MINUTES
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Planning and Development Services Department

Date: February 8, 2017
Location: 747 Market Street, Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 248

Commission Members in Attendance:
Brittani Flowers
Roger Johnson
Lysa Schloesser
James Steel
Eugene Thorne
Kevin Bartoy
Ken House
Marshall McClintock

Commission Members Absent:
Katie Pratt, Chair
Jonah Jensen, Vice-Chair
Jeff Williams

Staff Present:
Reuben McKnight
Lauren Hoogkamer
John Griffith

Others Present:
Jeff Ryan
Robert Mack
Susan Ryan
Felicity Devlin
Cole Brame
Denis Callaghan
Dawn Seaholm
Lucy Mikita
Victor Anderson
Emma Lantz
Phil Lantz
Michael Lafreniere
Jim Merritt
Bea Christopherson
Charlene Norton

Commissioner Ken House called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

2. CONSENT AGENDA
   A. Excusal of Absences
   B. Approval of Minutes: 1/25/17
   C. Administrative Review
      • 822 North 11th Street – deck rebuild/repair
      • 824 North K Street – single door replacement

The minutes were approved as submitted. The consent agenda was approved.

3. TACOMA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES – PUBLIC HEARING
   A. 3713 North 19th Street & 1920 North Adams Street, Cushman and Adams Street Substations

Commissioner House call the public hearing to order. Mr. McKnight read the staff report.

BACKGROUND
The Cushman and Adams Street Substations, at 3713 N 19th Street and 1920 North Adams Street, were built in 1926. The buildings were predominantly designed by engineer Vern Grongwer and built by Dougan and Chrisman.
The complex is nominated under Criterion A, for its association with the region's growth as a result of hydroelectric power production. The substations housed the means for efficient distribution of electricity, making the Cushman Substation one of the most important and influential buildings of its time as well as the only urban building constructed for the Cushman Hydroelectric Project. The property is also nominated under Criterion C as an excellent example of monumental, neoclassical revival style architecture. The Cushman Substation is a visual statement as to the importance of the city's municipal hydroelectric system. The period of significance is 1926 to 1949, which is the date of construction up until the transmission line was rerouted.

- Tacoma Public Utilities currently owns and maintains the property and was notified of the pending nomination on November 1, 2016. The nomination was prepared and submitted by Jeff Ryan. Notice of the hearing was sent to property owners in a 400' radius on January 25, 2017. Notice was also published in the Tacoma News Tribune. Letters of support have been received from the North End Neighborhood Council and community members.

- Cushman Substation, the North 21st Street Towers and the switchyard (noncontributing) are already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but the National Register designation does not include the Adams Street Substation.

- The nomination under consideration for the Tacoma Register of Historic Places includes: the exteriors of the Adams and Cushman Substations, the interior of the Cushman Substation condenser room, the surrounding sites, and a single lattice tower adjacent to the Adams Substation. The yard equipment is considered noncontributing to the historic character of the property, as with the National Register designation.

- On December 14, 2016, the Commission voted to forward the nomination for public comment at a Public Hearing, but removed the lattice towers along 21st Street from further consideration.

- There has been some concern from the public regarding a notice sent by TPU ahead of the nomination, which indicated that, if designated, "the equipment, steel structures and foundations within the Cushman and Adams substation fences remain in place (even if not in use)." The nominator wishes to clarify that this is not the intent of the nomination, and that the purpose of including the surrounding site in the in the nomination is to ensure that there is public input on any future development of the property.

**REQUESTED ACTION**
The purpose of this hearing is to hear public comment.

**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 and their contributing elements 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.

- The property will become eligible for the Historic Conditional Use Permit. However, designation does not limit the future use of the property.

**STANDARDS**
The properties are nominated under the following criteria:

A. *Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or*
C. Embodying 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;

Staff recommends the additional criteria of:

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

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the Landmarks Commission leave the comment period open until Friday, February 10, and schedule the nomination for final review on February 22, 2017.

Jeff Ryan commented that by nominating to the Tacoma register, they had the opportunity to have a public conversation about what the building can be used for in the future. He commented that he had been doing architecture in the City for 30 years and had seen many good historic buildings lost due to neglect, lack of maintenance, and not finding a good use for the building. Mr. Ryan commented that part of the purpose of the nomination was to come up with something to do with the building before it was sold. He commented that he had nominated the whole site, but not the small things on the site which were not original or of a character that needed to be preserved. He commented that he had nominated the site to address the building, as what happened to the site would affect the building and how the property is viewed. He reviewed that with the Union Station site, there were restrictions on construction in the adjacent areas to prevent views from being blocked, so there was precedent. He added that he would like a timeline from TPU on the cleanup for the site.

Robert Mack, Deputy Director for Public Affairs and Communications at Tacoma Public Utilities, commented that they were proud that the building was on the National Register and that it was iconic on the North End. He commented that part of their concern was things that had been added to the nomination that would have a negative impact on the future use of the site. Mr. Mack reported that they had no current plans to abandon the building or reuse it and that, if they chose to no longer use it for storage, there was a process through which the City would decide how to sell the property and for what use. He reported that they had asked that the material in the switchyards be removed from the nomination as there was little remaining. He commented that the building interiors were beautiful, but they felt they should not be nominated as they were never public spaces and did not meet the City code requirements. Mr. Mack commented that the Adams Street lattice tower and other towers were not unique and would interfere with the new towers that would be replacing them. He reviewed photos of the site from the 1920’s compared to recent photos, noting superstructures and towers which had been removed, adding that the integrity of the yards was gone. He discussed how the condenser room had been changed and noted that there had never been public access to the space. He noted a stair that had been moved to the exterior and could be restored. He reviewed the locations of other similar lattice towers near the Cushman Dam and the east side of Tacoma, noting that they had no plans to remove them. He reviewed that they were fine with preserving the Cushman and Adams buildings, but they had concerns about the rest of the nomination. Mr. Mack commented that the lattice towers on North 21st Street were on the national register and that they were working to remove that designation. If the towers were included in the Tacoma nomination they would also have to be removed from the City register before they could be taken down. He added that it was an important structure and he understood that there were concerns about future use, but he felt that the it was not the appropriate place to be debating future uses.

Commissioner House called for testimony. The following citizens provided comments:

(1) Susan Ryan:

Ms. Ryan asked how tall the new towers would be, commenting that they looked short in the images. An engineer from Tacoma Public Utility commented that the new towers would be 100-120 feet tall, because they would be every other block. He commented that on 21st Street they had to create large structures so that the wire could be kept at a distance from the tower structure. Ms. Ryan requested to have a vision of the potential of site with all of the components including the tower and both buildings.

(2) Felicity Devlin:
Ms. Devlin asked for clarification on the historical significance of the towers. Mr. Mack responded that the project itself was historical due to the distance covered by the wires, which crossed the Narrows. Ms. Devlin expressed support for the nomination, adding that the space around it was essential to the overall aesthetic of the building. She asked that the space, minus the equipment, be retained in the nomination.

(3) Cole Brame:

Mr. Brame reviewed that he had received a notice from TPU that the cement structures and steel towers were nominated to be maintained, which had been addressed. He asked that things like the barbed wire fence and cell phone towers be removed from the nomination. He commented that people viewed the rusty tower structures as an eyesore and that there was not much value in keeping the substructures that had been added through the years.

(4) Dennis Gallagher:

Mr. Gallagher commented that he had lived across the street from the lattice tower for 42 years and that he didn’t like it. He reviewed that they had been told that the towers were in poor condition and that they were excited that they were going to be removed along with the equipment in the yard. He commented that he did not see the need for the lattice tower or the equipment in the yard to be included in the nomination.

(5) Dawn Seaholm:

Ms. Seaholm noted that she lived across the street from the Cushman Substation. She commented that she had looked at the substation for over 40 years, that it was part of their environment, and that she hoped that it would be put on the Tacoma Register.

(6) Lucy Mikita:

Ms. Mikita commented that she had lived on the east side of the Cushman Substation for 17 years. She commented that the building was a landmark for the North End and that they needed open space. She commented that it would be a nice location for a park.

(7) Victor Anderson:

Mr. Anderson commented that he lived behind the Adams building. He asked if the new powerlines could be buried. It was noted that the existing lines were still in use and that the cost to move them underground was significantly higher than what they had planned on spending. Mr. Anderson noted that he liked the Adams building, but that something needed to be done as it was currently a location for illegal dumping and criminal activity. He commented that he didn’t know if the smaller building was worth putting on the register as it was in poor condition. It was noted that the Adams building was on the surplus list, available to be purchased, and that they had not had any successful bidders for the site. Mr. Anderson asked who would be responsible for cleanup of the site. It was noted that TPU would test and clean the site.

(8) Emma Lantz:

Ms. Lantz commented that she lived across the street from the towers. She commented that retaining one tower did not make sense due to the condition, appearance, and that it would be an obstacle for the new towers. She commented that she supported the rest of the nomination.

(9) Phil Lantz:

Mr. Lantz noted that he live across the street and that he would hate to lose the unique equipment that looked like robots from the equipment yard. He asked what would happen if someone wanted to convert the Cushman Substation to multifamily housing.

(10) Michael Lafreniere:

Mr. Lafreniere reported that in a book on the history of the Proctor area he had found that the residents had originally sued the City to fight the construction of the building due to lack of public input. He suggested that nominating for some kind of public use would be a way to compensate the community for putting up with a use that was a negative impact to the neighborhood. He commented that he was excited about what could be done to the site with park designs to compliment the building. He noted that he did not support keeping
the lattice tower, but that he supported the rest of the nomination. He suggested that the interior of the building be made into public space as it had potential for similar uses to the Union Station lobby.

(11) Jim Merritt:
Mr. Merritt reviewed that he was the lead architect for Union Station and that the interior and exterior of that building had been part of the project, even though they had done dramatic changes. He commented that having the interior on the nomination would be a valuable asset in how the building was adapted for reuse. He commented that transitions were also historic in their context. He commented that a public discussion was important so that they didn't have a crisis where there was not enough time to have a thorough discussion on the reuse of the building. He commented that elements of both buildings and the interiors could be restored and made usable for the community, so he supported keeping both buildings on the nomination. Mr. Merritt commented that the North End lacks public space and requested that the Commission to look at the Policy UF-13.28 of the Comprehensive Plan which stated that surplus substations should be prioritized for public recreational use.

(12) Bea Christopherson:
Ms. Christopherson commented that the classic look of the building gave them a sense of history and place. She noted that Proctor was increasing in density and needed appropriate green space. She commented that if anything was built around or next to the Cushman Substation, it would take away from the look of the building. She commented that there were no community centers in the North End and that the building would be a good location for one. She commented that no matter what the building was used for, there would need to be parking and visibility to the Substation, so she hoped no other buildings would go on the site.

(13) Charlene Norton:
Ms. Norton reported that her family had lived across the street from the substation for the last 14 years. She commented that she supported the nomination and that she'd like to see the interior preserved as well. She commented that the tower was an eyesore and created challenges for the future lines. She commented that it would be fascinating if they could repurpose some of the visually interesting equipment from the yard. She commented that, for the future use of the building, apartments would be a poor choice for the community.

Commissioner House closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Bartoy commented that he was concerned about the accuracy of communications sent by TPU that had been referenced in the hearing and that he would like to see a copy of the notice that had been sent out. He asked where TPU was in terms of Section 106 compliance as there was likely mitigation that would be part of it. Commissioner Bartoy asked for more information about the provisions for power substations in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. McKnight responded that he would provide the additional information to the Commission at the next meeting. He noted that the designation would not be able to prohibit a future use of the property.

Commissioner Thorne commented that he was in favor of included the interior of the Cushman Substation as part of the nomination, as it had relevance to the building's use. Mr. McKnight responded that there wasn't any debate as to whether the interior of the building contributed to its historic character. He commented that while the Commission was typically focused on the outsides of buildings, there was a specific code provision that talked about significant interior public spaces. He noted that the Pantages Auditorium as an example where the lobby was a public space that required design review by the Commission.

Mr. McClintock reviewed that Mr. Ryan had not had access to the interior of the building and was drawing primarily from the National Register nomination. He asked if staff would inventory the interior to better determine which elements might be historically significant. Mr. McKnight noted that he had been inside the building and that items like the sconces on the walls had been called out as significant, but that the space itself and the elements within it were what would be under review by the Landmarks Commission if there were future alterations. Mr. McClintock commented that a list of specific elements being considered might help TPU be more comfortable with the interior being part of the nomination.
Commissioner Flowers commented that access to the interior would be helpful in determining if the interior was significant. Mr. McKnight responded that they could work with TPU to find a time for a walkthrough of the building. Commissioners concurred that a site visit would be appropriate.

Mr. McKnight reviewed the scope of what was in the nomination including the Cushman building along with its interior, the Adams building, and the surrounding property. He reviewed that Commission had excluded most of the towers from the nomination at a previous meeting, and that the singular tower on the site was the only one remaining in the nomination. Mr. McClintock commented that an assessment of the condition of the Adams Street Tower and the feasibility of moving it might be helpful for the Commission.

Commissioner Schloesser asked if the “robots” were part of the nomination or included in site. Mr. McKnight responded that they were not historic and would be removed when the equipment yard was cleared.

Commissioner Steel requested additional information on the code for nomination of the site.

There was a motion.
“I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission leave the comment period open until Friday, February 10, 2017 and schedule the nomination for final review on February 22, 2017.”

Motion: Steel
Second: Bartoy
The motion was approved unanimously.

4. SPECIAL TAX VALUATION

A. 514 North M Street (North Slope Historic District)

Ms. Hoogkamer read the staff report.

OVERVIEW
WAC 254-20 enables local governments adopt local legislation to provide special valuation of historic properties that have been rehabilitated. With regard to the application review process, state law authorizes local historic review boards to determine:

1. Whether the property is included within a class of historic property determined eligible for special valuation by the local legislative authority under an ordinance or administrative rule (in Tacoma, this means properties defined as City Landmarks);
2. Whether the property has been rehabilitated at a cost equal to or exceeding 25% of the assessed improvement value at the beginning of the project within twenty-four months prior to the date of application; and
3. Whether the property has not been altered in any way which adversely affects those elements which qualify it as historically significant.

If the local review board finds that the property satisfies all three of the above requirements, then it shall, on behalf of the local jurisdiction, enter into an agreement with the owner which, at a minimum, includes the provisions set forth in WAC 254-20-120. Upon execution of said agreement between the owner and the local review board, the local review board shall approve the application.

Per TMC 1.42, the Tacoma Landmarks Commission is the local body that approves applications for Special Tax Valuation.

ANALYSIS
Property Eligibility: North Slope Historic District
Rehabilitation Cost Claimed: $102,604
Assessed Improvement Value Prior to Rehabilitation: $133,500
Rehabilitation percentage of assessed value: 77%
5. DESIGN REVIEW

A. 1716 Pacific Avenue (Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District)

BACKGROUND
Built in 1892, this building is a contributing property in the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District. The proposal is for a white PVC sign attached to a black steel bracket. The sign will be 30" and both sides will be light green with black and pink details and letters that read, "SAM CHOY’S Poke TO THE MAX." The sign will be 125” above the ground and mounted into the existing masonry joints: there will be no drilling into the masonry face.

ACTION REQUESTED
Approval of the above scope of work.

STANDARDS
The Union Depot/Warehouse District Design Guidelines for Signs:
General:
1. All new exterior signs and all changes in the appearance of existing exterior signs require Landmarks Preservation Commission approval. This includes changes in message or colors on pre-existing signs.

2. If there is a conflict between these standards and the requirements in the City’s Sign Code, the more strict requirement shall apply.

Location and Size of Signs:
1. Signs shall not dominate the building facades or obscure their architectural features (arches, transom panels, sills, moldings, cornices, windows, etc.).

2. The size of signs and individual letters shall be of appropriate scale for pedestrians and slow-moving traffic. Projecting signs shall generally not exceed nine square feet on first floor level.
3. Signs on adjacent storefronts shall be coordinated in height and proportion. Use of a continuous sign band extending over adjacent shops within the same building is encouraged as a unifying element.

4. Portable reader board signs located on sidewalks, driveways, or in parking lots are prohibited.

5. Existing historic wall signs are a contributing element within the district and should be restored or preserved in place. New wall signs shall generally be discouraged.

Messages and Lettering Signs:
1. Messages shall be simple and brief. The use of pictorial symbols or logos is encouraged.

2. Lettering should be of a traditional block or curvilinear style which is easy to read and compatible with the style of the building. No more than two different styles should be used on the same sign.

3. Letters shall be carefully formed and properly spaced so as to be neat and uncluttered. Generally, no more than 60 percent of the total sign area shall be occupied by lettering.

4. Lettering shall be generally flat or raised.

Color:
1. Light-colored letters on a dark-colored background are generally required as being more traditional and visually less intrusive in the context of the Union Station District's predominantly red-brick streetscapes.

2. Colors shall be chosen to complement, not clash with, the facade color of the building. Signs should normally contain not more than three different colors.

Materials and Illumination:
1. Use of durable and traditional materials (metal and wood) is strongly encouraged. All new signs shall be prepared in a professional manner.

2. In general, illumination shall be external, non-flashing, and non-glare.

3. Internal illumination is generally discouraged, but may be appropriate in certain circumstances, such as: (i) Individual back-lit letters silhouetted against a softly illuminated wall. (ii) Individual letters with translucent faces, containing soft lighting elements inside each letter. Metal-faced box signs with cut-out letters and soft-glow fluorescent tubes. (iii) However, such signs are generally suitable only on contemporary buildings.

4. Neon signs may be permitted in exceptional cases where they are custom-designed to be compatible with the building's historic and architectural character.

Other Stylistic Points:
1. The shape of a projecting sign shall be compatible with the period of the building to which it is affixed, and shall harmonize with the lettering and symbols chosen for it.

2. Supporting brackets for projecting signs should complement the sign design, and not overwhelm or clash with it. They must be adequately engineered to support the intended load, and generally should conform to a 2:3 vertical-horizontal proportion.

3. Screw holes must be drilled at points where the fasteners will enter masonry joints to avoid damaging bricks, etc.

ANALYSIS
1. This property is a contributing structure in the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District and, as such, is subject to review by the Landmarks Preservation Commission pursuant to TMC 13.05.047 for exterior modifications.
2. The proposed signage meets the district design guidelines for location, size, messaging, and lettering.

3. There will be both light colored lettering and black lettering, which has been allowed in the district.

4. No illumination is proposed.

5. All drilling will be into the mortar joints; there will be no drilling into the brick face.

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends approval of the application.

The applicant reported that the proposed sign would be a projected sign that would be attached to the building. She noted that there was an existing sign attached to the building and that they would be attaching a new sign bracket using existing penetrations in the building. She added that the sign was over eight feet above the grade.

Commissioner Schloesser asked if the colored background would be used for the sign. The applicant confirmed that it would and noted that it would be smaller than the existing sign that had been at the same location.

There was a motion.
"I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission approve the application for 1716 Pacific Avenue, as submitted."
Motion: Johnson
Second: Flowers
The motion was approved unanimously.

6. PRESERVATION PLANNING/BOARD BUSINESS

A. Discussion: Requirements/review of design guideline waivers

Mr. McKnight reviewed that the item was a follow up to the discussion of a request to exceed the height limitation in the Union Station Conservation District guidelines. He reviewed that there had been a request for a more detailed discussion of the rationale behind departing from the design guidelines for height and what kinds of information should be provided to the Commission to consider such requests. He noted that the conversation regarding the buildings in question would come before the Commission again. Commissioner Bartoy commented that he thought it would be good to be explicit when they made those deviations about why they were making exceptions. He commented that having more information would be valuable for the Commission moving forward. He commented that he would like to see the larger context of how the building fits into the neighborhood and relates to the surrounding buildings be considered when an application moves forward. Commissioner Johnson commented that renders showing the buildings in the context of the area would be helpful. Commissioner Steel reviewed that they had requested renders with context for the Convention Center hotel, but had not for the Brewery Blocks proposal because the buildings would not likely be visible from Pacific Avenue and that much of the code was written with the look of Pacific Ave and Union Station in mind and not the further extents of the district. Mr. McClintock commented that the applicants for the Convention Center hotel had provided renderings of the building from multiple perspectives. He suggested that if an applicant wanted to exceed the height guidelines it would be an appropriate request. Commissioner Steel commented that it would not need to be a detailed rendering, but a quick massing placed in a photo to show the heights of buildings would be useful. Mr. McKnight commented that staff would propose a checklist of what the Commission would need for similar projects going forward that could possibly be added to the bylaws. Commissioner Steel commented that he would phrase the request as "a 3D representation that includes site context". Mr. McKnight commented that they would prepare something for the Commission to review at a future meeting.

B. Events and Activities Updates

Ms. Hoogkamer provided an update on the following events and activities:
2017 Events
1. Historic Preservation Month Shirt Vote (February)
2. Landmarks Commissioner Training (8:30am-4:30pm @ Tacoma Convention Center, March 7th)
3. NSHD’s Wood Window Workshop (9am-4:30pm @ Foss Waterway Seaport, February 18th-19th)
4. History Happy Hour Trivia Night (6pm @ The Swiss Restaurant & Pub, March 15th)
5. Buying Historic Houses Workshop (TBD, April 8th)
6. Historic Preservation Month (May)
   i) City Council Proclamation (5pm @ City Council Chambers, May 2nd)
   ii) Historic Tacoma Kick-Off Event (7pm TBD, May 5th)
   iii) THS’s Historic Homes Tour (May 6th – 7th)
   iv) TAM’s Prairie Line Trail Festival (TBD May 7th)
   v) Amazing Preservation Race (11am TBD, May 7th)
   vi) Historic Preservation Debate (TBD, May 13th)
   vii) Historic Preservation Awards and Maritime History Walking Tour (1pm TBD, May 20th)
7. Northeast Tacoma Walking Tour (10am TBD, June 3rd)
8. Washington Trust for Historic Preservation Youth Heritage Program: Maritime Heritage (July 11th – 15th)
9. South Tacoma Walking Tour (10am TBD, August 12th)
10. Walking Tour (10am TBD, September 9th)
11. Arts Month (October TBD)
12. Fourth Annual Holiday Heritage Dance (November 3rd TBD)

7. CHAIR COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight
Historic Preservation Officer