



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION TO THE ANN ARBOR CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2009

Introduction

In accordance with the bylaws of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, an annual report is to be prepared by staff, approved by the Commission, and presented to City Council each year outlining the activities of the Historic District Commission for the previous year.

A Historic District Commissioner retreat was held in March 2009. The retreat agenda included review and discussion of: window guidelines, the Historic District Commission by-laws, and projects approved and constructed in the last year.

Statistics

A total of 168 applications were received by the Commission in 2009. The Historic District Commission has delegated a number of minor activities to staff to approve on their behalf, and 132 of those applications received Certificates of Appropriateness from staff. Generally speaking, these are routine work activities that do not affect historic materials on a structure, like replacing a non-historic roof with the same. Other examples of some of the thirty-one kinds of work that may be approved by staff, if the work is appropriate, include:

- Replacement of non-original windows or doors
- Replacement of existing awnings and signage in the same size, dimension, and location
- Reconstruction of existing porches
- New or replacement fences
- Replacement of roofs and concrete basement walls

The Commission held hearings on the other 36 applications during their regular monthly meetings. Of those applications, 29 received Certificates of Appropriateness and seven applications were denied. All of the sites were visited prior to their hearing by the HDC Review Committee, which is made up of two Commissioners and staff.

The applications receiving Certificates of Appropriateness included (totals reflect multiple work activities in some applications):

- Nine applications for window alterations (replacement, enlargement, or other modification)
- Eight residential additions
- Four new signs

- ❑ Three demolitions (one garage, one gas station, and one commercial building behind the front façade)
- ❑ Two new accessory buildings
- ❑ Two after-the-fact approvals for work done without building permits or a certificate of appropriateness (one porch and one door replacement)
- ❑ One roofing material change (from metal to rubber membrane)
- ❑ One accessible ramp at the Kempf House
- ❑ One chimney removal

The denied applications included:

- ❑ Three applications to remove or enlarge original windows that were not determined to be beyond repair
- ❑ One application to demolish two houses, which was denied because the structures contribute to the historic district
- ❑ One residential addition that was determined to be incompatible with the original house
- ❑ One application to replace front double doors on a commercial building that were not determined to be beyond repair
- ❑ One application for an awning that was not compatible with the building

Awards

Each year during May (National Preservation Month), the Historic District Commission presents Historic Preservation Awards to property owners who have shown dedication to preservation by rehabilitating or maintaining their historic property. The Ann Arbor Historic District Commission's 2008 awards were presented by Mayor John Hieftje during the May 5, 2008 City Council meeting. A reception for award recipients was held at the Michigan Theatre preceding the ceremony at City Council.

Rehabilitation Awards

Rehabilitation Awards recognize substantial work which returns a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration. The work facilitates contemporary needs but respects the features of the property which are significant to its historic and architectural values.



Award to: Phi Delta Phi

For: 502 E Madison – 1916

This Georgian style (with Dutch gambrel elements on the side gables) fraternity was built as Phi Delta Phi in 1916, making it one of the few fraternities still occupying its original building. The fraternity recently undertook restoration of the columns which are now fiberglass, but replicate the originals. Photographs taken in 1919 by local photographer Swain, reveal the appearance of the structure today is as much as it was when first constructed. Now in the shadow of South Quad, this fraternity manages to maintain its presence in glorious style.



Award to: Kristi Gilbert and Doug Bernardin

For: 307 W. William – 1917

This simple Dutch Colonial-style home was first occupied in 1917 by Harry Ryckley, an electrician with Detroit Edison. Asbestos siding has been removed, the front porch has been reconstructed using the original columns and railings which were restored, and the original garage has been maintained and renovated.



Award to: Michael Gray and Kelly Morris

For: 309 W. William -1917

This home was first occupied in 1917 by Daniel Eveland, a foreman at Hoover Steel Ball. The current owners have transformed this Colonial Revival by removing the insul-brick siding and restoring the clapboard among other things.



Award to: John E. and Tracy Beeson

For: 512 Hiscock- 1917

Local preservation architect John Beeson and wife Tracy have painstakingly chiseled fake stone siding off this house and restored the original clapboard. They also made the house more energy efficient with a new foundation and heating system. The house was built in 1917 for Edwin F. Kleinschmidt, a laborer at Economy Baler.



Award to: Ronald G. Miller

For: 1901 Washtenaw- 1917

This large Craftsman home was built 1917 for Mrs. Edith Hendrickson on the site of the former Ferdon homestead. It was lived in by UM Football Coach Fielding Yost in 1930. The home has recently been converted into three condos with seamless design and preservation of original elements.



Award to: Galanis Real Estate. LLC

For: 808 E Kingsley- 1906

Panos Galanis purchased this house in May 2008 from the ICC which had planned to open another Co-op here. Galanis orchestrated the removal of asbestos siding and restored the front porch in this student rooming house in the Old Fourth Ward. This work has resulted in a great improvement to the streetscape. The house was built in 1906 by Wm. J. Conlin, VP of Reule, Conlin and Fiegel (clothiers on Main Street).

Preservation Awards

Preservation awards are given to owners who have maintained superior maintenance and repair of a significant property to preserve its essential historical, cultural or architectural value for a period of 10 years or more.



Award to: Michele Derr

For: 929 Olivia-1890s

This house dates from as early as 1894 and was occupied by the A. S. Berry family from the 1890s until 1920. The house is a Colonial Revival with Tudor-style elements and several additions, all within the spirit of the original. It has been lovingly maintained by Michele and the late Ellwood Derr for many years.



Award to: Susan Gardner

For: 220 N. Fifth Ave-1844

This brick structure, in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, was built by businessman Jacob Vandawarker in 1844. The house is rich in Greek Revival-style massing and details and features an intricate Italianate-style porch. It became a rental in the 1930s and was later restored by Casey and Myra Jones in the 1970s. Today it is lovingly maintained by Susan Gardner who maintains her business here.



Award to: David and Barbara Copi

For: 1601 Cambridge-1913

Albert Kahn designed this Craftsman house for Louis Strauss (his cousin), Professor of English and Department Chair and his wife Elsa in 1913... They lived here 45 years. The house has more recently been owned for over 20 years by David and Barbara Copi who have lovingly maintained the house and grounds.



Award to: Ann Larimore

For: 916 Olivia-1899

This Colonial Revival appears in the 1899 City Directory as 'vacant' but by 1901 Thomas Smurthwaite, farmer, is listed as the occupant. The current owner and occupant is Prof. Ann Larimore who has beautifully maintained it for many years, keeping it in its original condition, including a complementary paint scheme.



Award to: Donna Sell

For: 1619 Cambridge-1909

This house was built for Charles Tilden, UM Engineering Professor, and was later the home of Lillian and Charles Edmunds, a professor of Medicine and Dean of the Medical School, for over 40 years. This stucco Craftsman home (with Asian elements) has been maintained in beautiful condition for many years by owner Donna Sell and her partner, the late Paul Bronstein.



Award to: Eric and K.M. Meves

For: 1706 Cambridge-1908

Clara and William Wait, an Associate Prof of Modern Languages first occupied this home in 1908. This vernacular Colonial Revival has been the home of Eric and wife K.M. Meves since 1986 who have maintained its historic qualities.



Award to: Herbert Black

For: 124 E. Washington -1906

This commercial building was erected in 1906 and replaced a residential structure. The building was home to two bakeries for over 50 years. It was recently awarded a plaque by the Historic District Commission and is in the Main Street Historic District.



Award to: Kent Berridge

For: 2021 Pontiac-c.1866

This nicely preserved- Greek Revival farmhouse was built between 1864 and 1870 by Robert McCormick. The 60 acre site, then in Ann Arbor Township, was occupied in 1895 by B. Keenan and in 1915 by G. Fisher. It is one of a handful of Hen and Chick style Greek Revivals with an umbra porch that survives in the area. The current owner has maintained it beautifully for over 20 years.



Award to: Mary Underwood

For: 1219 Traver-c.1851

The house was built around 1851 in the Greek Revival style by Solomon Armstrong, a native of upstate New York, It features simple massing, end gables and cornice returns. The current owner has preserved the original structure while adding additional space in a separate building, complimenting the original.



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Centennial and Sesquicentennial Awards

Sesquicentennial Awards are given to businesses and organizations which have been in Ann Arbor for at least 100 years.



Award to: YMCA

For: 400 W. Washington St. – Sesquicentennial

The YMCA celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding in the fall of 2008 with many lectures and an exhibit at the Museum on Main St.



Award to: Bethlehem United Church of Christ

For: 423 S. Fourth Ave

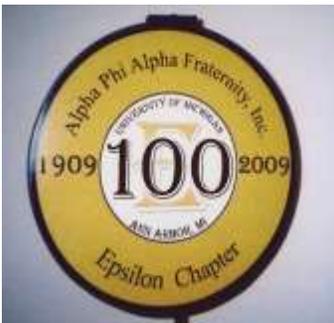
The congregation of Bethlehem church marked the 175th anniversary of its founding in late 2008. The church was formed in 1833 and was the first of many German Lutheran churches established by Pastor Friedrich Schmid in Michigan.



Award to: Ann Arbor Art Association

For: Centennial Award

One hundred years ago the Ann Arbor Art Association was formed and held its first exhibit in the newly built Alumni Memorial Hall in 1910. It showcased an exhibit of Oriental and American Art under the joint auspices of its members and those of the Alumni Memorial Committee. President Emil Lorch headed a group of directors which represented both town and gown. In addition, many items were loaned by the Detroit Institute of Arts as well as Charles L. Freer.



Award to: Alpha Phi Alpha

For: Centennial Award

The Epsilon Chapter celebrates its 100th year in April with a variety of events. According to their website, they were founded “before all black Greek lettered organizations with the exception of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. We are the Father of the Midwest. Our history speaks for itself.”

Preservation Project of the Year



Award to: University of Michigan

For: UM Law School Library, Reading Room. 1931

Original Architect: York and Sawyer of New York City

The cathedral like Reading Room in the William W. Cook Legal Research Building, with its stained glass windows and elaborate hanging fixtures, wins our Project of the Year Award because of the spectacular restoration of the barrel vaulted ceilings, the upgrading of the lighting, the restoration of the light fixtures, and the replacement of the original cork floor. These efforts have brightened and enhanced this already beautiful interior. As one of Ann Arbor's most historic buildings and recognizable landmarks, this renovation by architect Lord, Aeck and Sargent deserves recognition not only for the finished product but for the care taken to maintain the original as much as possible. In one history of the campus, this former library was described as "the most awesome space in decorative splendor on campus, from the paneled and medallioned plaster ceiling to the floor of quiet cork." (MacInnes, 1978).

For More Information

If you would like more information about the Historic District Commission or its activities, please contact Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator, at (734) 794-6265 x42608 or email jthacher@a2gov.org.