

Members

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Bret Maddox, S.E.
Ha Pham
Pamela Sundell
Duke York

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MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Community and Economic Development Department

Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer

Date: February 9, 2011

LPC 26/11

Location: 728 St. Helens, Tacoma Municipal Bldg North, Room 16

Commission Members in Attendance:

Ross Buffington
Edward Echtle
Ken House
Fred King
Megan Luce
Bret Maddox, S.E.
Mark McIntire
Ha Pham

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight
Tonie Cook
Diane Wiatr

Others Present:

Thomas Johnson, Kathy Ursich, Caroline Gallacci,
Ron Karabaich

Commission Members Excused:

Imad Al Janabi, Pamela Sundell, and Duke York

Chair Mark McIntire called the meeting to order at 5:08 p.m.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Excusal of Absences

Commissioners Imad Al Janabi, Pamela Sundell and Duke York were excused.

2. DESIGN REVIEW

Ms. Tonie Cook presented the Staff Report.

The Bowes Building is listed on the Tacoma, Washington State, and National Registers of Historic Places. The building is located on the southwest corner of 9th and A Streets across from the southern boundary of the Old City Hall Historic District and the Totem Pole landmark at Firemen's Park.

An application to install cellular equipment onto the rooftop was denied by the Commission in August 2008 due to concerns about adverse effects to the building's strong massing, detailed parapet, and views. A briefing on a new proposal that considered the Commission's previous concerns was presented on January 12, 2011.

Commission comments on the most recent proposal included the following:

- 1) Submit photo simulations of the proposal to show sight lines from the street;
- 2) Submit design plans, showing the dimensions more clearly than the plans presented on 01/12/11;
- 3) There was concern with visibility (of the proposed rooftop equipment) from uphill elevations;
- 4) Recommended not more than six antennas (versus the nine shown in the January design plans and 12 in 2008);
- 5) Recommended the plan for new equipment be as minimal in design as possible and without faux chimney or screening equipment.

The Applicant submitted the current proposal addressing the above comments. Please note that the copies of the design plan are included with the Commission packets. The original plans will be presented at the Commission meeting; the original design plans will be more clear to show the dimensions of the building and proposed equipment.

Standards to be considered:

Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Analysis to be considered:

1. The Bowes Building is historically significant. Built in 1907, the building at 100 South 9th is a significant example of Beaux Arts Architecture, and was designed by prominent Tacoma architect Fredrick Heath. It is listed on the Tacoma, Washington, and National Registers of Historic Places.
2. The location and setting of the Bowes Building is also historically significant. It lies across the street from the Old City Hall Historic District, which is also listed on the Tacoma, Washington, and National Registers of Historic Places.
3. The Landmarks Preservation Commission has jurisdiction to review and approve, or not approve, changes to this building per TMC 13.07.095, prior to those changes being made, by virtue of its status as a City Landmark.
4. The addition of cellular equipment will impact the view of the Bowes Building. The existing rooftop equipment is also visible from the pedestrian level at that location.
5. The location was selected on the basis of a defined area based on the targeted area for increased signal capacity and building owners who are willing to enter into a lease with the cellular company.
6. On August 27, 2008, the Commission denied the application to install 12 cellular antennas on the building, based on the concerns of adverse effects to the building's strong massing, detailed parapet, and views.
7. The primary views of the building are intact; the new proposal considers the proposed equipment's visibility, massing, and detailed parapet. This proposal reduces the number of antennas to six from twelve; the 2008 proposal included mounting GPS antennas to the inner parapet wall and the current proposal does not mount any equipment to historic elements; and the equipment can be removed without altering historic fabric.
8. The parapet is one of the main character defining features of the building and is described in the nomination. The location and attachment of the antenna and equipment will not alter historic features on the building as the equipment will be installed onto the rooftop and the number of antennas was reduced in half, which may meet the *Secretary of Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation Standard #2*, for, "...The...alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided".

9. The Commission previously had concerns regarding the compatibility of the antennas with the historic scale, proportion and massing of the building. In the current application, the reduction in the amount of proposed antennas by half, with no mounting of equipment onto historic features, and equipment that can be removed easily without damage to any character defining features, appears to lessen the impact on the property.
10. An original set of design plans will be presented at the Commission meeting to show more clear dimensions than the copies submitted in the meeting packets.

Staff recommended adoption of the above analysis as findings, and defers recommendation to the Commission.

The Commission discussed the revised proposal to include not more than six cell antennas onto the rooftop.

There was a motion:

"I move that we, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, adopt the analysis as findings, and approve the installation of not more than six antennas as proposed".

MOTION: Echtle

SECOND: King

MOTION: Carried

Mr. McKnight stated that the written decision would be issued within the next few days.

3. BOARD BRIEFINGS

Ms. Diane Wiatr, City of Tacoma Mobility Coordinator, presented the Prairie Line Trail, which is a new pedestrian and bicycle path planned for the historic BNSF corridor in downtown Tacoma.

Comments included the following:

1. Retain the rails in place;
2. Ms. Wiatr provided clarification that the rails are not original and most likely installed in the 1970s;
3. Funding is from the Transproatation Enhancement Grant Program for Engineering; WSDOT grants, resulting in review because of the City's CLG status;
4. Interpretation along the line/trail
5. Celebration on the opening (of the trail);
6. Rails are important as well as the switching/signal equipment; change was the nature of railroading, retaining rails would present a picture in time;
7. Is there a need for a double set of tracks through the Brewery District?
8. Historic element was a single set of tracks;
9. Suggestions to have a display at property south of 25th (or North);

Ms. Wiatr stated that the Commission would be kept informed on the process.

4. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING

A. Old Town Neighborhood Historic District Proposal – significance and criteria.

Mr. Reuben McKnight provided the following Staff Report on the proposed district significand and criteria.

On September 15, 2009, residents of the "Old Town" Neighborhood submitted a written request for consideration of the neighborhood as a historic special review district overlay zone. The proposed area extends roughly from N 31st Street, south along N Junett Street to North 29th Street, west to N Carr Street, south along Carr Street (including both sides of Carr) to Yakima. The southern boundary continues west along Tacoma Avenue N to

North 11th Street, and then returns north to North 30th Street. The nomination specifically excludes the business district and C2 commercial zone from inclusion in the district.

He noted the draft nomination is posted online at <http://tacomaculture.org/historic/resources.asp> in the 12/8/10 Application Packet.

On December 8, 2010, the Commission adopted the tentative review schedule (Figure 1). The purpose of today's discussion is to consider the statement of significance submitted with the nomination paperwork, to receive feedback on the content of the nomination documentation, requests for additional information, review the criteria for significance for historic districts according to TMC 13.07, and, if appropriate, to accept the significance statement or provide direction for further work.

Standards to be considered:

The Landmarks Preservation Commission reviews new Historic Districts against the criteria established in TMC 13.07.040, which states that a proposed district must:

- a. Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b. Be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c. Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d. Have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history; or
- e. Be part of, adjacent to, or related to an existing or proposed historic district, square, park, or other distinctive area which should be redeveloped or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif; or
- f. Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represent an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or City.

In addition, special criteria for the designation of historic districts also include:

1. The area must contain a concentration of structures having a special character or special historic, cultural, architectural, engineering, or geographic interest or value as defined by the eight criteria above; and
2. The area must be a distinct section of the City.

Analysis to be considered.

1. The area must be a distinct section of the City. The Old Town Neighborhood is defined by being the oldest neighborhood in the City, which includes the areas from N 31st Street, south along N Junett Street to North 29th Street, west to N Carr Street, south along Carr Street (including both sides of Carr) to Yakima. The southern boundary continues west along Tacoma Avenue N to North 11th Street, and then returns north to North 30th Street.

Topography defines the historical development pattern in Old Town. The area was originally platted close to the shoreline, extending from the shoreline south to North 28th Street, and confined between Buckley and Garfield Gulches to the west and east, respectively.

2. The area must contain a concentration of structures having a special character or special historic, cultural, architectural, engineering, or geographic interest or value as defined by the six designation criteria above.

The nomination form included with the nomination uses designation criteria that were replaced during an ordinance revision in 2008. The narrative, however, addresses the current designation criteria, specifically noting A and F. Staff has also included additional criteria that appear to apply to the Old Town nomination.

- Criterion A: Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Some of the first development in the Tacoma area occurred in Old Town in anticipation of the coming of the Western Terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Job Carr, a Civil War veteran, began scouting sites in Puget Sound in 1864, and eventually was joined by civic booster Morton McCarver. The events leading to the establishment of Old Town not only are illustrative of the early history of Puget Sound, but also of the gradual opening of the west due to federal policies.

Old Town was the site of Tacoma's first industry (Tacoma Mill Company), wharves, school and church (St Peter's Episcopal) and, in 1883, the first hospital.

Old Town's population also reflected patterns in immigration. The area served as a center for the first Croatian immigrants, including boatbuilders who supplied the fishing industry. Many of these families still live in the area, and some, such as Martinac Industries, are well established Tacoma businesses.

- Criterion C: Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

The district is an intact historic residential district that retains many of the visual and architectural characteristics that reflect its development history. Most of the earliest homes reflect vernacular architectural forms and are simple one or one and a half story gabled buildings with horizontal wood siding. Many of these homes still exist. There are a few homes designed by prominent architects within the district. Later development is influenced by generalized residential styles, including Italianate style, Dutch Colonial, Craftsman, and common forms such as Foursquare. In general, the majority of development in Old Town was concluded by the end of WW2, although there are a number of modernist homes from later periods.

Prominent architects who designed homes in the area included Earl Dugan, George Turst, K. Lockwood Squire, Ambrose J Russell and Frederick Heath, Stanley T. Shaw, Alan C. Liddle, George W. Bullard, Arnott Woodrooffe and Arnold Constable, Carl August Darmer, and George W. Bullard and Irwyn H. Hill. Curtis A. Beals was not an architect but designed the duplex on McCarver St.

- Criterion F: Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represent an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or City.

The geography of the Old Town area; defined by the gentle northern slope, shoreline, and gulches to the east and west, is unique within the City of Tacoma and directly reflective of the developmental history of the area. In addition, it possesses a developmental scale that is also unique. However, this is a difficult criterion to evaluate on a district wide basis, since to some degree all neighborhoods possess individual character that sets them apart from their surroundings; this is one way that neighborhoods become defined over time. Much of the evidence supporting the use of Criterion F is addressed in A and C.

Finally, he stated that the analysis is offered for guidance and discussion. Staff seeks any input from the Commission, including questions, concerns or requests for clarification, regarding the significance statements contained in the nomination document.

Caroline Gallacci, Kathy Ursich and Ron Karabaich were introduced.

Caroline Gallacci, co-applicant of the nomination, asked the Commission for feedback on the application, including Appendix A, Arcadia History.

B. Preservation Month: Committee and Awards

Commissioners Pham, Echtle, and House volunteered as members of the 2011 Preservation Month Committee.

4. COMMUNICATIONS / ITEMS OF INTEREST

Mr. Reuben McKnight presented information on the Comprehensive Plan Annual Amendment #2011-02: Historic Preservation Plan and Regulatory Code Text Changes. He stated that the Planning Commission would be releasing the document for public comment with a public hearing date scheduled for March. He stated that the Commission could provide feedback directly to the Planning Commission or to him.

Ms. Tonie Cook noted the Urban Trees letter copied to the Commission requesting representation on the development of Urban Trees' policy.

Ms. Cook also updated the Commission on details of the upcoming field trip to the Old Town Neighborhood.

Mr. Reuben McKnight:

- a) briefly reported on the proposed changes at the State of Washington Department of Historic Preservation and Archaeology;
- b) handed out a memorandum on Creating a Public Development Authority that was sent to the Mayor and City Council on January 18, 2011; and
- c) reported on the City Council Appointments Committee in which Megan Luce was re-appointed and Duke York was appointed to the Commission; and there was a lack of applicants who matched the architect category, therefore, the position will continue to be filled by Commissioner Fred King, until a qualified applicant is appointed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.:

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer