

Members

Mark McIntire, *Chair*
Bret Maddox, S.E., *Vice Chair*
Edward Echtle
Ken House
Imad Al Janabi, PhD.
Fred King
Megan Luce
Ha Pham
Pamela Sundell
Duke York

Marshall McClintock, North Slope Ex-Officio

Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer



MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Community and Economic Development Department

Date: March 9, 2011

LPC 27/11

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

Commission Members in Attendance:

Edward Echtle
Imad Al Janabi
Bret Maddox, S.E.
Mark McIntire
Ha Pham
Pamela Sundell
Duke York

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight
Tonie Cook

Others Present:

Caroline Swope, Paula Varner, Kent McClaren,
Mathew Horwitz

Commission Members Excused:

Fred King, Megan Luce, and Ken House

Chair Mark McIntire called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Excusal of Absences

Commissioners Megan Luce, Fred King, and Ken House were excused.

B. Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes of January 12, 2011 were approved with the amendments offered by Staff regarding the Prairie Trail/Hood Street Corridor agenda item, specifically, the Japanese School Memorial was proposed as a part of the Corridor/Trail area, and other minor grammatical edits.

2. PUBLIC HEARING – NOMINATION TO THE TACOMA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NOTES ON GENERAL ORDER

Chair Mark McIntire opened the public hearing and presented the hearing instructions.

Ms. Tonie Cook delivered notes on general order for nominations to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

The Tacoma Register listing will follow procedures defined in 13.07.050, and will consist of a minimum of two separate Commission meetings. The initial meeting was on August 26, 2009, and the Commission determined that the property met the threshold criteria in the ordinance for age and integrity and scheduled a public hearing and comment period; at which, the public may enter comments for the record. Following the comment period, the Commission may deliberate on the nomination for up to 45 days before recommending to City Council listing on the register, or denying the nomination.

The Tacoma Municipal Code lists six criteria for designation in Chapter 13.07.040.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive public comments regarding the nominated property, and to determine if the property meets one or more of the six nomination criteria in the City Ordinance. The Commission may elect to leave the record open until the next regular meeting, or, if no additional comment is warranted, take action on the nomination following public testimony.

A. 3419 North 27th Street (Semple Residence)

Ms. Cook continued with the staff report.

Constructed between 1890 and 1896, the one and a half story Shingle Style residence at 3419 North 27th Street is located in one of Tacoma's oldest areas, originally platted in 1869. The nomination states, "The Semple Residence has significance through its broader connection to the planning development patterns in Tacoma, Criterion A, and its Shingle Style architectural form, Criterion C, of the six criteria of eligibility on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

The Commission voted to forward this property for public comment and additional consideration on January 26, 2011, finding that it appears to meet the Landmarks designation criteria in 13.07.040.

Standards to be considered:

The property is nominated under the following Tacoma Register Criteria:

- A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; and
- C. Embodies 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;

This is a nomination for the exterior of the existing building.

If no additional comments are received, Staff recommended that the nomination be forwarded with recommendation for listing to the City Council.

Ms. Caroline Swope, Kingstree Studios, stated she was available to respond to any questions. She added she was representing the owners who were not able to attend the meeting.

Ms. Paula Varner, 3315 North 27th Street, testified that some of her neighbors had not received notice of the public hearing. Ms. Varner stated that a friend who lives in Old Town Neighborhood was becoming a historic district. She asked if this area (around 3315 n 27th) was being considered a historic district.

Chair McIntire asked if Ms. Varner's interest was in Old Town or the Semple Residence nomination.

She stated her interest was in her neighborhood and she wanted to know if a certain threshold of nominated properties would authorize the establishment as a historic district in her neighborhood.

Mr. Reuben McKnight stated that the notice of the Semple Residence nomination used the Pierce County Assessor records for noticing properties located within 400 feet of the nominated property and is monitored for mail returns. He stated that he would want to know if notices were not received; he added that Staff could review a neighborhood address list with the list of addresses which Staff used for the mailing and that Staff follows procedures for public notice outlined in City Code.

Mr. Reuben McKnight also clarified that a certain number of properties will not result in establishing a historic district. He provided information on the proposal to form a historic district in the Old Town Neighborhood including the procedures on review and public process, in which all will be scheduled approximately over the next year. He also discussed the research including boundaries that is involved in developing a nomination proposal. He stated that the Semple Residence is an individual designation as a landmark property.

He described the process of a land use zoning action through the Landmarks Preservation and Planning Commissions and City Council, in which a proposal to form a historic district would follow. He described this process with the issuance of many public notices to property owners, which are opportunities to become informed.

Mr. Reuben McKnight offered to discuss this further with Ms. Varner.

Ms. Tonie Cook noted there may have been a couple of returned mail notices.

Ms. Varner thanked the Commission for the clarification.

Chair Mark McIntire asked for comments and questions from the Commission; there were none.

Chair Mark McIntire noted the closure of the public hearing.

There was a motion:

"I move that we, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, recommend to City Council that the Semple Residence, be included on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, including the exterior of the existing building at 3419 North 27th Street, finding that it meets Criteria A and C, of TMC 13.07.040."

MOTION: Sundell

SECOND: Maddox

MOTION: Carried

3. DESIGN REVIEW

A. 815-819 Pacific Avenue – The Olympus Hotel (Old City Hall)

Mr. Reuben McKnight read the Staff Report as follows:

This item was re-scheduled to this meeting because of the cancellation of the February 23, 2011 meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Constructed in 1909, the building at 815 Pacific, the Olympus Hotel, is a contributing structure in the Old City Hall Historic District. The current use for the upper portion of the building includes 49 affordable housing units at 45% of area median income or less to residents of Tacoma. This proposal includes window replacements, minor masonry repair and protective coating on the south elevation; metal cap flashing on sills on North and South Elevations; and full roof and exhaust fan replacements. The purpose of the proposal is to improve energy efficiency of the building to reduce utility and maintenance costs and to address repairs that will improve the comfort of the building occupants. According to the application, state funding for rehabilitation of multifamily buildings requires a measured response to Evergreen Sustainable Design Standards, which typically mandate improvements to the energy performance.

Window replacements will be considered in this review, as follows:

- 1) East and West Elevations: Windows from floors 2 and above are proposed for replacement with metal-clad wood; and

- 2) North and South Elevations: All windows are proposed for replacement with steel for fire code reasons.

The application commissioned a window survey from a wood window expert, providing an overview of the existing conditions of the windows, which is enclosed in the Commission packets. The survey identifies approximately 133 windows proposed for replacement; 83 are considered historic windows in good or fair condition, and the remainder are nonhistoric or considered in poor condition.

The applicant stated that wood window restoration was considered for this project but was not selected for a number of technical and feasibility reasons, including:

- 1) Overall cost
- 2) Thermal efficiency (to meet project requirements for performance as well as to reduce utility costs to residents)
- 3) Operability (as opposed to interior thermally sealed glazing; the plan for the air flow for the building requires operable windows)
- 4) Replacement of windows will occur with all units occupied.

The Applicant will present additional photos of the existing conditions of the windows to the Commission meeting.

Standards to be considered:

Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, when replacing windows deteriorated beyond repair, then a compatible substitute material may be considered.

Analysis to be considered:

1. Built in 1909, the Olympus Hotel building at 815 Pacific is historically significant as a contributing property of the Old City Hall Historic District which is listed on the Tacoma, Washington, and National Registers of Historic Places.
2. 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.
3. The removal of all of the above street level windows, in which approximately 83 are historic and in good or fair condition, which could be repaired, does not meet Secretary of Interior's Standard number 2, specifically, "*The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided,*" unless it is demonstrated that there is not an economic or technically feasible way to meet this standard.
4. Windows are generally considered character defining features.
5. The Olympus Hotel building has been readapted for low income / affordable housing units serving Tacoma citizens at less than 45% of the area's median income.

6. The proposal is financed with State funding for rehabilitation of multifamily buildings which requires a measured response to Evergreen Sustainable Design Standards, which typically mandate improvements to the energy performance.
7. The feasibility of repair and maintenance of the windows, improving energy performance while continuing to provide affordable housing and retaining the building's historic character, were factored into the approach selected by the Applicant.
8. A survey of the condition of the building windows was conducted by Legacy Renovation, October 2010. A total of 133 windows were reviewed; 83 were reported as historic.
9. The application narrative reports that 30 of 40 of the West and 9 of 19 of the East elevation's windows are in fair to poor condition or worse but repairable.
10. The survey states that 35 of the 40 on the West elevation are in good or fair condition and could be repaired; the remaining 5 are listed in poor condition.
11. There is specific concern stated in the application that the sashes could not be retrofitted sufficiently to install insulated glass.
12. The application states, *"In accordance with Secretary of Interior Standards and Guidelines for replacing windows in historic buildings, windows will be replaced using the same sash and pane configuration as the original windows."*
13. *Secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines states, "...If using the same material is not technically or economically feasible, when replacing windows deteriorated beyond repair, then a compatible substitute material may be considered"*
14. The Commission has considered the financial feasibility of proposals in the past and approved proposals on replacement substitute materials.
15. The project requires review by the Washington State Historic Preservation Officer under Section 106 NHPA because of its Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding source. This review is pending.

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

Mr. Kent McLaren of BCRA presented information on the property proponents, Korean Women's Association, and the purpose of the proposal for the current residents including limited disruption. He emphasized the purpose of the project including energy costs and performance, and minimizing displacement of tenants. He presented a sample of the proposed Pella window.

Commission comments and questions:

1. Need additional information on benefit cost ratio on historic windows and energy efficiency, i.e. replacement costs;
2. Lead Base – exposure to occupants: many new technologies that can be used, such as steam or infrared heat, which is onsite that does not require window removal;
3. Interior Storm Windows: have you looked at the option for interior storms? Have you explored magnetic interior storm, including such window styles as double hung interior storms; Ventilation – interior storm window technology allows for air circulation and reduces moisture intrusion;
4. Application mentions interior storm is not a good option for this population: Interior Storm windows can be removed, to circulate the air;
5. Have you looked at other funding sources?
6. Project Costs: what does it entail; how much is allocated for windows?

7. Legacy – professional survey definition of good, fair and poor in the application by Legacy and by owner (i.e. differences in conclusions)
8. Pella Windows: Have you looked at other window manufacturers as an option, such as a local manufacturer Bear Windows?

Mr. Mathew Horwitz, Common Ground, discussed the scope of the project including funding and the very limited repair to the exterior, including concrete window sills, as needed; limited masonry and roof repairs.

Mr. Reuben McKnight stated that Staff would review the exterior repairs proposed other than the windows.

Commission requested the following additional information:

1. Photos: provide close-up photos of the windows – In order to review the structural integrity of the windows, please show more detail of the window components (i.e. sash, etc), because the images provided at the meeting (3/09), show the existing windows in very good condition; Need cross-sections of windows;
2. Professional Survey of the Windows by Legacy that was submitted with Application:
Concern that the Applicant is grouping together both the fair as well as the poor condition rated windows as non-repairable.
The Legacy survey defined the “fair condition” windows as repairable;
Need clarification on the surveys and conclusions.
3. What are other options for air infiltration (other than replacement windows).
4. Exterior Repairs: Would like information on the scope of the proposed repairs to the masonry, minor repairs, roof, etc and if this will be submitted at a later date for LPC to review?
Note: It was agreed that Staff would review the specifications and recommend the scope in which the Commission has purview;
5. Bringing windows up to energy code: National Trust for Historic Preservation’s green lab is devoted to bringing historic buildings into energy code compliance; have you talked with them?
6. Need information on the extent of sill repair.
7. Need cost analysis of the repair/replacement of windows.

There was a motion:

“I move that we, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, defer the decision pending additional information submitted on the Olympus Hotel at 815-819 Pacific Avenue”.

MOTION: Sundell
SECOND: Al Janabi
MOTION: Carried

Mr. Reuben McKnight stated that he would coordinate a time for the Commission to visit the property.

4. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING

Notices/Announcements:

The field visit to Old Town Neighborhood is re-scheduled for Wednesday, March 16, 2011.

The discussion on the proposed boundaries and inventory for the proposed Old Town Historic District is postponed until after the field visit.

Mr. Reuben McKnight noted the copies of information circulated to the Commission, including the recent billboard settlement, upcoming Murray Morgan Bridge paint color review by the Commission, copy of the North Slope Historic District Neighborhood Association’s letter submitted to the Planning Commission at the recent public hearing on code amendments, and Evergreen Tacoma’s meeting minutes and upcoming meeting agenda.

Mr. Reuben McKnight noted the recent newspaper article on vinyl windows and the active court case that has not been resolved; he briefly stated for information purposes, that the Commission could be involved in this item since it has not been resolved and to act accordingly.

Vice Chair Bret Maddox announced attendance along with Reuben McKnight at the recent meeting at the University of Washington Tacoma about the student prince commemorative on the Joy Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer