

CITY OF MUSKEGON
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 2, 2021

Chairperson S. Radtke called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and roll was taken.

MEMBERS PRESENT: S. Radtke, Muskegon, Michigan; K. George, Muskegon, Michigan;
T. Emory, Muskegon, Michigan; K. Panozzo, Muskegon, Michigan;
D. Gregersen, Muskegon, Michigan

MEMBERS ABSENT: A. Riegler, excused

STAFF PRESENT: J. Pesch, L. Mikesell

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Black, 511 W. Clay Ave.; K. Jawor, 511 W. Clay Ave.; S.
Dahlstrom, 511 W. Clay Ave. (contractor); J. Samuels, 511 W. Clay
Ave. (contractor)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 5, 2021 was made by K. George, supported by T. Emory and approved with S. Radtke, K. George, T. Emory, K. Panozzo, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS

Case 2021-03 – 511 W. Clay Avenue (Siding and Windows). Applicant: Katherine Jawor/Steve Dahlstrom. District: National Register. Current Function: Residential. J. Pesch presented the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to replace areas of deteriorated wood siding on the front of the house with a treated engineered wood lap siding of the same size and spacing with a smooth finish. J. Pesch explained that the same siding product was approved in 2019 and installed on the rear of the house.

T. Emory asked if siding would only be replaced where deterioration is occurring. D. Black stated that all of the siding would be replaced with the same siding material that was used as a replacement on the back side of the house. J. Pesch noted that the staff report included photos of the back side of the house both before and after the replacement siding was installed. S. Radtke asked what issues existed with the siding currently on the front of the house. D. Black stated that the existing siding was over 100 years old in some areas and most of the siding would no longer hold paint. K. Panozzo asked what types of paint had been used on the siding more recently and what types of treatment had been tried when painting the house. D. Black stated that the entire house was painted two and a half years ago and within one year the paint was peeling. K. George asked if there was deterioration or if the house only required repainting too frequently. D. Black noted that there was deterioration of the wood siding and that it was getting punky which led to its inability to hold paint. S. Dahlstrom stated that there was deterioration of the wood in non-

consistent places and that some of the wood was replaced in the early 2000s with cedar lap siding which is deteriorating at a different rate. He noted that the existing wood was not holding up well to any kind of paint and that the replacement siding installed on the rear of the house looked identical to the existing siding and would likely last for another 100 years.

D. Gregersen stated that the replacement siding installed on the rear of the house did not detract from the age, detail, or respect for the structure and that he understood the difficulties with maintaining old wood. S. Radtke noted that the HDC's local standards do not endorse residing structures with materials other than the original material, but that with the issue of the siding not holding paint, the board would adhere to standards which allow for replacement materials. Those materials must simulate the appearance of the original building material and take into account the size, shape, profile, texture, and linear direction of the original material. The exposure to the weather of the replacement siding must range within one inch of the nominal dimensions and could not cover over existing trim. As the proposed product met those standards, the work would fall within the guidelines of what the HDC typically allows.

K. George asked if the replacement siding would be installed only on the front façade of the house, or if it would also replace the siding on the sides of the house. D. Black said that the siding would be replaced on the front and about halfway back on each side, replacing what remains of the original wood siding. S. Dahlstrom reminded the board that residing the rear of the house was approved in 2019, so that area would not be part of this work.

A motion that the HDC approve the request to replace areas of deteriorated wood siding on the front and sides of the house with a treated engineered wood lap siding of the same size and spacing with a smooth finish as long as the work meets all zoning requirements and the necessary permits are obtained, was made by D. Gregersen, supported by T. Emory and unanimously approved, with S. Radtke, K. George, K. Panozzo, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

S. Radtke noted that the HDC was informed by Staff that this request also originally included replacement windows, but that it was determined that this work could be approved by Staff. J. Pesch stated that he had approved replacement of some windows already, and noted that the photos in the staff report showed that the new windows matched the old ones almost exactly. The new windows would be replacing 15-20-year-old replacement windows that were in poor condition due to their being constructed with a combination of interior- and exterior-grade products. S. Dahlstrom verified that this information was correct. J. Pesch said that Staff could approve future requests for replacement windows in this house as long as they met the standards for Staff approval as well as those of the board; the board members agreed to allow this.

OLD BUSINESS

None

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Although the HDC last held elections in September 2020, they typically take place at the February meeting once open positions on the HDC have been filled. J. Pesch noted that S. Radtke was the current Chairperson and A. Riegler was the current Vice Chairperson. Some board members

informally stated a preference to retain the current Chair and Vice Chair, but it was determined that, without A. Riegler in attendance, she could not accept a nomination for Vice Chair. A motion that the HDC table the vote to retain S. Radtke as Chairperson and A. Riegler as Vice Chairperson for the upcoming year was made by K. George, supported by T. Emory and unanimously approved, with S. Radtke, K. George, K. Panozzo, T. Emory, and D. Gregersen voting aye.

OTHER BUSINESS

Work Completed Without HDC Approval – S. Radtke noted that there were two issues at the previous month's HDC meeting where work had either started or had been approved prior to HDC review, and asked Director of Development Services, L. Mikesell, to provide an update on the meeting between her and City Manager, F. Peterson. L. Mikesell stated that F. Peterson was supportive of setting up a meeting with SAFEbuilt leadership and the appropriate staff from that department as well as the Division Heads for both Public Safety, and Development Services. She stated that Director of Public Safety, J. Lewis, was also in favor of meeting to improve the process of reviewing building permit applications for buildings in the historic districts, and that the meeting would be scheduled in the coming weeks. J. Pesch noted that he had also met with L. Mikesell to review past HDC and Staff efforts to improve how this issue was handled, and they also discussed the steps involved with properly reviewing work proposed for buildings in historic districts.

S. Radtke stated that the board would anticipate further discussion of this topic at the next meeting, following a meeting among Staff from the departments involved.

2021 Meeting Schedule – Staff shared the HDC meeting schedule for 2021. J. Pesch noted that the only potential conflict could come in November if the HDC was meeting in-person again at that time and if the City Commission Chambers was reserved for an election. The most recent in-person meeting was held in a new conference room on the second floor of City Hall, but staff stated that accessibility to that room was not as convenient as the Chambers. He also noted that the City Commission Chambers recently underwent upgrades that could improve presenting information to both the board members and those in attendance at future meetings.

New Board Member – Board members welcomed their newest member, D. Gregersen, to the HDC.

Development Survey – K. George discussed a survey that addressed new development in the downtown neighborhoods and a committee that was being formed to help guide contextually appropriate new construction in these areas. While not a project initiated by the HDC, the area of focus included some of the historic districts and aligned with the HDC's work in preserving those districts. The board discussed the survey and the ongoing development in downtown Muskegon.

Public Comment Period – Time was allotted for public comment with contact information provided. No comments were received.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

JP