

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers
January 19, 2016

CALL TO ORDER – ITEM 1:

A regular meeting of the Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) was held at the above place at the hour of 5:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL – ITEM 2:

Commissioners Present: President LJ Gunderson, Commissioners Jack Osterberg, Paul Caruana, Mac Burns, Kevin McHone, and Thomas Stanley.

Commissioners Excused: Vice President Michelle Dieffenbach

Staff Present: Community Development Director Kevin Cronin and Planner Nancy Ferber. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

ELECTIONS OF OFFICERS – ITEM 3(a):

In accordance with Sections 1.110 and 1.115 of the Astoria Development Code, the HLC needs to elect officers for 2016. The 2015 officers were: President LJ Gunderson, Vice President Michelle Dieffenbach, and Secretary Sherri Williams.

Commissioner Burns moved to reappoint LJ Gunderson as President, Michelle Dieffenbach as Vice President, and Sherri Williams as Secretary of the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) for 2016; seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Ayes: President Gunderson, Commissioners Caruana, Osterberg, Burns, