

Members

Ken House, *Chair*
Edward Echtle, *Vice Chair*
Katie Chase
Jonah Jensen
Megan Luce
Daniel Rahe
James Steel
Duke York

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

Staff

Reuben McKnight, *Historic Preservation Officer*
Lisa Spielmann, *PDS Office Assistant*



MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Planning and Development Services Department

Date: October 9, 2013

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

Commission Members in Attendance:

Ken House
Katie Chase
Jonah Jensen
James Steel
Duke York
Ross Buffington, *Wedge Neighborhood Ex-Officio*
Marshall McClintock, *North Slope Ex-Officio*

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight
Lisa Spielmann

Others Present:

Commission Members Absent:

Edward Echtle
Megan Luce
Daniel Rahe

Commission Members Excused:

Chair Ken House called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Commissioner Echtle, Luce, and Rahe and present are the ex-officio Commissioners.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Excusal of absences: no excusals requested.
- B. Meeting minutes: no minutes to approve

Consent agenda approved.

3. DESIGN REVIEW

- A. 625 Commerce Street (Old City Hall, Old City Hall Historic District)

Mr. McKnight read the staff report into the record.

BACKGROUND

Old City Hall, constructed in 1892, was the first property added to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places in 1974. Since 2006, the property has been vacant while the ownership has attempted to obtain financing for a rehabilitation project.

In 2010, during a severe cold snap, the sprinkler main froze and burst, flooding the interior of the building. Although the damage from the water was cleaned up and abated, several other areas of concern have emerged, including a leaking roof on the northeast tower, potentially failing masonry on the west side of the building, lack of fire protection, and other substandard conditions.

Since 2010, the building has been under a "derelict" status under the Minimum Buildings and Structures Code (TMC 2.01); recently the City elevated this to a "dangerous" status. As a result of this action, the owner and the City negotiated a stipulated agreement to address the substandard conditions in the building (attached to the Staff Report).

The first action stipulated in the agreement is roof replacement on the northeast tower of the building, which has failed and is allowing water to enter the building, raising significant concerns about long term decline. The owner has submitted the attached proposal in keeping with the agreement, in which the following is proposed:

1. Remove and store existing barrel rolled copper roof.
2. Inspect and anchor existing copper cornice/soffit ornamental elements.
3. Inspect and repair/replace as needed existing roof decking material.
4. Install Tri-Built self-sealing underlayment
5. Install metal standing-seam roof in a finish to be determined
6. Install new gutters within the existing gutter system
7. Close open soffits where material is missing with temporary measures

This work is to be executed by November 4 and completed by December 20, 2013. Within the Stipulated Agreement, the owner agrees also to present a permanent restoration plan, including repair of cornice elements, to the Landmarks Preservation Commission within three years.

The City has consulted with roof repair and building envelope specialists regarding recommendations for addressing the roof issue. There is general agreement that the existing roof, which appears to be original to the building, must be removed to address both water incursion and wind.

Additional Items

Staff has requested that the following information be furnished to the Commission at the October 9, 2013 meeting:

1. Profile information for the metal roof, including width between roof seams.
2. Detail drawings showing the roof/gutter junction and gutter details.
3. Drawn details of the proposed treatment for the soffit where the cornice materials are missing (how will the soffit be enclosed, including materials, profile and attachments).
4. Material samples of the proposed metal finish.
5. Additional information for documentation of the existing roof if additional pieces of the cornice must be removed.

Mr. McKnight distributed material samples.

ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the proposal to replace the existing roof and secure the cornice materials to the building, as indicated above.

STANDARDS

The Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation apply. The standards "are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility."

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

ANALYSIS

1. Built in 1892-3, Old City Hall is an iconic historic building in Tacoma, listed on the National, State and Local Registers of Historic Places, in addition to being the namesake of the Old City Hall Historic District. Old City Hall was the City of Tacoma's first designated landmark.
2. As a City Landmark, exterior changes to the building require the review and approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission prior to the work being performed or permits being issued, per TMC 13.05.047.
3. The proposed action is being undertaken under a Stipulated Agreement between the City and the property owner, as a result of an enforcement action by the City to address multiple substandard conditions present on the property, including a failed roof.
4. According to building envelop consultants, repair of the roof is not feasible, because there are multiple areas of failure, and the tiles currently on the roof are not securely attached (meaning that more loss would be anticipated in high wind events). Repair from the underside will not address water penetration through the roof and underlayment.
5. According to a report prepared for the City by Wetherholt and Associates, previously presented to the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the original roof tiles could be custom reproduced but tooling may have to be made. The cost would be estimated at 2-3 times the cost of a standing seam assembly, thus
6. The proposed seam metal roof will attempt a color match to the remaining copper. In general, faux finishes should be avoided. A color such as "weathered copper" or "dark bronze" is preferable over an artificially patinated surface.
7. Removal of the copper will be documented and the material will be stored, to allow for future restoration.
8. The ownership will address the long term design of the roof and missing cornice elements within three years as a part of the stipulated agreement.
9. The existing (remaining) copper cornice elements will be retained and secured in place.
10. The proposed action will address the water incursion into the building.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted, noting that 1) this approach is designed to address the ongoing issue of serious water incursion into the building, 2) based upon the input received, this represents the most economically and technically feasible approach to address the issue, and 3) materials will be salvaged and the owner has committed to returning to the Commission to discuss future restoration.

There was discussion regarding stipulation that a permanent plan will be brought forward by owners within three years ensued. Also discussion about applying a special tax valuation on this effort and the Commission's options. Also concerns about the wording of the motion. A recommendation was made that there be a condition that no future permits or LPC approvals be issued until a permanent replacement and restoration has gone through. Mr. McKnight indicated that he'd have to check to see if that is legal. Lisa Wojtanowicz also noted that in the stipulated order there are requirements that need to be met within three years and all other violations (as outlined in the dangerous building code) be brought into compliance within five years.

There was discussion of an appropriate motion.

Motion:

Approve a temporary solution as presented, conditioned upon meeting the requirements outlined in the stipulated agreement Item 12 regarding return to the LPC with a plan for the restoration of the missing gutter and cornice elements with an architecturally appropriate roof material and design within the timelines that are indicated in item 9 of the stipulated agreement; that the future proposal shall comply

with Secretary of the Interior standards. A permanent roof solution may be required for the purposes of a special tax valuation for the Commission to approve such an application.

Motion seconded by Commissioner York.

Commissioner Chase proposed that the motion be amended to not use the shiny copper material.

Amendment seconded by Steel. Amendment accepted.

Commissioner Steel requested that in future if legal agreements are being reviewed that a rep from the City Attorney's Office be present.

Motion: House

Second: York

Motion approved.

4. Board Briefing

A. 764 Broadway (Bostwick Building)—storefront painting

Mr. McKnight stated that Rex Nikula from Reeder Management Company was not present.

BACKGROUND

Originally built in 1889, the Bostwick Building is a City Landmark. The building was added to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places in 1999 and received a Special Tax Valuation incentive for a substantial remodel that concluded in 2000. The building achieved its current visual appearance following a significant remodel in 1924, at which time the ornate Victorian exterior was stuccoed, and the existing Philippine mahogany storefronts were added.

On September 24, staff received numerous complaints that the storefronts on the building, which were stained and varnished, were being primed and painted. Staff contacted the ownership and property management company, Reeder Management, which was unaware that there was a requirement for approval for this exterior change.

Approximately 75% of the wood storefronts on the Saint Helens side of the building have been primed and painted with an oil-based penetrating primer and acrylic paint. The color of the paint is a brown selected to match the tone and hue of the unpainted wood. According to the property manager, the ongoing maintenance (and severely weather condition) of the existing exposed wood prompted this action. While stain and clear sealant was considered, the management was advised by the painting representative that this would not address long term maintenance and that suitable products would not produce a desirable "sheen."

At the request of staff, Mr. Nickula of Reeder Management attended the Architectural Review Committee on October 2. During this meeting he explained the rationale behind the painting and expressed concern that the removal of the paint would be very difficult.

The Committee made the following observations and recommendations:

- The mahogany wood is a character defining element of the building and was not meant to be painted
- Expert advice should be sought regarding both the feasibility of removal of the paint as well as potential sealants that would still allow the wood grain to be seen
- Potential resources might include window restoration experts or furniture refinishing experts
- The commission would like to see cost comparisons and pros/cons of different approaches to determine if painting is truly the best option

Mr. Nickula requested to be on the October 9, 2013 Landmarks meeting to continue the discussion and present additional information. Mr. McKnight said he would follow up to see why they did not attend this meeting and when the LPC may see a proposal from them. If they don't respond, he may pursue this as violation.

Commissioner York discussed remarks by a Sherman Williams chemist regarding paint vs. varnish. Clear varnish (one coat) doesn't last nearly as long as the paint with its expansion-contraction characteristics, but it has been proven that a multicoat buildup of varnish (four coats) you can achieve the same result as paint in terms of durability. So there is a way to make the varnish last as long as paint.

Chair House noted that they have created the condition by priming so near to the end of the weather window.

5. CHAIR COMMENTS

The Chair had no comments.

6. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING:

Mr. McKnight noted that here are a few special tax valuations coming up at the next meeting, and minutes will be completed.

Commissioner Jensen said that few months ago he gave an update on Washington and stated he could arrange a tour. It's getting toward the end of selective demolition for anyone who would be interested. One challenge with that may be with the time since it is getting darker sooner, we would need to do it earlier in the day instead of at this meeting time. The contractor is not on site after dark. He talked with the school district today and sometime in the next 3 or 4 weeks would be a good time. There are a lot of interesting things going on in the inside, and you can start to see the shape of the additions and the spaces they are going to create around the historic building. There are a lot of things happening concurrently. He said he could set something up with Mr. McKnight if people are interested.

There was brief discussion of work currently occurring on the roof.

Mr. McKnight reminded the Commissioners of the tour of McCarver Elementary on October 16, 5:30pm. This is an introductory walk through of current state in advance of project work.

Adjourned.

Chair Ken House adjourned the meeting at 6:28 pm.

Submitted as True and Correct:



Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer