



MINUTES

City of Ypsilanti HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Tuesday, April 27, 2021
7:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairperson Pettit Video/telephone usage instructions given for potential attendees
Meeting called to order at 7:05pm

Commissioners Present: Alex Pettit – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
Erika Lindsay - Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
James Chesnut – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti
James Ratzlaff – Washtenaw County, City of Ypsilanti

Commissioners Absent: Anne Stevenson and Amy Swift

Staff Present: Scott Slagor, Preservation Planner
Nancy Hare-Dickerson, Commission Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Discussion: Slagor: Staff added 324 Oak as a study item.

Motion: Lindsay (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift
Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS—none

PUBLIC HEARING—none

OLD BUSINESS

222 N River

**Solar array.*

Applicants: William Crawford, contractor – not present
Zakary Thompson, project representative - present

Discussion: *[Per Staff Review Note: The application was tabled at the April 13, 2021 meeting citing a lack of information. Specifically, the Commission asked for a shadow study and information on the location of the panels.]*

[Discussion ensued regarding the requested information listed above]

Thompson: Indicated that the proposed south-facing placement listed in the reference materials was viewed as the most ideal location because it would get the most sunlight hours. Stated that they could move the panels to other areas but they may not get as much production.

[Discussion as to relevant Fact Sheets; the view of solar panels in relation to the primary street; the importance of having the sun and shadow study in decision-making]

Chesnut: Asked about an array that stops short of the ridge west of the chimney *[reference materials]*.

Thompson: Stated that that is the initial proposal; that it is not the final design of the system, which does not happen until all of the permitting comes back. Stated that they would make sure that they are symmetrical from the chimney.

Slagor: Staff explained to applicant that if the application is approved, that any design changes from what the Commission has viewed and approved would have to be submitted as an amendment.

Thompson: Acknowledged.

[Further clarifying discussion continued as to filler panels, aesthetics]

Chesnut: Asked about an option of making the west array run from bottom to ridge and then putting the step in the east array *[reference materials]*.

Pettit: Stated – meaning swapping those two groupings *[reference materials]*.

Thompson: Stated that they could swap the grouping if that is what is needed. Stated that it would not affect their work either way if the Commission feels that that would make it more aesthetically pleasing.

Chesnut: Stated an opinion that that would look better; that it would give a fuller look on the main street-side façade.

[Procedural discussion as to motion language]

[Thompson]: In noting that the final design has not been selected and can be flexible, the application was amended to include two options of where the panels could go, essentially reversing the configuration.

Motion: Chesnut (second: Lindsay) moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 222 N River in the application dated March 18, 2021, for the installation of two solar arrays on the south roof slope, using LG NeON solar panels in black, and Ironridge anchor system as specified. The inverter, disconnect, and other power apparatuses shall be located on the rear east elevation. Approval is granted with the understanding that the work is removable and although visible, the panels are not directly street-facing and have minimal impact on the historic setting. Two options were discussed on April 27, 2021. The preferred option is option [A] where the full solar array is on the west side of the chimney, which is the street side of the house, and the shorter solar array is on the east side of the chimney. Option [B] is as shown in the application with the smaller array being on the west side of the chimney, which is also acceptable but not the preferred option.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9- Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift

Motion carried.

39 E Cross

**Rooftop patio improvements.*

Applicants: Keith Gipfert, contractor - present

Sandee French, owner - present

Discussion: *[Per Staff Review Notes: The applicant wishes to build a roof over an existing second floor patio atop the rear ell of the building. Some of this work has already been started without HDC approval.*

The application was tabled from the April 13, 2021 HDC meeting citing a lack of information. Specifically, the HDC wanted more information regarding: "...materiality with regards to decking and/or surface material for decking, roof material with the recommendation that an alternative be sought; the lighting - would like to reevaluate the up-lighting as proposed and see spec. sheets for lighting proposed and would like to understand the position of the screen as proposed..."

Pettit: Indicated that the applicant submitted additional information in regards to clarifying the choice for decking material.

Gipfert: Stated that it is a teak mat decking, real wood, natural finish *[reference materials]*.

Pettit: Asked if there is a plan to replace some existing light posts that have lights on them.

Gipfert: Confirmed.

Pettit: Asked what the new fixtures would look like.

Gipfert: Stated that it is the same but with a dual head instead of single. Stated that it is like a bell looking fixture.

Pettit: Initiated discussion regarding the following: color and temperature of proposed lighting; clarification of proposed up-lighting; proposed roof material; Dark Sky initiative compliance; clarification of screen wall location, reference drawing.

Chesnut: Initiated discussion regarding the appropriateness of the proposed roof material for the Historic District.

Pettit: Asked about plans to coat/paint the wood structure *[reference photo]*.

Gipfert: Indicated plans to leave it the natural cedar tone.

Pettit: Discussed HDC guidelines requiring the coating/painting of exposed wood surfaces.

Gipfert: Acknowledged.

Ratzlaff: Asked if the proposed lighting has dimming controls.

Gipfert: Confirmed.

[Further clarifying discussion as to proposed LEDs as relates to dimmable vs non-dimmable considerations]

Motion: Lindsay (second: Chesnut) moved to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 39 E Cross as submitted in the application dated March 22, 2021, for construction of a roof over the rear second floor outdoor seating area as submitted with the conditions that objects mounted to the building are mounted to the mortar joints rather than brick, that the wood components of the structure be finished in paint or an opaque stain and that the composite siding portions of the structure have a smooth finish, rather than faux wood-grain. It is recommended that the materials utilize colors that are similar to or compatible with colors already used on the building. One other condition is the use of the metal roof option. Lighting shall match the requirements of the HDC Lighting Fact Sheet; shielded and a light color temperature of less than 3000k.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9- Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

#10- New work shall be removable.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift
Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

317 S Huron

**Window replacement.*

Applicants: Brent Hall, contractor - present

Discussion: Pettit: Stated that the application is for window replacement work. Asked applicant to walk the Commission through the application.

Hall: Indicated that in an upstairs bedroom, there is an entry door that leads to a flat roof and a double hung window next to it. Stated that the plan is to reframe the opening by removing the door and the double hung window, reframing the opening and putting in a double casement window in its place *[indicated safety reasons]*.

[Commission review of photo materials/clarifying discussion]

Chesnut: Initiated clarification discussion regarding window type.

Hall: Discussed reasons for the proposed double casement window rather than double hung.

[Continued discussion as to appropriateness of proposed installation]

Motion: Chesnut (second: Ratzlaff) moved to approve and issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 317 S Huron as submitted in the application completed April 20, 2021 for replacement of a window and door with a double-casement window on the east elevation as specified. The new window shall be an Andersen A Series wood window with composite cladding. Approval is conditioned that the new window be appropriately trimmed, and the new wall space be clad to match the existing siding.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#9- Contemporary designs shall be compatible and shall not destroy significant original material.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift

Motion carried.

407 E Cross

**Window replacements.*

Applicants: Stewart Beal, owner - not present

Discussion: Pettit: Indicated that this is a situation where it appears that every window in the home was replaced with a vinyl window.

Slagor: Provided an overview of his understanding of the work that was done.

[Commission review of materials and discussion re: logistics of the circumstances]

Pettit: Summarized that windows were replaced with vinyl windows, which would not have normally been approved for installation in the Historic District. Stated that the original windows do seem to still be on site.

[Procedural discussion]

Motion: Lindsay (second: Chesnut) moved to deny the application for work at 407 E Cross as completed and submitted for review on April 19, 2021 with the finding of an adverse impact. The original six-over-six windows were a character-defining feature of the building and the new windows do not match the original windows in design or materiality and are not compatible with the character of the Historic District.

Secretary of the Interior Standards:

#2- Do not destroy original character.

#5- Preserve distinctive features.

#6- Repair don't replace, replacements shall match the original.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift

Motion carried.

STUDY ITEMS

302 Oak

**Garage.*

Applicant: Barry LaRue

Discussion: Applicant presented drawings/photos/product information and discussed replacing an existing garage/storage building with a proposed two-story garage/shop space on the property.

119 S Washington

**Roof/gutter/window/skylight replacement.*

Applicant: Aaron Johnson

Discussion: Applicant discussed the necessity for roof and gutter replacement on the home due to leakage, a secondary leak due to a window positioned too close to the roofline and replacement of a pre-existing skylight towards the back of the house.

324 Oak

**Decking/garage.*

Applicant: Troy Abrahams

Discussion: Applicant presented drawings/product information and discussed removing the existing back deck, turning it into a finished multi-purpose room, and then adding a proposed three-car garage extending to the back of the home.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS—none

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Property Monitoring

Commissioners/Staff discussed property issues under review.

2. Updates from Staff—none

3. Commissioner Comments

Commissioners, who wished, shared additional comments.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS—none

HOUSEKEEPING BUSINESS

Approval of the minutes of April 13, 2021

Motion: Lindsay (second: Chesnut) moved to approve the minutes of April 13, 2021, as submitted.

Roll Call Vote - Ayes: Commissioners Pettit, Lindsay, Chesnut, Ratzlaff

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioners Stevenson and Swift

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Pettit adjourned the meeting, citing the end of the agenda with no further items to discuss.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:48 p.m.

Full Minutes Prepared By: Nancy Hare-Dickerson