

Members

Katie Chase
 JD Elquist
 Chris Granfield
 Jonah Jensen
 Daniel Rahe
 Lysa Schloesser
 James Steel
 Jeff Williams
 Duke York

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

Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer



MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Planning and Development Services Department

Date: April 23, 2014

Location: 747 Market, Tacoma Municipal Bldg, Conference 248

Time: 5:30 pm

Commission Members in Attendance:

Katie Chase
 JD Elquist
 Chris Granfield
 Jonah Jensen
 Daniel Rahe
 Lysa Schloesser
 James Steel
 Jeff Williams
 Duke York
 Ross Buffington
 Marshall McClintock

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight
 Kris Bertucci

Others Present:

Chris Ott
 John Lewis
 Denny Anderson
 Darius Thompson
 Martin Burns
 Ryan Williams
 Jori Adkins

Commission Members Excused:

Jonah Jensen

Chair York opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: York, Chase, Elquist, Granfield, Rahe, Schloesser, Steel, Williams, Buffington, McClintock.

2. BOARD BUSINESS

Mr. McKnight introduced the new Office Assistant, Kris Bertucci. Kris will be providing administrative support for the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Excusal of Absences – Chair York noted that Jonah Jensen was absent.
- B. Administrative Review
 - i. 715 S 11th St (railing and stairs)
 - ii. 629 St Helens (painting)

4. PUBLIC HEARING**A. NOMINATIONS TO THE TACOMA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

- i. 2324 S C Street (Tacoma Municipal Barn)

Mr. McKnight gave the Staff Report.

BACKGROUND

The Tacoma Municipal Barn, commonly known as the “City Shops and Stables,” was designed by City Engineer Wilbur C. Raleigh as a stable building to house city-owned horses and wagons, street maintenance operations, and facilities for other tasks (including carpentry, painting, and machining – and broom making). Opened in 1910, it has continuously housed city operations since. The Municipal Barn

embodies the transitional period between horse-dominated transportation and automobiles, and is a rare example of a Craftsman style concrete building.

The building is owned by the City of Tacoma and is the subject, along with several adjacent City-owned properties, of a current Request for Proposals.

It is nominated under the following criteria:

- a) *Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*, for its broad contributions to Tacoma's municipal development as an operations facility in the early part of the 20th century;
- b) *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*, as a rare example of industrial/commercial Craftsman-style architecture;
- c) *Is 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*; because it is located in a historically significant industrial area of the city and is adjacent to the Union-Depot/Warehouse Historic District; and
- d) *Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristics, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood or City*; as a visually unique building due to its architectural style and character in the industrial area.

The Barn was forwarded for Public Hearing on March 26, 2014.

EFFECTS OF NOMINATION

- Future changes to the exterior will require approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission prior to those changes being made, to ensure historical and architectural appropriateness.
- Unnecessary demolition of properties listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is strongly discouraged by the municipal code, and requires approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.
- Future renovations of listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places may qualify for the Special Tax Valuation property tax incentive.

STANDARDS

The threshold criteria for Tacoma Register listing are listed at 13.07.040B(1), and include:

1. Property is at least 50 years old at the time of nomination; and
2. The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association such that it is able to convey its historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

ANALYSIS

1. The Tacoma Municipal Barn Building was constructed in 1910. The building has been minimally altered on its exterior. Therefore the building appears to meet the threshold criteria for age and integrity.
2. The building is evocative of the history of street operations maintenance and public works, and represents the history of transportation technology in the City, thus meeting Criterion A.

3. The unusual combination of the Craftsman style architecture and concrete construction type makes the building a unique example of architecture, meeting Criterion C.
4. The building location is adjacent to the Union Depot-Warehouse Historic District, and is part of the "Brewery District," and has also been identified as a "catalyst" property in the South Downtown Plan, thus meeting Criterion E.
5. The City Shops and Stables Building has long served as a recognizable community landmark in the neighborhood, thus potentially meeting Criterion F.

RECOMMENDATION

The Commission may recommend designation to the City Council, deny the nomination, or defer if additional information is needed. Based upon the criteria listed in TMC 13.07.040, if no further public comments are received, staff recommends that the nomination be forwarded to City Council with a recommendation for designation.

B. RESCISSION OF LANDMARKS DESIGNATION

- i. 1239 E 54th Street (JM Hendricksen Homestead)

Mr. McKnight gave the Staff Report.

BACKGROUND

This is a request from the owner of the property at 1239 E 54th Street to remove the property from the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

The J. M. Hendrickson Homestead property, designated on November 12, 2011, is a 1.4 acre portion of a historic homestead that originally was settled in 1922 as a homestead farm. The farm originally consisted of 4.95 acres, and was designated with the existing craftsman style farmhouse, garage and barn. In the fall of 2012, the owner requested feedback on a proposal to subdivide and develop a significant portion of the open space on the property due to unforeseen financial concerns, which would allow her to remain in her home and provide living expenses.

On May 8, 2013, following a Public Hearing, the Commission forwarded a recommendation to City Council to change the boundaries of the historic designation, leaving approximately 1.4 acres under historic designation and removing historic designation from the remaining portion of the property, in order to allow the subdivision and development of that portion.

The entire property is currently for sale. Under the City of Tacoma land use regulations, the property can only be replatted once every five years, thus making it infeasible to subdivide the property into two parcels and then sell the remainder to be platted into residential lots. Thus, to sell the property to a developer as envisioned requires sale of the entire property, including the residence.

On February 26, 2014, the Commission was briefed on a proposal to plat the open space on the site for residential development, which would significantly encroach on the remaining historically designated area. The prospective buyer requested feedback, including whether the Commission would support another change to the historic boundaries, or permit development in the historically designated area. It was noted that the owner needs to sell the property for health related and financial reasons, but desires to remain in the home. During this discussion it was suggested that, due to the many discussions about this property and the difficulty of the situation, that it may be more appropriate to submit a request for removal from the historic register rather than request another boundary change, which would further diminish the historic integrity of the homestead's agricultural character.

This request is made on the basis of Economic Hardship under the Economic Hardship Criteria listed at 13.05.047.F.

The owner submitted a declaration to support the request for rescission on March 19, which included the following points:

- a) The Commission and City Council recently voted to remove all but 1.37 acres from the Tacoma Register of Historic Places to allow the remainder of the property to be developed, to relieve the owner of her financial distress.
- b) For reasons stated above, the owner has been unable to sell the land but keep the historic designated portion as planned.
- c) The owner has not been able to work since 1998, after developing cancer. Her sickness returned in 2012 and she currently is in treatment.
- d) Her cancer treatment is only partly insured and is a significant cost.
- e) The property has never functioned as an income producing farm.
- f) Attempts to sell the property but retain the home have not been successful. The owner desires to remain in her home.
- g) The owner also argues that the historic significance of the home, barn and garage is greatly diminished by the removal of the associated open space from the historic designation.

The following additional information has been submitted in support of the hardship claim:

- a) The amount paid for the property: *property was inherited.*
- b) The date of purchase, the party from whom purchased, and a description of the business or family relationship, if any, between the owner and the person from whom the property was purchased: *the property was inherited from her father in 2000.*
- c) The cost of any improvements since purchase by the applicant and date incurred: *No improvements have been made since the property was acquired.*
- d) The assessed value of the land, and improvements thereon, according to the most recent assessments: *the assessed value is \$227,000. When acquired the assessed value was \$157,000.*
- e) Real estate taxes for the previous two years:
 - i. 2012 \$4408.49
 - ii. 2013 \$3841.01
 - iii. 2014 \$3904.88
- f) Annual debt service, if any, for the previous two years: *none.*
- g) All appraisals obtained within the previous five years by the owner or applicant in connection with his or her purchase, financing or ownership of the property: *property has not been appraised in the past five years.*
- h) Any listing of the property for sale or rent, price asked, and offers received, if any: *property is listed for sale for \$420,000. Two offers have been received, one for \$195,000 that was withdrawn (land only) and a current offer for \$395,000 for the whole property. The latter offer is conditioned on the ability to rescind the Landmarks designation and will allow the owner to continue residing in the*

house.

- i) Any consideration by the owner for profitable and adaptive uses for the property, including renovation studies, plans, and bids, if any: *There have been attempts to find a compatible use that would relieve the financial stress of owning the property. Using the property as a community farm was considered but there wasn't enough interest to pay for an appraisal. It has also been considered for acquisition as open space, but did not meet criteria. The land is not practical from a logistical standpoint to be an income generating agricultural property.*

Additionally, the owner states that she currently has a revolving debt of \$57,661 relating to her living expenses. She is unable to work due to a serious recurrence of cancer.

On March 26, 2014, the Commission voted to forward this for Public Hearing. As of April 20, no written comments have been received.

STANDARDS

Rescission of a Landmarks Designation follows procedures outlined in TMC 13.07.055, and requires:

1. A written request from the property owner or City Council, or a direct resolution by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, to initiate the process.
2. The request should state the reasons why, under criteria outlined in TMC 13.07.055, the property should be removed from the register.
3. When the request is received, the Commission shall schedule a public hearing within 60 days to receive public comment.

The criteria include:

1. Economic hardship. The property cannot be maintained as a City Landmark without causing undue economic hardship to the owner. Efforts to find a purchaser interested in acquiring the property and preserving it have failed.
2. Catastrophic Loss. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the owner, such as fire, earthquake, or other catastrophic occurrence, the property has been damaged to the extent that its historic character has been irrecoverably lost.
3. Procedural Error. A property may be removed from the Historic Register if there is clear evidence that the Landmarks Preservation Commission or City Council committed any procedural errors during the consideration of the designation. This criterion does not include dissenting opinions regarding the findings or interpretations of the Commission during the designation process or the Commission's application of the Criteria for Designation.
4. The Landmarks Preservation Commission may itself also request removal of a property from the Historic Register in instances where:
 - a. The significant structure on the property no longer exists, due to a previous demolition.
 - b. The Commission finds that retaining the property on the Historic Register does not further the goals and objectives of this Chapter and the Preservation Plan.

ANALYSIS

1. The property is a City Landmark, added to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places on November 12, 2011, as an example of early 20th century homestead in Tacoma, for its vernacular architecture, and for

its association with the immigrant experience in Tacoma.

2. On December 18, 2013, the City Council voted to amend the boundaries of the historically designated area as recommended by the Landmarks Preservation Commission to allow for development on the open space area, while maintaining a 1.4 acre area around the existing structures, to provide some financial relief to the owner.
3. The owner has submitted a written request as required by TMC 13.07.055 for removal from the historic register, and has stated that Economic Hardship is the basis for the request.
4. Economic hardship standards in code require that the applicant submit information to support the claim of hardship, which has been submitted in the form of two declarations.
5. The owner has been unable to sell the property under terms that meet her personal and financial needs – to remain resident in her home, at a price that will provide her with income on which to live and pay medical and debt obligations. She has successfully negotiated an offer which would meet these criteria, if the property is no longer listed on the historic register, which would allow more of the open space land to be developed. Clearly this attempt has been made.
6. The removal of additional land from the historic designation for the purposes of development would create a situation in which the sole contributing element of the property would be the buildings – including the barn, garage, and bungalow. By themselves, these elements do not likely represent a strong case for historic significance, even though the house is well maintained, as Craftsman influenced residential architecture is particularly well represented in Tacoma. In that case, it would be questionable as to whether retaining the property on the register contributes to the objectives of TMC 13.07 and the Preservation Plan.
7. The owner is suffering from a significant illness and is clearly in financial distress related to that illness.
8. The specific factors relating to this property and this owner present a unique situation that differs from that of a commercial property owner, or an owner of a typical home, which is not well anticipated by the structure of the code.
9. This request for rescission comes as a result of Commission discussion with the prospective developer on February 26, 2014, during which it was suggested that delisting may be more appropriate than another boundary adjustment.
10. At the time of this staff report no public comment has been received on this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

If no additional comments are received, Staff recommends forwarding a recommendation to City Council for the Rescission of Landmarks Designation, based on 1) economic hardship and 2) given the circumstances of this property owner and the property itself, retention of the landmarks designation does not further the goals and objectives of the preservation plan or ordinance.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Chair York opened the floor for public testimony.

Chris Ott came as a citizen to speak publicly about the Barn. His statements were: if the Barn is put up for sale, it will likely be re-purposed. We will then lose an important part of the City. I worked in Street Maintenance for 25 years. The Barn was designed and built specifically for COT Public Works – for many years, it really was the face of Public Works. Consider the caliber of the people who have worked there over the last 100 years through snowstorms, windstorms, earthquakes. One employee was killed in 1925; there

was no tribute paid to him. Your acceptance of the City Shops and Stables Building would pay tribute to him and the other employees who have worked there.

Mr. McClintock, a non-voting member from Historic Tacoma, expressed his concern about the building. Architecturally, it is an amazing building, and he showed concurrence with Mr. Ott. The New Tacoma Neighborhood Council felt very strongly in support of registering the Barn building. There was a unanimous decision to write the appropriation letter.

John Lewis of the "Brew Crew" spoke. He has a brewing operation in the vicinity of the Shop building, and responded to the fourth RFP. The "Crew" wants the building preserved. It is an investment in the whole neighborhood area, and we plan on keeping the building's integrity intact. The building was built by the people who worked in it. We want to preserve as much of the historical character as possible.

Martin Burns, attorney for the property owner, was there to represent. He knows that the removal of Historical Properties from the Landmarks list is unusual, but the owner is under financial hardship. The property is in Tacoma, and is a large parcel of land. It is incapable of getting a reasonable return on development, as it is R-1 zoned. There is no other use for it. The owner has tried many options, but plans were not drawn. Removing the property from the Landmarks designation is not going to make her money. She has severe health issues, medical and drug expenses, etc. The house is on an empty field, and hopefully is not a great loss to the Landmarks list.

Chair York closed the hearing and called for discussion.

DISCUSSION/MOTIONS

2324 S C Street (Tacoma Municipal Barn)

There was a motion:

*I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission recommend to City Council that the **Tacoma Municipal Barn**, be included on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places, finding that they meet Criteria A, C, E and F of TMC 13.07.040.*

Motion: Steel

Second: not recorded

Motion carried.

1239 E 54th Street (Hendricksen Homestead)

Several commissioners remarked that in the future, the guidelines for demonstrating economic hardship should be more strictly applied. Commissioner Steel stated that he believed that the rescission was a correct decision in part because the current owner was the original nominator of the property to the register, and that her specific circumstances were unique. Commissioner Williams believed that the demonstration of economic hardship in this case could be stronger but that he concurred that the action of rescission was the correct course of action given all the circumstances. He requested in the future that the requests for finding hardship be very carefully scrutinized.

There was a motion:

*I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission recommend to City Council the rescission of Landmarks designation for **1239 E 54th Street**, based on a finding of economic hardship and, given the circumstances of this property owner and the property itself, a finding that the retention of the landmarks designation does not further the goals and objectives of the preservation plan or ordinance.*

Motion: Steel

Second: Williams

Motion carried.

5. DESIGN REVIEW

- a. 17th Street Re-Alignment (Union Station Conservation District) Darius Thompson, Public Works

Mr. McKnight gave the Staff Report.

BACKGROUND

The University of Washington Tacoma has expressed a desire to re-align South 17th Street into a continuous Street and to reconfigure the intersections at South 17th/Broadway/Jefferson and South 17th/Commerce/Jefferson. This work will include a new rock wall on the Northside of 17th between Commerce and Broadway, new ADA ramps at both intersections, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and a grind and overlay of Jefferson between 19th and 17th and a road section on 17th between Commerce and the Westside of Broadway. Some utilities in the roadway will be upgraded.

The Commission was briefed on this item on February 12, 2014.

REQUESTED ACTION

Approval of the above scope of work.

STANDARDS

Union Depot Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines

E. Streetscape Guidelines. Streetscaping is essential in the development of the districts in order to create value and enhance private development efforts. Proper design of streetscapes and public open spaces provides a unifying theme and unique identity for the districts, complements and extends the presence of Union Station, encourages pedestrian circulation, and creates a gateway to downtown and the waterway. The pattern of traffic routes and open space is based upon the historic function of the district and has a direct relation to such physical features as views from the upper floors of the building, sunlight, façade visibility, and streetscape appearance. Any significant loss or reconfiguration of existing open space and street corridors is discouraged.

ANALYSIS

1. The project area is located within the Union-Depot Warehouse 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 Right of Way per TMC 13.05.047, prior to those changes being made, by virtue of its location within the historic district.
3. This proposal restores traffic flow to the 17th Street alignment. Although the design guidelines dictate that "significant reconfiguration of existing open space and street corridors is discouraged," the road alignments have already been significantly altered from the original axis that was dependent on the railroad and topographical alignment. By the 1970s, 17th Street adjacent to the Carleton – the portion proposed to be reopened – was closed. In 2001, the 1500 Block of Jefferson was bisected by the Sound Transit Link extension, which ran counter to the historical grid pattern, and then was removed by the construction of Tollefson Plaza, creating a significant traffic issue.
4. The project will re-establish 17th as a through street.

The presenter brought rock wall design pictures made from Shockcrete, a stamped concrete product. He said this type of rock was used in other places in the City of Tacoma, so he used the existing model in order to produce this rendering.

Much dissention was expressed over the use of the wall. The LPC expressed more preference over a smooth concrete wall that was acid-washed, which would give the wall texture and make it look more like aggregate.

Another suggestion was a plaster pattern to match the adjacent building.

General concurrence in the Committee was that we want to use materials used to match the existing architecture. In 30 years, the stamped concrete would show as a “date stamp” for the 2012 – 2014 era.

MOTION

I move to approve the application and to delegate to administrative review the final design for the wall surface texture.

Motion: Steel
Second: Granfield
Motion carried

6. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING

- a. Stewart Middle School Jeff Dunning, Bassetti Architects
Site visit recap and next steps

There are many challenges making Stewart ADA compatible. The front terrace must be rebuilt. The architects invited questions or concerns regarding the idea of rebuilding.

Then ensued long discussion about the aesthetics of the terrace, the safety aspects, the practical usage, and the options for rebuild or re-design. After much brainstorming, the decision was that Bassetti Architects will return to the next Landmarks Preservation Commission meeting with several new ideas and options to present.

- b. Presentation on Marvin Windows product line Jim Hay and Carrie Cooke, Marvin
The presenters brought a sample of the new Marvin window line that reflects old style, but is a new window with all the features of today’s technology.

- c. Preservation Month update
Reception Planning
May is Preservation Month! We are in the throes of reception planning, and we encourage you to attend. The City will provide food, but we unfortunately cannot provide beverages. We will “pass the hat” to the Commissioners for contributions to the beverage fund. Mr. McKnight will pay for the beverages up front if the Commission agrees to \$20 to \$25 per person.

Commission consensus was achieved.

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer