

KALAMAZOO HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Agenda – Tuesday, April 15th, 2025

5:00 pm

241 W. South St. Kalamazoo, MI 49007

I. Call to Order: Mr. Kastner called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM

II. Roll Call & Approval of Absences:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Eric Stucky-Absent | Katie Boertman- Present |
| Dana Underwood – Present | Kristi Breisach- Present |
| James Johnson-Present | |
| Dan Kastner- Present | |

Motion made by Ms. Underwood to approve the absence of Mr. Stucky with a second by Ms. Boertman. All commissioners approved.

Mr. Pena read the disclaimer on record at 5:03 PM.

III. Approval of Agenda:

Amending the agenda to remove 807 W Vine as they have withdrawn the application.

Motion made to approve the amended agenda by Ms. Underwood with a 2nd by Ms. Breisach. All commissioners approve.

IV. Approval of Minutes: March 18th, 2024

Motion made by Mr. Johnson to approve the minutes with a second by Ms. Boertman; All commissioners approve.

V. Public Comment on non-agenda items: No comments.

VI. OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|--|
| A) 430 Elm | 5:06 PM | New construction of detached garage |
| Year Built: 1860 | | Style: Italianate |
| | | Historic District: Stuart |

Ms. Sharon Carlson is the current owner of the property and is looking to build a new garage that has been in the works since 2009. Mr. Johnson makes a motion to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness

for the work as described in the application, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior standards 9 and 10 with a second by Ms. Underwood. All commissioners approve.

**B) 107 (107, 109, 111) 115 and 5:08 PM
119 (non-contributing
Year Built: 1912, 1875, 1914 (107),
1885 (115), 1970 (119)**

Demo of 5 buildings

**Style: Colonial Revival, Italianate,
Colonial Revival (107,
Italianate (115),
Contemporary (119)
Historic District: South St – Vine
Area**

Mr. Jamauri Bogan from Bogan Developments is working on a project to build 80 workforce housing units with an early learning center and other amenities. They are looking to remove the liquor store as well as other houses with some being Historic houses and some that are non-contributing. Mr. Bogan will be holding a community meeting on April 29th from 4-6 pm to get neighborhood feedback. Mr. Jason Novotny is with Tower Pinkster and is the architect for this project. Mr. Novotny goes through which houses are in the historic district and which ones are non-contributing.

Mr. Kastner shares his feelings on the project as he used to live in the area for many years. Mr. Kastner did explain they did approve some houses to be removed in past years in this same area. Mr. Kastner does state that the houses in question are wrecked and does feel that this would be for the greater good of the area.

Mr. Pena did share that a commissioner sent an email to him regarding the ownership of some of the properties as well as demolition by neglect as well as the possibility of moving the structures. Mr. Pena did want to share this for transparency.

Ms. Breisach was concerned about who owns the properties currently. Mr. Bogan does have control over most of the properties and will close on the other soon. Bronson Hospital does own some of the properties and has owned some of them for quite some time. Ms. Breisach feels they have been neglected and untouched for years with now the plan to tear them down. Ms. Underwood was wondering why the properties were not touched or possibly renovated 7 years ago. Ms. Underwood feels that this should be done in a non-historic district. Ms. Underwood states that most demos are normally due to fires and is normally only one house not multiple. She feels that they should have submitted drawings, renderings or received zoning approval prior to this meeting. Ms. Underwood feels that this is premature. Ms. Underwood thinks that the better option would have been to redraw the Vine District to remove this block from the district. Mr. Bogan feels that this project will be transformable for the district and do justice to the community. This project would bring affordable housing and jobs. Mr. Pena did direct Mr. Bogan not to bring drawings to meeting until the project is fully finalized and have this be a two step process. Ms. Breisach points out what is going to stop another company or someone else from buying up another block and removing more of the city's historic buildings. Mr. Bogan will need to return to another meeting with the plans for the new building to get approval.

Ms. Boertman drove by the properties that are in question and stated that they are in bad condition. The properties are blighted, which means there are no utilities for a certain amount of time and Ms. Boertman is concerned about how long these buildings have not been in use and Mr. Bogan says most of the properties have been unoccupied for more than a year.

Mr. Bogan goes into detail regarding the plan for this project, stating that the building will mirror the other larger properties around it and will be a 5-story building.

Mr. Novotny has explained that they are going through the process of getting historic approval, zoning approval and then they would return to get the second approval from the historic district as well as going through site plan approval. Mr. Johnson was curious about how this project compares to other projects that have occurred in past years. The commissioners discussed some other projects that were reviewed. Ms. Boertman points out that the properties are blighted and if they don't approve the demo what is the other option? Would the properties just sit empty and remain blighted. Mr. Pena states that it would be up to the owner of the property. Ms. Breisach did suggest possibly relocating some of the houses (2,3,4 or 5) and even if just one of them could be saved. Also to open it up to the community to salvage anything from the buildings before the demo is completed.

Mr. Nelson Nave is very worried that the Historic District is being chipped away for development. These properties have always been landmarks in this area and could always be restored into beautiful apartments and still fit into this development and would save two historic structures. Mr. Nelson is worried about the Historic District depressing in size.

Mr. Mike Fleckenstein is a businessman in Kalamazoo. Mr. Fleckenstein isn't strictly against this project and does see some good and bad points. Mr. Fleckenstein is happy to see some of them go. Mr. Fleckenstein is surprised they can go this long in this condition. He does see two sides to this and does see it benefiting the neighborhood. Mr. Fleckenstein does feel that this will take away tenants from his other properties surrounding this development.

Mr. Johnson does feel that this project will be a benefit to the neighbors but will also take away from the history of this block.

The project will be a multi-phase project according to Mr. Bogan but wants to focus on this phase first and wants to focus on what the community needs and wants. The drawings have not been fully finalized but will come back with a final plan.

Ms. Boertman makes a motion to approve a Notice to Proceed for the work as described in the application, the proposed work complies with the Notice to Proceed Criteria 2 and 4 with a 2nd by Mr. Johnson. All commissioners approve.

C) **807 W Vine**
Year Built: 1915

Alteration- Replacement of windows
Style: Tudor Revival
Historic District: South Street-Vine Area

Application was withdrawn, no longer on the agenda.

VII. Coordinator's Report

- The historic conference is being held in Sault Ste. Marie. Will be looking into if a virtual option is available. Will also look into seeing if the power points could be given to him to review.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Kastner adjourned at 6:06 PM.

Chairperson

Date

Historic Preservation Coordinator

Date

Recording secretary

Date