

CITY OF MUSKEGON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 12, 2022 (Rescheduled from May 3, 2022)

S. Radtke called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Radtke, D. Gregersen, E. Trejo, J. Huss

MEMBERS ABSENT: K. George

STAFF PRESENT: J. Pesch, L. Evans

OTHERS PRESENT: S. Thompson and V. Thompson (461 W. Webster), E. Trejo (486 W. Clay), J. Huss (561 W. Western, also noted above)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 5, 2022 was made by D. Gregersen, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, J. Huss, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

OTHER BUSINESS

Potential Hackley Park Conservation Work – The second item of Other Business was moved to the start of the meeting as L. Evans, Director of Public Works, had to leave the meeting by 4:30pm. The City of Muskegon was seeking to complete needed conservation work to the monuments at Hackley Park. In seeking funding sources for the project, Staff was directed to the CLG program and annual grant opportunities presented by the program. Staff was seeking support for the Hackley Park conservation work as a grant priority should the City become certified through the program.

Staff provided a quote for the conservation work that had been obtained by the City, and L. Evans explained that the quote also included the McKinley Monument across W. Webster Avenue from Hackley Park, the Kearny Statue at Terrace and Peck Streets, and a cannon at the Mona Lake Cemetery in Muskegon Heights. J. Pesch explained that the City would need to become certified through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Certified Local Government Program (CLG) in order to be eligible for grant funding, and that if the grant amount requested were to match the amount quoted for the work, this would likely be the City's only application for funding this year.

L. Evans stated that this was the first phase of a larger effort to maintain and conserve the various pieces of public art in the city, and that Hackley Park was the highest priority as the sculptures had not seen any substantial work since the 1990s. The HDC was supportive of pursuing the CLG grant opportunity for the proposed Hackley Park conservation work.

NEW BUSINESS

Case 2022-15 – 461 W. Webster Ave. – Solar Panels

Applicant: Victoria Thompson - District: Houston - Current Function: Residential

J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant was seeking approval to install a 12-panel roof-mounted solar array on the southeast-facing roof surface of the detached garage (along the rear alley).

The board reviewed the drawings providing the specific locations of the solar panels and the installation method and agreed that the proposed placement of the solar array met the local standards.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to install a 12-panel roof-mounted solar array on the southeast-facing roof surface of the detached garage to the location and installation specifications provided in the May 12th, 2022 HDC staff report as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by J. Huss, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, J. Huss, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

Case 2022-16 – 390 W. Muskegon Ave. – Patio

Applicant: William Smith - District: Houston - Current Function: Residential

J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant was seeking approval to construct an unattached, 16'x16' wooden patio in the side yard of the property. The patio was proposed to be flush with ground, and painted black to match the house.

J. Pesch stated that the applicant was not available to attend the rescheduled meeting, but that he would attempt to answer any questions that the board had. The board noted that the proposed patio was not permanent and not attached to the house. J. Pesch explained that the drawings provided were not clear as to whether the patio would be flush with the ground or raised slightly above grade, but that it was anticipated to be flush with the ground. The board agreed to word their motion in a way that could allow for both options.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to construct an unattached, 16'x16' wooden patio in the side yard of the property, flush with or five inches above the ground, and painted black to match the house as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by T. Emory, supported by J. Huss and approved with S. Radtke, J. Huss, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

Case 2022-17 – 486 W. Clay Ave. – Gutters

Applicant: Emilio Trejo - District: Clay-Western - Current Function: Residential

E. Trejo explained that there were existing white gutters on the house but that this project called for additional gutters to get water away from the stone foundation of the house. The new gutters would be black in color, and installed along the front of the house along the second-story roofline, sloping toward the inside corners of the bump-out to downspouts that would continue to the porch roof then pitch out to another pair of downspouts at the corners where the porch connects to the house. The front porch would have a gutter along the roofline as well, diverting water to downspouts at both corners of the porch. Another gutter would run along the second-story roofline of the side porch on 5th Street, around the back corner of the house, sloping toward the rear of the house to a downspout on the back of the house.

T. Emory stated concern with the appearance of the black gutters in the locations proposed on the front of the house. S. Radtke asked if it would be possible to slope the gutters on the second-story to the corners of the house to two-story downspouts. E. Trejo said that he was open to the idea, but would need to discuss it with his contractor to determine if it was feasible. D. Gregersen suggested that the HDC approve both options, with one being preferred to avoid having the applicant return for a second meeting.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to install gutters on the front roofline of the house preferred to slope to downspouts on the outer corners of the house, install a gutter along the front of the porch, sloping toward the corners of the porch, and install a gutter along the roofline of the side porch, wrapping around to the rear elevation and down the rear elevation of the house. If the contractor deems the preferred gutter setup on the front elevation of the house infeasible, then the HDC approves the original request to install gutters on the front roofline of the house sloping toward downspouts running along the corner of the gable in the center of the house, then along the top of the porch roof to downspouts at the back corners of the front porch as long as the work meets all zoning

requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by J. Huss, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, J. Huss, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

Case 2022-18 – 561 W. Western Ave. – Window Sign

Applicant: Lakeshore Museum Center - District: Clay-Western - Current Function: Institutional

Case 2022-18 listed on the meeting agenda at 585 W. Clay was withdrawn, and the case number was reassigned to 561 W. Western (listed as 2022-19 on the agenda). J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant was seeking approval to replace the window sign in the storefront window. The work had already been completed.

J. Huss explained that the new sign would match the signage found at the museum's various other sites. J. Pesch provided photos of the previous window sign's appearance, noting that there was no record of its approval from the HDC. J. Huss explained that the previous sign was an applied vinyl window sign that spanned both the left and right storefront windows, but the new applied vinyl sign would only be installed on the right storefront window; the sign was green, as each museum site had its own color scheme under a recent rebranding project.

J. Pesch provided past and present photos of the other museum signs at 430 W. Clay, 504 W. Clay, 510 W. Clay, and 484 W. Webster, noting that because the sign faces had been updated, the HDC would also need to include them in the final motion. The board acknowledged that all the signs now matched, and as ground signs, were not directly affixed to the buildings.

J. Huss stated that if the sign at 561 W. Western were to be redone in the same format as the other museum signs, the final dimensions would be 13"x48". J. Pesch added that the signage requirements in the downtown area leaned heavily toward pedestrian-scale signage, and that it was likely more limiting, in terms of overall dimensions, than the HDC's local standards. The board and staff discussed the various signage regulations typically used in zoning ordinances, ultimately agreeing that staff could verify the standards used locally and convey the maximum window sign dimensions to the applicant.

The board stated general reasons that they were not in favor of approving the window sign that was installed. S. Radtke recommended that a window sign with individual letters would be preferable to the large block of background color of the current sign. J. Huss said that their marketing consultant could recreate the logo without the background.

D. Gregersen asked if the green entrance sign on the left door was also included in the request and J. Huss explained that it was also new, but it conveyed the same information as the previous sign on that door. D. Gregersen noted that the sign on the inoperable door drew more attention to it than the door to its right that people used to enter the museum. The board agreed that the sign on the left, inoperable door should be made less prominent. D. Gregersen offered a possible design that could achieve this goal.

A motion that the HDC deny the request to replace the window sign in the storefront window as proposed in the May 12th, 2022 HDC staff report was made by D. Gregersen supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye, and J. Huss abstaining.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to replace the main window sign in the storefront window with individual letters and logo in the suggested green color applied to the glass with no background as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by T. Emory, supported by D. Gregersen and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye, and J. Huss abstaining.

J. Pesch reiterated that the maximum dimensions as outlined in the zoning ordinance would be shared with the applicant along with the HDC's approval motion following the meeting.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to install four museum site signs as installed at 430 W. Clay, 504 W. Clay, 510 W. Clay, and 484 W. Webster as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained was made by T. Emory, supported by S. Radtke and approved with S. Radtke, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye, and J. Huss abstaining.

OTHER BUSINESS

Certified Local Government (CLG) – J. Pesch explained that he was preparing an application for the City of Muskegon to become certified through the CLG Program. As discussed under the first item of other business, certification would make the city eligible for annual, historic preservation grant opportunities available only to CLG communities. While this topic had been discussed by the HDC a number of times throughout the past few years, many changes on the board had also occurred during that time which led to a revisiting of the expectations, requirements, and opportunities associated with the certification. The board was in agreement that Staff should continue with pursuing certification through the CLG program. J. Pesch stated that he would finish the application and submit it.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

JP