

## Members

Katie Pratt, *Chair*  
Ken House, *Vice-Chair*  
Roger Johnson  
Lysa Schloesser  
James Steel  
Eugene Thorne  
Jeff Williams  
Kevin Bartoy  
Ken House



# MINUTES

## Landmarks Preservation Commission Planning and Development Services Department

Marshall McClintock, North Slope Ex-Officio

## Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer  
Lauren Hoogkamer, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer  
John Griffith, Office Assistant

Date: September 13, 2017

Location: 747 Market Street, Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 243

### Commission Members in Attendance:

Katie Pratt, *Chair*  
Roger Johnson  
James Steel  
Jeff Williams  
Kevin Bartoy  
Eugene Thorne  
Marshall McClintock  
Lysa Schloesser

### Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight  
Lauren Hoogkamer

### Others Present:

John De Loma  
Jared Bonea

### Commission Members Absent:

Ken House, *Vice-Chair*

Chair Katie Pratt called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m.

## 1. ROLL CALL

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Excusal of Absences
- B. Approval of Minutes: 8/23/17
- C. Administrative Review
  - 4604 N. 38<sup>th</sup> St.—Solar panels
  - Lincoln and Stadium High Schools—Scoreboard signs
  - 912 N. Ainsworth Ave.—Patio door
  - 1016 N. 6<sup>th</sup> St.—Fence
  - 219 N. Tacoma Ave.—Painting
  - 415 N. J St.—Non-historic window replacement
  - 411 N. M St.—Staircase

The consent agenda was approved.

## 3. DESIGN REVIEW

- A. 723 North M Street (North Slope Historic District)

### *Roof Height*

Mr. McKnight read the staff report.

### **BACKGROUND**

Built in 1919, this property is a contributing structure in the North Slope Historic District. On March 22, 2017 and April 26, 2017, the Landmarks Preservation Commission was briefed on options to increase the roof height. During both

briefings the Commission commented that the proposals did not meet the district design guidelines, particularly with regard to increasing the height of primary ridgelines; the minutes from those meetings are included in the packet.

Previous designs included a proposal to raise the main ridge height 8'3" and add a front dormer, and a proposal to increase the main ridge height 3'10" with no new front dormer. In both cases, the Commission felt that the proposals altered the home too significantly and did not meet the guidelines.

The applicant is now seeking approval for an alternative design that would increase the roof height 3'10" to accommodate additional living space. The proposal includes a new front dormer and increase the existing roof pitch from 4:12 to 6:12, with new windows and siding to match the existing materials.

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Approval of the above scope of work.

### **STANDARDS**

#### **North Slope Historic District Design Guidelines**

##### **Guidelines for Roofs**

1. **Preserve and retain existing roof form and appearance.** Major changes to the overall roof plan/type are discouraged. For example, changing a hipped roof to a gabled roof is generally inappropriate.
2. **Rooftop Additions should be sensitively located.** Additions that affect roof appearance may include the addition of elements such as dormers, skylights and chimneys. Additions are not discouraged, but should seek to minimize the visual impact to the overall roof form, as follows:
  - Changes to the roof form should be located to the rear and less visible sides of a home.
  - In certain cases, it may not be possible to conceal new elements such as additional dormers from view. In such cases, using examples of historic additions (location, scale, design, materials) to guide new design is appropriate.
3. **Existing roof heights should be maintained.** Changes to the primary ridgeline height of a house are generally discouraged, such as "bump ups," with the exception that: in certain cases it may be demonstrated that an overall ridgeline height increase will dramatically increase useful attic space in a house WITHOUT significantly changing the appearance of the home from the street (rare).
4. **Materials and colors.** Composition roofs are an acceptable substitute for shingles, and have been in use on homes since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Composite and engineered materials that mimic the visual qualities of shingles vary widely in quality and appearance. If an engineered material is proposed that is not common in the district, material samples and product specification sheets should be furnished to the Commission. Metal roofs are not acceptable for historic homes. Clay tile roofs are appropriate only on the few examples of Mission or Spanish influenced architecture seen in the districts.

##### **Guidelines for Additions**

1. **Architectural style should be compatible** with the era and style of the principal structure, including massing, window patterning, scale of individual elements, cladding, roof form, and exterior materials.
2. **Additions should be removable** in the future without harming the character defining elements on the principal structure.
3. **Additions should be sensitively located** in a manner that minimizes visibility from primary rights of way. Where this is not possible, the design should respect the style, scale, massing, rhythm, and materials of the original building.
4. **An addition should be subservient** in size, scale and location to the principal structure.
5. **Seamless additions are discouraged.** There should be a clear visual break between the old structure and the new, such as a reduced size or footprint or a break in the wall plane, to avoid creating a falsely historic

appearance (such that the original, historic portion of the house can be distinguished from the new, non-historic addition).

### **ANALYSIS**

1. This property is a contributing structure in the North Slope 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 applicant previously submitted designs for briefing feedback on March 22 and April 26, 2017. In both cases, the Landmarks Preservation Commission indicated that, while sympathetic to the desire of the owners to remain in their current home, the proposals to increase the height of the home did not meet the North Slope Design Guidelines.
3. The current proposal increases the ridge height by 3'10", which does not appear to meet the guidelines for Roofs, which states, "*Existing roof heights should be maintained. Changes to the primary ridgeline height of a house are generally discouraged, such as "bump ups," with the exception that: in certain cases it may be demonstrated that an overall ridgeline height increase will dramatically increase useful attic space in a house WITHOUT significantly changing the appearance of the home from the street (rare).*"
4. The proposal also adds a front dormer and raises the height of the rear wing. The front dormer does not appear to meet the guidelines, which state, "*Changes to the roof form should be located to the rear and less visible sides of a home.*" However, the addition to the rear of the home appears to meet the guidelines.
5. The proposed materials and colors, which will match what currently exists on the home, are consistent with the district guidelines for materials.
6. The overall design approach to the addition appears to be compatible with the existing architectural style of the home; however, as a total second story replacement it is seamless and is not reversible, which does not appear to meet the guidelines for additions, which state, "*Additions should be removable in the future without harming the character defining elements on the principal structure,*" and "*Seamless additions are discouraged. There should be a clear visual break between the old structure and the new.*"
7. The application refers to a roof height increase and dormer addition at 1303 N 7<sup>th</sup>, which was approved previously by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. However, this approval was issued in 2007, prior to the adoption of the current North Slope Historic District Guidelines (adopted in 2012 and most recently updated in 2016). The previous design guidelines did not contain a provision relating to raising roof height or adding dormers.
8. The application states that the revised design attempts to take into account the input from the commission in previous briefings and to minimize the visual impact from the roof change. Regarding balancing feasibility with application of the guidelines, the guidelines state, "*Guidelines should be applied reasonably. When applying the guidelines, the Commission will be considerate of clearly documented cases of economic hardship. Application of these guidelines is not intended to deprive a property owner of reasonable use of their property.*"

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff defers recommendation.

John De Loma, MD Architects, reviewed the options that had been brought to the Commission before, noting the differences in pitch and roof height between the options. He reviewed that the intent of the proposed height increase was to accommodate an existing homeowner in the North End who wished to stay in the neighborhood. He commented that trying to find another home in the same area would be a hardship. He commented that the changes proposed were just to accommodate the existing family and that improvements such as the 2x4s in the new ceiling would also stabilize the house. Mr. De Loma commented that they would not be able to sell the house for much currently because it only had two bedrooms, which was also a hardship. He noted that the proposed design had changed from when they initially spoke with the Commission and that they were no longer planning a full master bedroom, only a bonus room and a bathroom. He commented that there wasn't enough space to stand in the existing attic, due to the low ridgeline and that even using the attic for storage would require strengthening the ceiling joists. He reviewed that the Commissioners had voiced concerns about the proposed change in the roof at a

previous meeting. He reported that they had lowered the roof pitch from a 8/12 to a 6/12 and would be willing to remove the dormer if it would be necessary for approval.

Commissioner Johnson asked to clarify that the addition would only have a 7 foot ceiling height. Mr. De Loma confirmed that it would. Commissioner Johnson asked about the usable space provided by the dormers.

Commissioner Steel reviewed that in earlier feedback the Commission had not found issues with the design, but was instead concerned that the proposal would be removing the entirety of the roof and going above the existing ridgeline. He commented that reducing the proposed increase of the ridgeline still had the same issue where the guidelines did not allow removing the entire roof of an existing house. He commented that he understood the hardship issue but, in terms of reasonable use, the home had been used as a single family residence so there was no denying that it was usable as is.

