

Members

Mark McIntire, *Chair*
Bret Maddox, S.E., *Vice Chair*
Katie Chase
Edward Echtle
Ken House
Jonah Jensen
Megan Luce
Daniel Rahe
Duke York

Ross Buffington, Wedge Neighborhood Ex-Officio
Marshall McClintock, North Slope Ex-Officio

Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer
Tonie Cook, Landmarks Coordinator



MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Community and Economic Development Department

Date: July 25, 2012

LPC 68 /12

Location: 747 Market Street, Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 248

Commission Members in Attendance:

Mark McIntire, *Chair*
Bret Maddox, S.E., *Vice Chair*
Ross Buffington
Katie Chase
Edward Echtle
Ken House
Megan Luce
Marshall McClintock
Daniel Rahe

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight
Tonie Cook

Others Present:

Jonah Jensen, Gene Grulich, Lee Fenton, Christy Barrie

Commission Members Absent:

Jonah Jensen and Duke York

Chair Mark McIntire called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Katie Chase has been appointed to fill the remaining term of the Professional 3 Position (P3), through the end of 2012. Ms. Chase is an Architectural Historian with Artifacts Consulting.

Ross Buffington is a resident of the Wedge Neighborhood and has been appointed as the first Wedge Neighborhood Ex-Officio. Mr. Buffington previously served two consecutive terms on the Landmarks Preservation Commission in the Professional 1 (P1) position and as Vice Chair.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Excusal of Absences

Commissioners Jonah Jensen and Duke York were excused.

B. Administrative Approvals

The Administrative Review Summary listing projects approved from June 20 through July 13, 2012 were accepted.

3. BOARD BRIEFING

A. 3701 North 26th St – Washington Elementary School

Commissioners Jonah Jensen and Bret Maddox were recused. It was noted that this is a non-action briefing on the Washington Elementary rehabilitation project.

Mr. Reuben McKnight presented the Staff Report including background on the historic property and noted the previous February 2012 briefing, which introduced the project and design team to the Commission.

Mr. Gene Grulich with BLRB Architects introduced Lee Fenton, BLRB Senior Principal, and Jonah Jensen, BLRB Project Architect and Christy Barrie with Tacoma Public Schools.

Mr. Gene Grulich the history of the site, including the original building construction in 1906, 1910, and in 1949 with two components; he noted where the original school building (prior to 1906) had been located; he commented that the previous 1918 building was temporary and no longer there. He stated that to their knowledge, there had been no other buildings prior to school buildings located on this site.

Mr. Gene Grulich presented slides and described the existing site.

Mr. Lee Fenton discussed the programmatic issues of the existing space, the function and proposed uses: the existing 42,000 square feet includes a library, gym, 14 classrooms, two student restrooms on the lower level, staff and public restrooms located primarily on the lower level, one music room, and administrative and support space. He described the challenge of meeting the program needs of the students within the existing school facility that is over 100 years old and, overall, the programmatic improvements will increase the size to 60,000 square feet.

Mr. Gene Grulich proposed rehabilitation as the treatment for making improvements to the historic building, which, he stated, accepts alterations and additions to provide opportunities for modern school educational needs and noted, *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* #1, for the building's function will continue as it was historically; #5, to retain the character features, and #10, to not damage the historic building with proposed alterations and additions.

Mr. Lee Fenton described the planning approach to design the program expansion to 60,000 square feet was to understand how the existing building can accommodate the program needs. He talked about the resulting compromises to the functions of access, program, and aesthetics.

The following are highlights of the proposed schematic design plan based on the slide presentation.

Additions: One major addition on the northwest corner of the site is proposed for a gymnasium and L-shaped lunchroom that rests against the existing building; this addition will allow for 15 upper level classrooms;

Replace rather than re-purpose 1949 structure: Due to the grade level of this existing building and the need to create suitable access for all students, the proposal is to replace the building and lower it to make it complementary with the remaining facility. The new space will be a library and instructional addition at the same level that will be created at the main entrance.

Three kindergarden classrooms: The proposal is to "tuck" the classrooms underneath the playground with access [to this space] from 27th Street. This proposal will create this grade level's own autonomous identity and connection, via the hallway and elevator, to the main building.

Mr. Jonah Jensen stated that he is a Tacoma Landmarks Preservation Commissioner and affirmed he will recuse himself from the decision when the proposal is an actionable item before the Commission; he noted his employer and the school district asked him to present the next portion of the design plan.

He began by noting the three main components directing the plan, which are programmatic requirements, accessibility, and character defining features. He presented information on the interior's character defining elements, including the width and height of the corridors, volumes in the classroom, moldings, transoms, etc; and retaining the approximate size and location of the stairwells and the classrooms. He described the goals of maintaining the layout of three classrooms per grade level located on the same floor level and to retain shared activity space for small group instruction. There will be individual colors for student and staff restrooms on each floor and noted the areas for staff functions including a lounge area in the 1949 addition.

Mr. Jonah Jensen provided the following description along with slides:

By lowering the grade of the structure, the main entrance will be on the west versus the south side, which makes the building accessible; he showed the proposed gymnasium and lunchroom (i.e. the new "L-shape area) and transparent glass volumes that will connect the new with the old historic structure; he talked about the use of characteristics and elements from the historic building and interpretation so as not to mimic the historic building. The horizontal roof line element will be on the new additions by keeping a low slope to be able to see the cornice and third floor windows on the historic Frederick Heath building and 1949 building. The proposed new music classroom is double in size, the administration is in one location; the addition of new stairs to the kindergarden and food prep/kitchen areas will have little impact to the historic fabric of the building. The educational garden program will be incorporated into the site

An animation of the site was shown and described by Mr. Lee Fenton who stated that the site design is part of the program improvement of the school, including a new student drop off area, removal of onsite parking, and introduction of covered play and soft surface areas and re-distribution of parking.

Mr. Jonah Jensen summarized the design concept stating that the east elevation will remain intact; the south will be intact with the 1979 addition removed; the glass connection will serve to show the historic building features; he described the new additions.

Mr. Gene Grulich reviewed the schedule as follows: the schematic design will be finalized; when design development is complete, the plans will be presented to the Commission in October or November; at approximately 70% of the contract documents phase, formal recognition will be requested of the Commission; And, in early 2013, the final approval will be requested of the Commission.

Commissioners asked about the proposed perpendicular parking, school closure during construction, and the future of Hoyt School.

Ms. Christy Barrie, Tacoma Public Schools talked about the potential future use of Hoyt for a preschool program, the potential nomination of Hoyt and two other schools to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

There was discussion about the impact on the view of the historic school with the introduction of a new three-sided covered play structure and the challenge of selecting the best site with the least impact to the historic building and how to achieve the school program goals by balancing its (play structure) function with its design and provide for safety. Mr. Lee Fenton noted the consideration of rhythm of openings per the Secretary of Interior's Standards.

Commissioner Megan Luce complimented the design plan highlighting the proposed volume transition between the historic building and the new additions.

Commissioner Ross Buffington asked about the use of artificial green turf material and the kindergarden elevations.

Mr. Lee Fenton confirmed the proposal for turf in the plans at this time and the kindergarden addition's backside will be dark with the north side providing natural light.

4. CHAIR COMMENTS

No comments were made.

5. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING

A. Mr. Reuben McKnight talked about the following business items:

- i. There is a Pierce County grant opportunity with a limited amount of funds available to a Commissioner for attendance at the upcoming National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference in Spokane this fall. Commissioner Ed Echtle expressed his interest to attend this conference.
- ii. There is a potential request to schedule an Architectural Review Committee meeting on August 1, 2012, for a proposal to remodel a porch at 817 North I Street; he noted that a meeting agenda will be posted.
- iii. He asked if it would be beneficial to convene meetings beginning at 5:15 or 5:30 p.m. because of conflicting work schedules (for Commissioners). Commissioners stated support for the change in the start time and asked Staff to prepare the change to the Bylaws and work with the City Clerk on public meeting schedules.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer