

CITY OF MUSKEGON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 1, 2022

S. Radtke called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Radtke, D. Gregersen, T. Emory, G. Borgman

MEMBERS ABSENT: J. Huss (excused), K. George (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: J. Pesch

OTHERS PRESENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 4, 2022 was made by T. Emory, supported by G. Borgman and approved with S. Radtke. D. Gregersen, T. Emory, and G. Borgman voting aye.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Updates on Recent Topics – Staff updated the HDC on the following topics:

- **1347 Peck Street** – G. Borgman noted that the new fence discussed at the October meeting had been constructed. J. Pesch added that the owner’s plan was to construct the fence in phases, and the fence would be extended around the rest of the front yard in the spring and/or summer of 2023 using the same style of fencing that met the HDC’s local standards.
- **1561 Peck Street** – J. Pesch summarized the history of work at this property dating back to 2018 and the ensuing efforts for enforcement of the HDC’s motion; the owner recently completed work to address the violation. The board agreed that this work was satisfactory and that the matter be considered resolved.
- **1586 Peck Street** – Commissioners asked about the status of the work that was completed without approval at this property and had been reviewed at the July and September meetings. J. Pesch explained that HDC approvals are generally valid for one year following the date of issuance, but that he was expecting a building permit application for the porch. He planned to stay in contact with the property owner so that all future work follows the HDC’s motion.
- **621 W. Western Avenue** – In September, the Planning Commission granted a departure from the Form Based Code’s requirements to allow the reflective glass window on the W. Western Avenue elevation to remain. J. Pesch attended the meeting, and made sure that the Planning Commission was aware of the HDC’s motion from the June meeting that granted approval with the conditions that a tint and additional

mullions be applied to the glass. The property owner also agreed to remove decals covering windows on the 7th Street elevation that were in violation of Form Based Code requirements. The HDC discussed the merits of good storefront design and the history of this building and neighboring buildings on W. Western Avenue. Staff mentioned the new facade grant program that the DDA was creating.

- **390 W. Muskegon Avenue** – Staff contacted the property owner about the new patio being out of compliance with the HDC’s approval issued at the May meeting. J. Pesch noted that their application to the HDC mentioned that the patio would be “flush to ground” and that there seemed to be a lack of clarity as to what this meant. The HDC concluded that their motion called for no more than five inches of the patio being visible above grade. In discussing the appropriate means of addressing this, it was agreed that the grade of the yard could be changed to make the height of the patio compliant with the HDC’s motion, or landscaping could be installed to screen the view of the patio.
- **1624 Jefferson Street** – The board discussed a fence that had been installed at this property without HDC approval. The fence was built with the “good side” facing away from the neighbors, but both adjacent property owners agreed to this configuration. The board acknowledged that the fence should have received some form of HDC approval prior to construction, even if it was Staff approval of the fence. It was also agreed that the fence was located a considerable distance from the sidewalk which made it less visible from the street, and that the fence would look exactly the same had either neighbor constructed it with the “good side” facing out. The HDC had no issue with the fence as it was constructed.
- **97 Iona Avenue** – J. Pesch reported that vinyl siding had been installed on this house despite the HDC denying the request at the April meeting. At that time, the HDC also approved removal of the existing wood siding on the house and installation of replacement siding of a composite material with the same reveal as the original siding, maintaining all moldings and profiles. The vinyl siding was installed without the required building permit, so Staff was anticipating a building permit application and would carry out the necessary enforcement action following receipt of that application. Commissioners were frustrated that the work had been completed and voiced concern over the potential damage that comes with installation of vinyl siding on top of wood siding.
- **Dangerous Buildings in the Historic Districts** – The HDC had discussed the possibility of mailing owners of structures on the City’s dangerous building list regarding their property’s location in a historic district. At the time of the meeting, Staff was unable to find an example of a letter that had previously been sent to property owners, but planned to share it with Commissioners.
- **Realtors Contacted in 2022** – J. Pesch stated that he had contacted 17 local realtors regarding 17 historic district properties that had been listed for sale and provided information about the HDC review process. The efforts have been well-received, and Staff will continue to reach out as properties go on the market.
- **1292 Jefferson** – G. Borgman mentioned that there was renewed interest in the potential sale and moving of the Nelson House from its present location next to St. Jean’s Church.

Discussion of HDC Goals – With a number of people needing to leave, the board agreed to move the discussion of the year’s activities to the December meeting.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.