Mr. De Loma clarified that they were talking about guidelines and not code. Mr. McKnight reviewed that the guidelines were an administrative document that was referenced in the City Code.

Mr. De Loma reported that the square footage of the house limited its sale. He added that he had clients that were avoiding historic neighborhoods because people don't want limits on what they can do. Mr. McClintock responded that there were smaller homes in the North Slope that were selling for high amounts of money. Commissioner Steel commented that the sale of the home was an economic limitation and not a hardship. Discussion ensued on the home market in the North Slope.

Jared Bonea, the owner, discussed having lived in the home for almost 20 years and having seen the neighborhood change over the years. He commented that they had grown deep roots in the area and did not want to move. Mr. Bonea commented that the area was dynamic and had homes that were non-historic and others that were poorly maintained. He commented that with the addition they tried to have something that was period appropriate. He added that they wanted to stay in the community.

Commissioner Johnson reviewed item 8 from the analysis section of the staff report, which suggested that guidelines should not prevent a property owner from reasonable use of their property. He suggested that it should be the key thing they consider as they review the proposal and possibly seek a compromise. He added that he didn't want to see a family give up on the North Slope due to the guidelines.

Mr. McKnight noted item 3 from the analysis section of the staff report, which stated that existing roof heights should be maintained. He added that staff's analysis was that the proposal did not appear to meet that guideline.

Chair Pratt discussed the elevation drawings, commenting that she had concerns about the front dormer and losing the look of a bungalow from the front of the house. She commented that carrying the ridge line back behind the chimney was the more sensitive design approach. She commented that removing the dormer would improve the front of the house, though the home was on a corner lot.

Commissioner Steel commented that guidelines required that additions be removable and were intended to allow for things like new dormer windows or an additional wing, not the removal or an entire roof and addition of a new second story. He commented that the application went beyond what the guidelines allowed for as it removed a prominent feature in its entirety and changed the character of the home.

Mr. McClintock concurred with Commissioner Steel's comments and stated that purpose of the North Slope Design Guidelines was to preserve the historic structures that were there. He commented that the proposal dramatically changed the structure, which the guidelines were meant to preserve.

Commissioner Williams commented that, as much as the applicant had made the effort to think through the proposal, he didn't think it met the guidelines for the district even if they were to lose the front dormer.

Mr. Bonea commented that the guidelines were only guidelines, which were ultimately up to the Commission. He noted that there were two nearby homes that have had dormers added and that when people drive the streets of the neighborhood, they can see things have been done to the homes consistent with what was being proposed. He commented that they needed to understand what the area is and how they define history. He suggested that they should consider the other buildings in the area. He noted that an earlier suggestion of the Commission to compromise by creating an addition on the back of the house would have completely changed the appearance of the home on the 8th Street side. Commissioner Steel responded that they empathized with his situation, noting that they try to apply the guidelines as best they can and they could not speak for how the code had been interpreted in the

past. They had to make their best assessment of the code as it exists currently. Discussion ensued.

There was a motion.

"I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission deny the application for 723 N. M Street, finding that it does not meet the following North Slope Design Guidelines including the Guideline for Additions No. 1, that architectural style should be compatible; No. 2, that additions should be removable; No. 3, that additions should be sensitively located; No. 4, that additions should be subservient in size, scale, and location to the principle structure; and No. 5, that seamless additions were discouraged."

Motion: Steel

Second: Bartoy

The motion was approved with one Commissioner voting against.

#### **4. PRESERVATION PLANNING/BOARD BUSINESS**

##### **A. Events and Activities Update**

Ms. Hoogkamer provided an update on the following upcoming events and activities:

1. South Tacoma Way Walking Tour (11am, September 16th)
2. History Happy Hour Trivia Night (6pm @ The Swiss, September 20<sup>th</sup>)
3. Wood Windows Workshop (10:30am @ Earthwise Tacoma, September 23<sup>rd</sup>)
4. Prairie Line Trail Celebration and Artists Forum (4:30pm @ TAM, October 19<sup>th</sup>)
5. Fourth Annual Holiday Heritage Dance: Browns Point Bop (Tour: 5pm; Dance: 6-9pm @ Browns Point Improvement Club, November 3<sup>rd</sup>)

#### **5. CHAIR COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:13 p.m.