Overland asks if there is any way this demonstration project can be made more relevant to residential property owners for use on a house. Commissioner Penet agrees that this project seems specific to the downtown area and wonders about the value for residential neighborhood applications, although he feels it would work well as a billboard for solar energy in general. Applicants agree that residential applications have different issues, but that since the currently proposed installation would be on a public building, this project could focus on public education in ways a private project could not.

Commissioners ask about the sign illustrated on the application materials, reading "Ypsilanti Solar Project" above the panels. Mr. Strenski states that he thought of printing the sign on vinyl and attaching with small fasteners. Commissioners suggest that if the project and sign are approved, a rigid sign material or painting it on the side of the building would be preferable to vinyl.

Commissioner Rigdon notes that all Commissioners present appear to be in agreement on the appropriateness of the project as long as the structural engineering analysis supports the proposal. But the Commission cannot give partial or conditional approval so any approval will be granted only after a professional structural analysis is completed.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Prebys) moves to table the application for work at One South Huron pending analysis of the proposed installation by a licensed, professional structural engineer to determine how the installation will affect the existing historic material.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

402 S. Huron, Action Item

Applicant: Brynn and Paul Raupagh, owners (Not Present)

Discussion: Application is for painting the exterior and installing new front doors and a transom in the existing opening.

Motion: Penet (Second: Prebys) moves to table the application for work at 402 S. Huron pending receipt of further information.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

214-216 Maple, Action Item

Applicant: Joe Ratcliff, contractor (Not Present)

Discussion: Application is for tuckpointing the foundation.

Motion: Penet (Second: Overland) moves to table the application for work at 214-216 Maple pending more complete information.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

NEW BUSINESS

206 S. Washington, Action Item

Applicant: Jim and Beth Fink, owners (Present)

Discussion: Application is for re-roofing; the material to be used is "Centennial Slate," an asphalt shingle that resembles slate. Information on the material is submitted; applicants have not chosen a shingle color. Commissioners note that any of the available colors should be acceptable. Commissioner Rigdon asks about the color of the new drip edge. Applicants point out that the trim on the house is white. Commissioner Schmiedeke suggests matching the roof instead of the trim because the roof will outlast the trim paint. A black drip edge is recommended. Commissioners ask whether soffit vents will be installed, since ridge venting is part of the proposal. It is determined that soffit vents are not possible due to interior gutters and are not necessary in this case since the house has an existing gable vent.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Overland) moves to approve the application for work at 206 S. Washington to include re-roofing. Work shall include tear off and re-roofing of all shingled areas of the house; installing black aluminum drip edge, ice guard roof felt, ninety pound closed valley ridge vents, roof flashing and aluminum counter flashing on the chimneys. No soffit vents are required and interior gutters shall be repaired in-kind as needed. The shingles shall be Certainteed Centennial Slate, in any standard color of that line.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

413 Maple, Action Item

Applicant: Richard Nation, owner (Present)

Discussion: The application is for repairs to the east side porch including removing the existing concrete steps, and replacing with wooden steps and railings to match those on the front porch.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Penet) moves to approve the application for work at 413 Maple to include installation of a new side porch on east side of house, trim, details and paint colors to match the existing front porch. Five inch wide half round gutters shall be installed on the main east side roof line as well as the porch roof to prevent water damage to the newly installed steps. Water damaged clapboards on the east wall shall be replaced in kind with matching cedar planks installed with the same exposure as existing. All work shall comply with specifications in the Porch Fact Sheet.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material and #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

200 W. Michigan, Action Item

Applicant: David Curtis, owner, J. Neil's Mongolian Grill (Present)

Discussion: Application is for re-approval of work reviewed and previously approved in October, 2005. Staff notes that the previous application was for more extensive work and that much of it has been completed, but a few items need to be done and the previous application has expired. Remaining work includes lighting on the Michigan Avenue (south) façade, both gooseneck sign lighting as well as up-lighting on the pilasters, and duct work and venting on the roof at the rear (north side) of the building.

Motion: Overland (Second: Penet) moves to re-approve the application for work at 200 W. Michigan dated October 4, 2005 to include the installation of gooseneck fixtures to light the signs, as indicated in the architectural drawings dated August 8, 2007. Up-lighting of the pilasters shall be incorporated into the cornice above the sign and not into the brick pilasters. The gooseneck lighting shall have a conduit incorporated in the cornice above the sign and shall not penetrate the brick wall. The ductwork and ventilation stack shall be added to the roof at the north (rear) side of the building and shall be painted blue to match the existing elevator shaft.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #8 – Preserve archeological resources; #9 – Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material; #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

6 S. Washington, Action Item

Applicant: Tim Bowman, contractor (Not Present)

