

**CITY OF MUSKEGON  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING**

DATE OF MEETING: Tuesday, July 7, 2020  
TIME OF MEETING: 4:00 p.m.  
PLACE OF MEETING: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofMuskegon>

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AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Election of Chair and Vice Chair
- III. Approval of Minutes of the regular meeting of June 2, 2020
- IV. New Business
  - Case 2020-11 – 1218 Ransom – Sign
  - Case 2020-12 – 123 W. Larch – Fence
  - Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana – Windows and New Construction
  - Case 2020-14 – 511 W. Clay – New Construction (Porch Roof)
- V. Old Business
- VI. Other Business
  - Mechanical Equipment Local Standards Draft
  - HDC Staff Approval Fencing Materials
- VII. Adjourn

*“We admire that which is old not because it is old, but because it is beautiful.” Winston Churchill*

AMERICAN DISABILITY ACT POLICY FOR ACCESS TO OPEN MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION AND ANY OF ITS COMMITTEES OR SUBCOMMITTEES

The City of Muskegon will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities who want to attend the meeting, upon twenty-four hour notice to the City of Muskegon. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City of Muskegon by writing or calling the following: Ann Marie Cummings, City Clerk at 933 Terrace Street, Muskegon, MI 49440 or by calling (231) 724-6705 or TTY/TDD: Dial 7-1-1 and request that representative dial 231-724-6705

### **III. MINUTES**

#### **CITY OF MUSKEGON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION MINUTES**

**June 2, 2020**

S. Radtke called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: A. Riegler, S. Radtke, K. George, K. Panozzo

MEMBERS ABSENT: L. Wood, T. Painter, T. Emory excused

STAFF PRESENT: J. Pesch, R. Cummins

OTHERS PRESENT: J. Hoff, 1122 Terrace; J. Weaver and J. Miller, 579 W. Clay; L. King, 1305 Jefferson

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

This was postponed until the next meeting due to the absence of three board members.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 5, 2020 was made by K. George, supported by A. Riegler and unanimously approved.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Case 2020-08 – 1122 Terrace Street (Siding and Windows).** Applicant: Josh and Jen Hoff. District: McLaughlin. Current Function: Residential. J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to replace the cedar shake covering the exterior of the third floor with a polymer shingle of a similar appearance and to replace six (6) windows – three on the north side and three on the south side of the house – on the third floor with wood windows of a similar size and appearance. J. Hoff was in attendance to represent the case.

J. Hoff explained that the windows he was requesting to install would be very similar to the windows on the front of the house. He described the type of siding proposed for the house and noted that it comes in varying widths which allows it to better follow the contours of the wall much like the original cedar shake, allowing for preservation of the flares and bends going into the windows. The proposed siding has a blend of three shades to create a more natural appearance when installed.

S. Radtke stated that the board would discuss the request in two parts – the shingles, and the windows – starting with the shingles. A. Riegler stated that it would help to have a sample of the siding material but that, considering the circumstances, she thought the material looked good. K. George

stated that she had been impressed with past work that has been done on the house and did not have an issue with the choice of replacement materials. K. Panozzo asked if the proposed shingles were the same material as the new roof on the house that was previously approved. J. Hoff stated that the roof is made up of aluminum panels and paint made specifically for weather. He stated that the materials chosen were selected to retain the details and represent the original materials of the house.

The board moved on to discuss the replacement windows. J. Pesch stated that, based on a review of the HDC's documents, the windows on the upper floors that are covered in the photos included in the Staff Report were plain, double hung windows. J. Hoff stated that those not already replaced with plexiglass were single-pane windows, and that he was looking to replace them to save on energy costs. The replacement windows used elsewhere on the house are solid oak with aluminum cladding on the exterior. A. Riegler stated that as long as the existing windows were being replaced with like materials and within a very close dimension to the original they could be approved.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to replace the cedar shake covering the exterior of the third floor with a polymer shingle of a similar appearance and to replace six (6) windows (three on the north side and three on the south side) on the third floor of the house with wood windows of a similar size and appearance as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by A. Riegler and supported by K. George. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Case 2020-09 – 579 W. Clay Avenue (Shed). Applicant: Jennifer Weaver/J&J Corner Properties, LLC. District: Clay-Western. Current Function: Vacant Lot.** J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to construct a 10' x 20', wood frame shed. Drawings of the shed were provided. J. Pesch stated that Staff recently approved a 6'-tall, wood privacy fence at this property that would screen the proposed shed from the street. J. Weaver and J. Miller were in attendance to represent the case.

A. Riegler asked about any potential zoning issues with building a shed on a vacant lot. J. Pesch stated that there was an option to combine the lots. A. Riegler stated that the shed alone would be out of scale with the surrounding buildings, but that it would work in the neighborhood as an accessory structure. K. George stated that she was less concerned about the design and size of the shed because it was not prefabricated and because of the varying scale of the structures in the immediate area and larger district. K. Panozzo stated that the shed would add to the neighborhood, and A. Riegler concurred, stating that the shed would stand out by not mimicking a historic structure. S. Radtke noted that the shed would not be a permanent structure and could be replaced with a larger structure in the future.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to construct a 10' x 20', wood frame shed as presented in the June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 HDC Staff Report as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by K. Panozzo and supported by K. George. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Case 2020-10 – 1305 Jefferson Street (Siding). Applicant: Lateesha King. District: Campus. Current Function: Residential.** J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to install vinyl siding on the exterior of the house. L. King was in attendance to represent the case.

L. King explained that the wood siding currently installed on the house was chipping and was expensive to upkeep. She stated that the vinyl siding would be the same color as the existing painted wood siding.

A. Riegler asked if the existing accent siding in the gable would be retained. L. King stated that the all the brick would remain and that only the siding that is currently painted grey would be covered with new vinyl siding. K. Panozzo asked what material would be installed near the peaks of the roof. L. King stated that it would remain the same, as the siding is in good condition in that area. A. Riegler stated that she was hesitant to approve vinyl siding on a house with as much detail as this one because it would be difficult to keep the existing trim without impacting the appearance of layering vinyl siding over the existing siding. She mentioned the possibility of looking into other siding options. K. Panozzo stated that she understood the maintenance problems with wood siding, but agreed that the appearance of the siding and trim would be negatively affected with the proposed change. A. Riegler expressed concern about the long term condition of the wood siding if it were to be covered with vinyl siding and encouraged looking into alternative materials or getting an estimate for painting the existing wood siding. L. King stated that previous owners never installed gutters on the house, which has led to issues with dry rotting; she noted that painting would likely cost less than residing, but would require repainting every few years. A. Riegler stated that the board occasionally approves vinyl siding on houses without as much detail or corners, but that there is also an unfortunate misconception that vinyl siding is maintenance-free.

S. Radtke noted that the HDC had to follow their local standards. The board reviewed the relevant sections of the local standards for vinyl siding that were included in the Staff Report.

A motion to deny the request to install vinyl siding on the exterior of the house was made by K. Panozzo and supported by S. Radtke. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### OLD BUSINESS

None

#### OTHER BUSINESS

J. Pesch provided ordinance sections from other Michigan cities' historic district commissions' local standards dealing with installation of mechanical equipment as well as a proposed amendment to the City of Muskegon HDC local standards from around 2003 that dealt with the issue. Staff will draft an addition to the HDC local standards that addresses outdoor mechanical equipment for review by the board at the next meeting.

Time was allotted for public comment with contact information provided. There were no comments from the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.  
JP

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

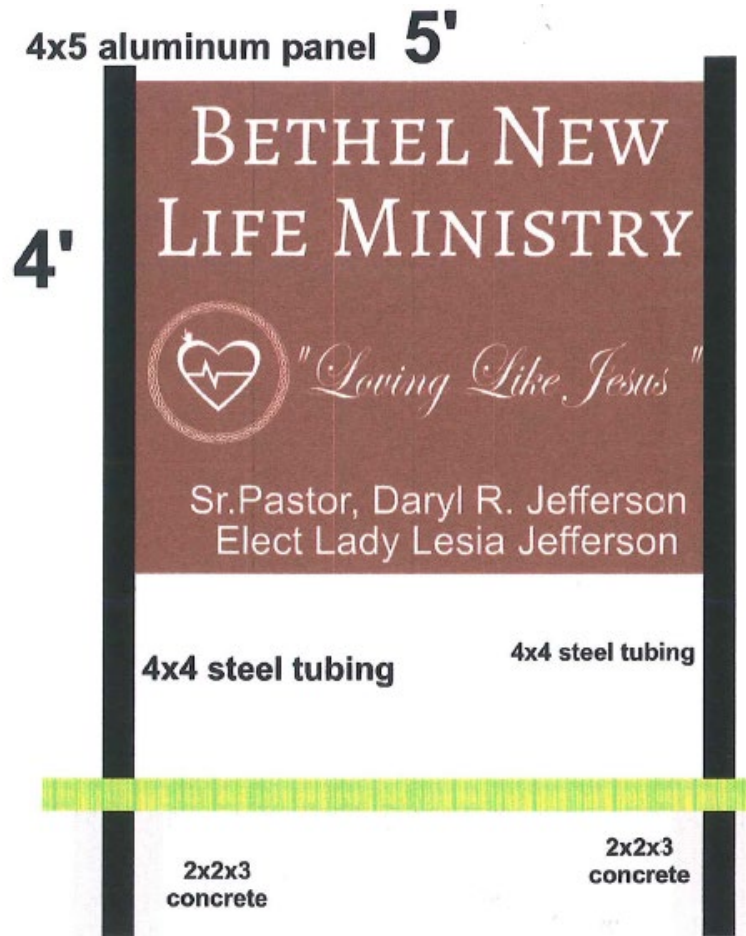
**Case 2020-11 – 1218 Ransom – Sign**  
**Applicant: All Signs LLC (representing Bethel New Life Ministry)**  
**District: McLaughlin**  
**Current Function: Institutional**

#### **Discussion**

The applicant is seeking approval to install a new, 4'x5' aluminum panel sign supported by 4"x4" steel posts along the Ransom Street side of the property.



View of structure looking north from Ransom Street



Proposed sign design



View of proposed sign location from Ransom and Delaware

## **Standards (Abbreviated)**

### **A. Letters**

1. Style. Uniform lettering style shall be used throughout the sign to avoid incoherence and otherwise incompatible letter form combinations which may be determined as inappropriate by the Historic District Commission. The use of serified (footed) letter styles is preferred for certain historical buildings; however, Gothic letter forms (those without serifs) and script letter forms may be acceptable to the Historic District Commission dependent upon the style and period of architecture represented by the building involved.

2. Size. "Letters should be subordinate to the background area". The maximum allowable height of capital letter forms shall not exceed two-thirds the height of the background area on which it appears (the background area is, in turn governed by the sign size and location restrictions which follow) or shall be reduced to the size declared appropriate by the Historic District Commission, dependent upon the actual signable wall area or sign size, location and viewing distance.

...

E. Number of Signs: The maximum allowable number of business identification signs per street frontage per establishment shall be limited to one (1). Whereas additional directory or directional signs which point out parking lots and other specific services are requested, the Historic District Commission shall determine the appropriateness and building/site compatibility of such exceptions.

F. Shape and Form: The physical form of a sign shall be proportioned in massiveness and scale to the building for which it is meant. All shapes shall be simple (square, rectangle...) and relate directly to the architectural features of the immediate and surrounding historic structures.

G. Location and Size: Sign use, sign type and location may be dictated by established district zoning ordinances. Whether those ordinance requirements are established or nonexistent, the following standards shall apply and prevail for all signs used within the City's designated historic districts.

#### **1. General:**

a. No sign may be erected upon or within any dedicated public easement or right-of-way without the expressed permission of the Muskegon City Commission.

b. No sign shall be placed so as to conceal, disfigure, or otherwise violate any architectural features of a building.

c. Sign size shall be visually compatible with the scale of the building for which it is meant. No sign shall be located in such a manner or position as to affect adversely the use and enjoyment of neighboring historic district properties.

Ground signs. These shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet per sign face. No such sign shall exceed four (4) feet in height from ground level. To maintain consistency with the objectives and standards of this Policy, the Historic District Commission may require a smaller sign face and specific location.

### **Deliberation**

I move that the HDC (approve/deny) the request to install a new, 4'x5' aluminum panel sign supported by 4"x4" steel posts along the Ransom Street side of the property as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained.

**Case 2020-12 – 123 W. Larch – Fence**  
**Applicant: Debra Warren**  
**District: Jefferson**  
**Current Function: Residential**

**Discussion**

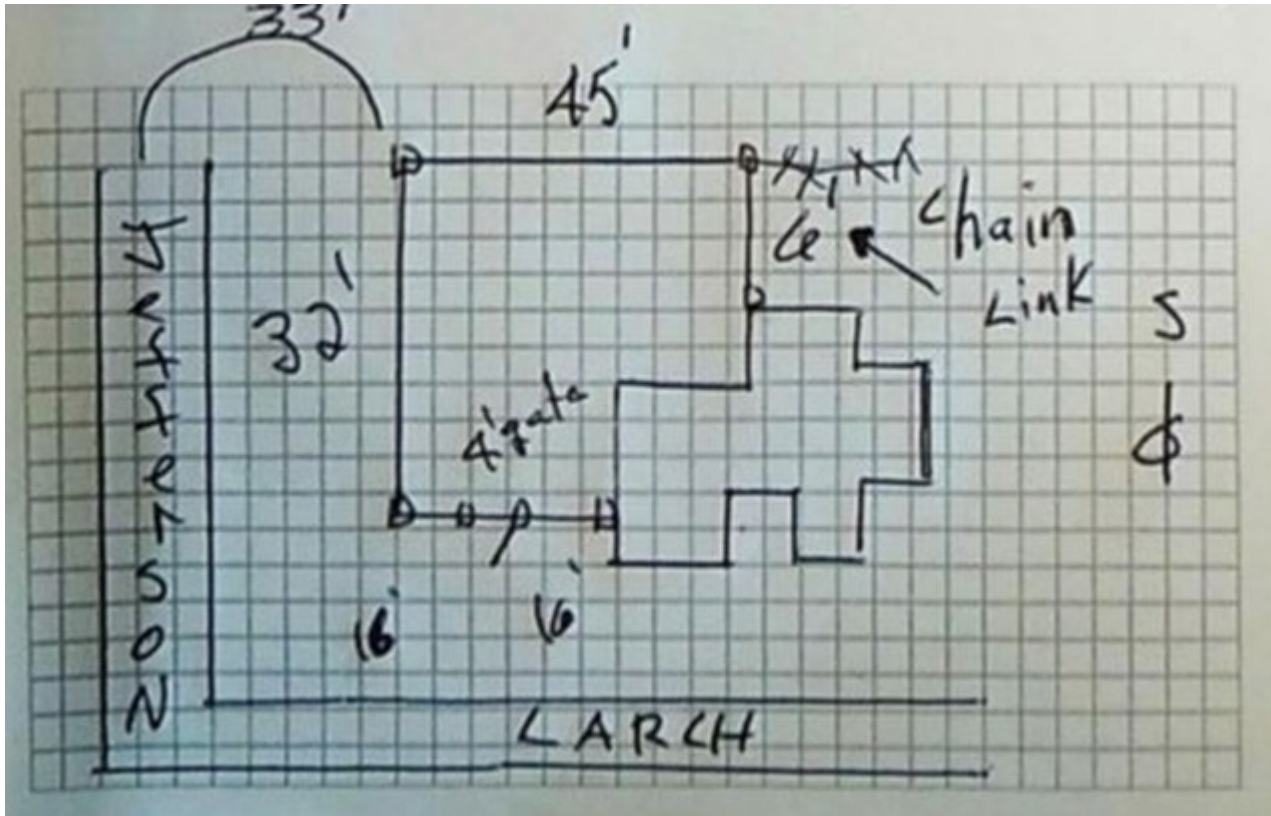
The applicant is seeking approval to replace an existing chain link fence with a six-foot tall cedar stockade fence, which will extend to the sidewalk. The applicant also plans to add a four-foot tall cedar picket fence around the remainder of the yard (see below site plan for the fence layout).



View of house from W. Larch Avenue



View of house from Jefferson Street. Proposed 6' fence extends 36' to edge of sidewalk from house



Proposed stockade fence layout (picket fence not depicted)

## Standards

### **General**

Fences and gates are an extension of the architecture of a home. They should be compatible in style and material. They should be appropriate to the size and scale of the structure. They, therefore, require review and approval by the Historic District Commission.

Sometimes it is necessary to use fencing for other than decorative purposes, such as marking boundaries, privacy, screening unsightly areas, or security. Fencing for utilitarian purposes sometimes requires fencing materials which are not of the period or character of the house. Nonconforming fencing materials may be considered for use in the back of the structure.

### **Fence Guidelines**

When building wood fencing, consideration should be given to the kind of wood best suited for the project, adequate post foundations, weatherproofing, color, and amount of maintenance required. Simple variations of wood picket-style fencing are appropriate to many period homes. Wood fences must be painted to complement or contrast the colors of the house. Pressure treated wood shall be painted no later than one year after installation.

Iron fencing is an appropriate option for Victorian-era homes. Iron fencing was often modest in proportion, seldom exceeding four feet in height. A popular standard was 36 inches.

Fencing materials such as split rails, stone, and brick may be considered if they reflect the feeling of the home in material and character.

Chain-link and similar utilitarian fencing, such as industrial fencing, wire mesh, and barbed wire, is not permitted in the front of a structure.

Hedges and natural fencing are possible alternatives to fences.

### Fence Standards

LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS: (Please see the Supplementary Graphics sheets) Conforming fences not over four feet (4') in height are permitted between the property line and half way between the front and rear setback lines.

Corner lots will be considered to have two front yards, except that non-conforming fences higher than 4' will be permitted immediately behind the existing side setback line (rather than half way between the front and rear).

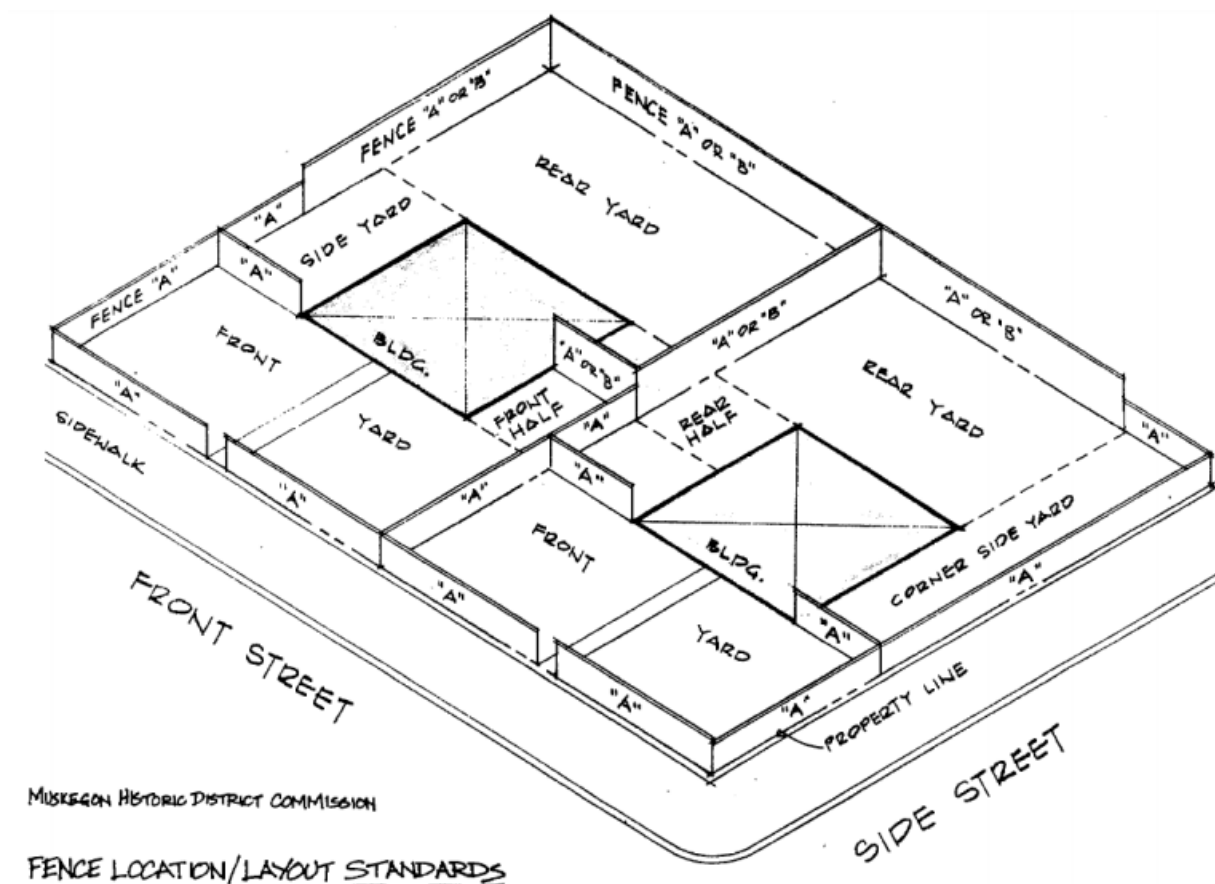
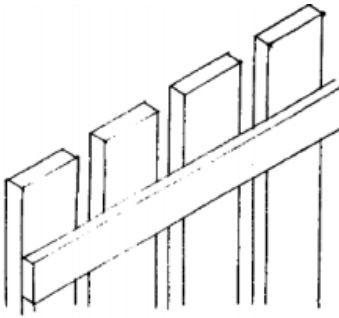
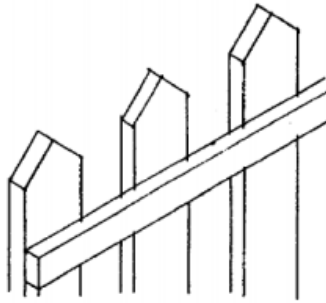


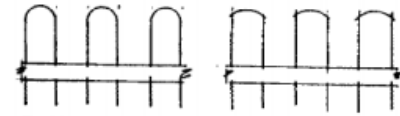
ILLUSTRATION COURTESY CITY OF KALAMAZOO



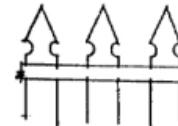
BOARD FENCE



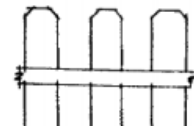
PICKET



ROUND



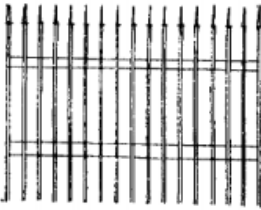
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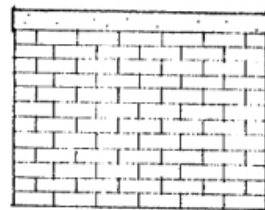
DOG-EARED

ALTERNATE TOPS

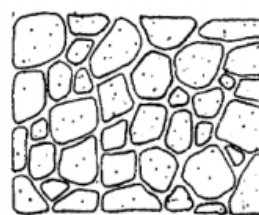
- MAXIMUM HEIGHT: 48"
- SPACE BETWEEN PICKETS MUST BE LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO PICKET WIDTH
- WOOD TREATED FOR CONTACT WITH THE GROUND IS RECOMMENDED
- POST HOLES SHOULD FILLED WITH COMPACTED GRAVEL, RATHER THAN CONCRETE
- OTHER VARIATIONS POSSIBLE
- MUST BE CONSTRUCTED WITH THE "GOOD SIDE" FACING OUT.



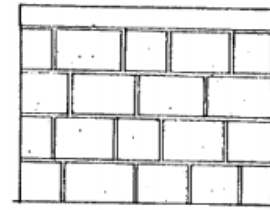
IRON



BRICK

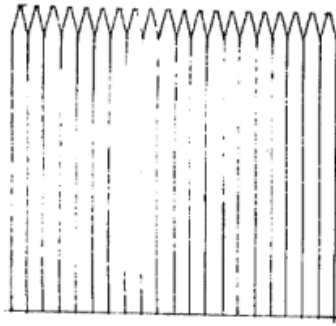


UNCUT FIELD STONE

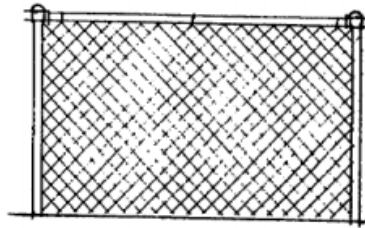


CUT STONE

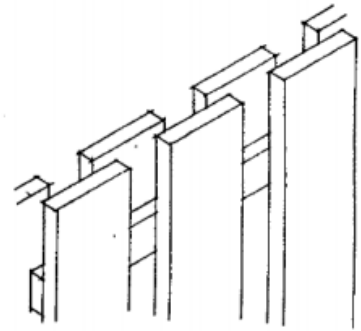
TYPE "A"  
CONFORMING WALLS & FENCES



STOCKADE



CHAIN-LINK/CYCLONE

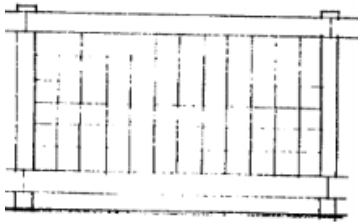


OBSCURING

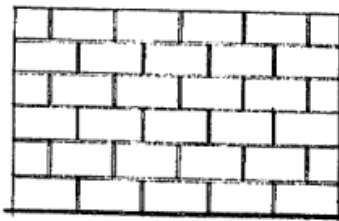
TYPE "B"

### CONFORMING REAR LOT FENCES

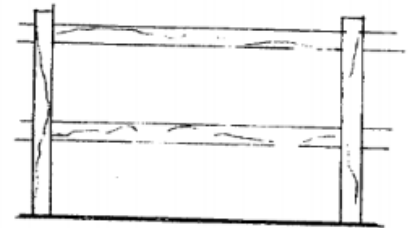
- ALTERNATE TOPS FOR STOCKADE FENCE PERMITTED
- UP TO 6'-0" HIGH



WIDE MESH



CONCRETE BLOCK



SPLIT RAIL

### NON-CONFORMING FENCES

CONSTRUCTION MUST BE APPROVED BY  
THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Deliberation

I move that the HDC (approve/deny) the request to replace an existing chain link fence with a six-foot tall cedar stockade fence and add a four-foot tall cedar picket fence around the remainder of the yard as presented in the July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 HDC Staff Report as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained.

**Case 2020-13 – 100 Diana – Windows and New Construction**  
**Applicant: Antonio Figueroa**  
**District: McLaughlin**  
**Current Function: Residential**

**Discussion**

The applicant is seeking approval to 1) demolish and rebuild the 8'x18' room on the back of the house, 2) remove the existing wood windows and replace them with new windows, and 3) remove and rebuild the front steps to be 8'-wide. More information will be provided at the meeting.



View of the house looking east from Diana Street



View of the house and garage looking west from Diana Street



View of existing front steps



Rear view of 8'x18' room to be demolished and rebuilt



Side view of 8'x18' room to be demolished and rebuilt



Examples of existing windows proposed to be replaced with new windows

## **Standards**

### **GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

#### **Recommended**

Height - Relating the overall height of new construction to that of adjacent structures. As a general rule, construct new buildings to a height roughly equal to the average height of existing buildings from the historic period on and across the street.

Scale - Relating the size and proportions of new structures to the scale of adjacent buildings. Although a building may be much larger than its neighbors in terms of square footage, it should maintain the same scale and rhythm as the existing buildings.

Massing - Breaking up uninteresting box-like forms into smaller, varied masses such as are common on most buildings from the historic period. Variety of form and massing are elements essential to the character of the streetscape in historic districts. For example, if an infill site is large, the mass of the facade can be broken into a number of small bays.

Directional Expression - Relating the vertical, horizontal, or non-directional facade character of new buildings to the predominant directional expression of nearby buildings. Horizontal buildings can be made to relate to the more vertical adjacent structures by breaking the facade into smaller masses that conform to the primary expression of the streetscape.

Setback - Maintaining the historic facade lines of streetscape by locating front walls of new buildings in the same plane as the facades of adjacent buildings. If exceptions are made, buildings should be set back into

#### **Not Recommended**

Height - Introducing new construction that varies greatly in height (too high or too low) from older buildings in the vicinity. Extreme differences in building heights will have a detrimental visual effects on the appearance of surrounding property.

Scale - Creating buildings that in height, width, or massing violate the existing scale of the area. The new building should not disrupt the scale and rhythm of the streetscape, although it might be appropriate in a different location.

Massing - Introducing single, monolithic forms that are not relieved by variations in massing. Box-like facades and forms are intrusive when placed in a streetscape of older buildings that have varied massing and facade articulation.

Directional Expression - Creating strongly horizontal or vertical facade expressions unless compatible with the character of structures in the immediate area. A new building that does not relate well to its neighbors or to the rhythm of the streetscape because of an unbroken horizontal facade should be avoided.

Setback - Violating the existing setback pattern by placing a new building in front of or behind the historic facade line. Placing buildings at odd angles to the street, unless in an area where diverse siting already ex-

the lot rather than closer to the street. If existing setbacks vary, new buildings should conform to historic siting patterns.

Sense of Entry - Articulating the main entrances to the building with covered porches, porticos, and other pronounced architectural forms. Entries were historically raised a few steps above the grade of the property and were a prominent visual feature of the street elevation of the building.

Roof Shapes - Relating the roof forms of the new buildings to those found in the area. Although not entirely necessary, duplication of the existing or traditional roof shapes, pitches, and materials on new construction is one way of making new structures more visually compatible.

Rhythm of Openings - Respecting the recurrent alteration of wall areas with door and window elements in the facade. Also considering the width-to-height ratio of bays in the facade. The placement of openings with respect to the facade's overall composition, symmetry or balanced symmetry should be carefully studied.

Design Expression - Composing the materials, textures and colors of the new building facade to compliment adjacent facades and relating details and decorations of the new building to those of existing surrounding buildings.

Imitations - Accurate restoration of or visually compatible additions to existing buildings and former construction, contemporary architecture that well represents our own time yet, enhances the nature and character of the historic district.

ists, even if property setback is maintained, should be avoided.

Sense of Entry - Introducing facades with no strong sense of entry. Side entries or entries not defined by a porch or similar transitional element result in an incompatible "flat" first-floor facade.

Roof Shapes - Introducing roof shapes, pitches, or materials not traditionally used in the area.

Rhythm of Openings - Introducing incompatible facade patterns that upset the rhythm of openings established in surrounding structures. For example, glass walls and window and door shapes and locations which are disrespectful to the adjoining buildings.

Design Expression - Violating the existing character of the district by introducing non-compatible materials, textures, colors, details, and decoration on new buildings.

Imitations - Replicating or imitating the styles, motif, or details of older periods. Such attempts detract from the character of the district by compromising what is truly historic.

## **WINDOW, DOOR, AND EXTERIOR WOODWORK**

### **General**

These guidelines pertain only to proposed changes to the structure and do not affect existing construction.

These guidelines are primarily directed toward the front and side elevations of the structure. Greater variances and more leniency may be extended toward proposed changes to the rear elevation of the building by the Commission. All desired or proposed changes should be referred to the Historic District Commission for consideration. Extenuating circumstances, the effect upon the architecture of the particular structure together with the general effect upon the surrounding structures, variables in architectural design, or the effect upon usage and viability of the structure could dictate a variance from these guidelines.

No exterior doors, windows, or exterior woodwork shall be altered, removed, relocated, or added without Historic District Commission approval.

Existing exterior window or door casings, sills, and caps shall not be altered from the original design or appearance. Damaged or deteriorated wood shall be repaired as a first course of action. When repair is not possible, elements shall be replaced with matching wood members. Damaged or deteriorated wood elements may be replaced or covered with formed aluminum or vinyl, subject to Commission approval and provided that the original profile of the woodwork is not altered or changed.

### **Primary Windows**

Existing damaged or deteriorating window frames and sash shall be repaired as a first course of action. When repair is not possible, elements shall be replaced with matching wood members. Metal or vinyl replacement windows may be acceptable provided they match the original windows in design and type and that they consist of or are painted an appropriate color. Bare metal finishes generally will not be acceptable.

The size of glass lites and muntin arrangements shall not be altered without Commission approval. Special glazing, such as stained or leaded art glass, shall not be removed without Commission approval. Unusual decorative windows such as Palladian windows, oriels, bays, Gothic arch or segment tops, etc. shall not be removed or altered.

### **Storm Windows**

Wood storm and screen windows are the most appropriate for use in the historic district. Other types of storm, screen, or combination windows will be approved provided that the new storm window mullions align with the mullions of the primary windows. Blind stop storm and screen windows (where such windows are placed inside the existing window frames rather than affixed to the exterior of the frames) are preferable and may be required in some instances. Bare metal storm and screen windows must be painted to match or complement the trim. Interior storm windows may be acceptable as long as they do not detract from the appearance of the primary windows. Care should be taken, however, when using interior storm windows because condensation tends to form on the in-

side surface of the primary window and could cause damage to the wood and paint if not properly ventilated.

### **Primary Doors**

Every effort should be made to preserve or repair the original doors where damage has occurred. When repair is not possible, a new wood door may be used. Such new door shall match the original in detail and finish.

The Commission may approve new wood doors that may slightly differ from the original in cases where replicating the original may not be feasible, as long as such doors generally conform to the ones illustrated on the attached sheet. Under certain circumstances, the Commission may approve doors made of material other than wood provided they conform to the same design requirements.

### **Storm Doors**

Wooden storm and screen doors are preferred and will generally be the required option especially on the front of the structure. Aluminum or metal storm and screen doors may be used so long as they are not mill finished or anodized aluminum. Baked enamel or other applicable paints or finishes will be acceptable. In general, storm and screen doors shall conform to those illustrated on the attached sheet. The door stiles and rails should be a minimum of 4" wide and one lite doors, where practical, are preferred in order not to detract from the existing primary door. Jalousie doors are not acceptable for use as storm doors in the historic districts. Ornamental iron work safety doors are also generally inappropriate in the historic districts.

### **Exterior Woodwork**

Existing decorative woodwork such as railings, moldings, eave, and gable cornice trim, tracery, columns, observatories, scrolls, bargeboards, lattice, and other carved or sawn wood ornament shall not be removed or altered without Commission approval. Existing deteriorated ornamental woodwork shall not be removed but shall be repaired or replaced with matching materials where possible.

### **Deliberation**

I move that the HDC (approve/deny) the request to 1) demolish and rebuild the 8'x18' room on the back of the house, 2) remove the existing wood windows and replace them with new windows, and 3) remove and rebuild the front steps to be 8'-wide as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained.

**Case 2020-14 – 511 W. Clay – New Construction (Porch Roof)**  
**Applicant: Katherine Jawor**  
**District: Clay-Western**  
**Current Function: Residential**

**Discussion**

The applicant is seeking approval to add a small roof over the existing side porch as well as a small roof over the door into the garage; both will match the existing, decorative porch roof on the east side of the house.



View of house from W. Clay Avenue. Garage door visible at right; side porch not visible from street



Proposed locations for new roof at side porch (left) and garage door (right)



Design of existing porch roof on east side of house to be reflected in new construction

### **Standards**

See Guidelines for New Construction in Case 2020-13, above.

### **Deliberation**

I move that the HDC (approve/deny) the request to add a small roof over the existing side porch as well as a small roof over the door into the garage to match the existing, decorative porch roof on the east side of the house as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **VI. OTHER BUSINESS**

**Mechanical Equipment Local Standards** – Staff has drafted the following local standards for mechanical equipment:

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### **CITY OF MUSKEGON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

#### **General Utility/Outdoor Appliances** (Adopted July 7, 2020 - Effective July 7, 2020)

##### **General**

Many historic resources have survived over the years with minimal alterations to the fabric of the building. Recent inventions and conveniences have placed a toll on the historic nature of our resources. These conveniences should not be prohibited, but regulated in a fashion that allows for the enjoyment of the resource while keeping the integrity of the district intact.

##### **Guidelines**

Air conditioning – Like many other modern day conveniences, A/C units can have a potential detrimental impact on the look of an historic resource. Large ‘whole house units’ should be placed inconspicuously – such as on the roof, in the rear, or on the side of structures not facing streets. Roof mounted equipment is to be screened by architectural features from the view of abutting streets and parcels. Equipment at grade is to be screened by landscaping, a solid wall or fencing from the view of the street or surrounding property. Tubing and connections must not be readily visible.

Window air conditioning units – Units that do not change window structure are permitted on the sides and rear of resources not facing streets. All other placements must be approved by the HDC.

Other air conditioning units – Units that must be placed in walls are discouraged because they may degrade the structural integrity of the resource. However, if properly installed, they may be placed in areas of the resource not facing the street. The HDC may approve other installations if screened from street view.

Satellite Dish Antennae – Over the years this type of equipment has drastically decreased in size to roughly 18”. However, they are still a visual, exterior change on a historic structure, and a generally negative influence in historic districts. Older satellite dishes that are greater than several feet in size are not permitted in the front yard of a resource. The smaller dish may be permitted in the front yard when proper screening (such as landscaping, solid wall, or fencing) obscures it from the street. Antennae should not be placed on the front half of the resource, including the roof, unless it can be obscured from street view. The HDC recommends that if an antennae needs to be installed, it should be

placed in the rear yard of the resource. If it must be attached to the resource, then great care must be taken to secure it properly to the rear half of the resource, and route the cables so as to not damage the physical materials of the house.

Electrical, gas, water, and other utilities – As a first course of action, these services must be in good repair and be located out of view from the street. However, the appropriate code must be followed for health and safety issues. When impossible to locate utility out of sight, the HDC may require it to be screened from view with landscaping, a solid wall, or fencing.

Solar Panels – All solar panels and associated mechanical or service equipment should not be located on a primary or character-defining elevation or roof, nor damage or obscure character-defining features of the resource. New solar panels mounted at grade level should be located in an area not visible from the street. New solar panels located on a sloped roof surface should be installed parallel to the roof, should match or be similar in color to the roof surface, should not extend more than eight (8) inches above the roof surface, and should be installed on the rear half of resources (typically a side- or rear-facing roof surface) out of view from the street. New solar panels located on flat roof surfaces should be located and positioned to reduce visibility from the street and should utilize existing architectural features (parapets, chimneys, dormers, etc.) to further limit their visibility.

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**HDC Staff Approval Fencing Materials** – In October 2019, staff approval powers were granted for new fences that meet the HDC local standards. Although not mentioned in the local standards, due to their popularity and frequent approval, Staff is requesting that aluminum fences resembling iron fences be included as a fence type that can be approved by Staff (local standards for fences can be found in Case 2020-12, above).

## **VII. ADJOURN**