Discussion: Application is for replacement of three doors and their frames with steel service doors. The installation would include panic bars, self closers, thresholds, weather seal and painting the doors to match the existing façade or enamel panels.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Penet) moves to table the application for work at 6 S. Washington pending further information as to the specific location of the doors to be replaced and the style of the proposed new doors.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

312 N. River, Action Item

Applicant: Dave Strenski, Ypsilanti Food Coop (Present)

Discussion: Application is for the installation of one solar panel to the roof to add to the existing array of four panels. The center parapet wall, to which the existing panels are attached, does not have enough space for the fifth panel due to a chimney obstructing the sun exposure. The applicant would like to remove the non-functioning chimney and level it off to the same height as the parapet wall, so that the fifth panel could be added to the row without obstruction. Or, if that is not possible, the installation would be carried out as proposed in the application, which would involve removing the existing solar panels from the wall and installing all five panels using a clamp system attached to the chimney. The row of panels would sit out in front of the west side of the wall and chimney with feet that rest on the roof. Commissioners agree that the chimney should not be removed if it is not necessary for the installation.

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Penet) moves to approve the application for work at 312 N. River to include the addition of a fifth solar panel to the existing four panel array on the roof. Existing panels shall be moved and all five panels shall be installed two feet southeast of the existing placement, on the south side of the chimney using attachment system described in application materials.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

210 Washtenaw, Action Item

Applicant: Mark Materba, contractor (Present)

Discussion: The application is for paint colors on the trim and a small area of wood siding. The brick and stucco portions of the house are not to be painted. The work has already been largely completed and photographs of the trim colors as they currently appear are reviewed. Commissioners agree that the yellow used on the soffits and fascia is inappropriately vivid. Commissioner Prebys suggests that the yellow color be toned down a shade or two. Commissioners agree that the green color on the wood siding is appropriate. Applicant proposes alternate yellow colors from the Benjamin Moore color palette in more muted shades of yellow. Commissioners agree that any color within the range proposed would be acceptable.

Motion: Prebys (Second: Penet) moves to approve the application for work at 210 Washtenaw to include painting the wood siding in a color similar to Benjamin Moore 447 (Holiday Wreath) and the remaining trim in any of the colors listed between numbers HC-7 through HC-12 on the Benjamin Moore chart.

The following Secretary of the Interior Standards were used in making this decision: #10 – New work shall be removable.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

STUDY ITEMS

220 N. Huron, Study Item

Applicant: Karen Nickels, Ypsilanti Historical Society (Present)

Discussion: The Historical Museum was required to have a site plan review due to the new handicap accessible entrance addition on the north side of the building. The review revealed that the Museum is not in compliance with parking requirements. The Zoning Board of Appeals has granted a variance to allow the existing ten parking spaces in place of the twenty-three required, but with the condition that six additional spaces will be added within two years. The Museum has an agreement with the Presbyterian Church, directly across Huron Street, to use up to ten of their parking spaces at any time, except for Sundays. The proposal under review for this study item is for expanding the existing lot at the Museum by six spaces. The application materials include a sketch of the proposed parking lot expansion, which would involve paving what remains of the south side yard. Commissioner Prebys asks if the variance requirements will be met by the agreement with the church. Staff explains that according to the ordinance, off site parking within 300 feet is allowed if the applicant owns the property or has a permanent easement. Although the Historical Society does not meet these requirements, a variance to these requirements could possibly be obtained from the ZBA. Commissioners would prefer parking shared with the church and other adjacent businesses

rather than an expansion of parking at the site and would not approve the application as presented.

OTHER BUSINESS

Administrative Approvals

- **331 Oak** Re-roofing

Motion: Rigdon (Second: Prebys) moves to approve the administrative approvals.

Approval: Unanimous. Action carried.

Property Monitoring

- **105 W. Michigan** – Unapproved banner sign has been removed.
- **107 E. Cross** – Appeal to SHPO of staff decision to not place application before HDC was settled / withdrawn; applicant will complete application by paying fee, and item will appear on HDC agenda to be decided.
- **210 Washtenaw** – Painting begun without HDC approval; staff contacted contractors and instructed to apply.
- **213 Arcade** – Staff sent owner letter for front door installed without approval. Owner has contacted staff to ask about HDC process.
- **631 N. River** – Long-term issue of roof damage still not resolved; Building Department has issued citation and will be seeking remedy in court. Building Official has been informed that HDC would prefer repair of property to demolition, though demolition was approved, but never acted upon, in the past.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – None

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes from the August 21, 2007 meeting.

Motion: Penet (Second: Overland) moves to approve the minutes of August 21, 2007 as presented.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion carries.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Prebys (Second: Rigdon) moves to adjourn the meeting.

Approval: Unanimous. Motion Carries.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:00 PM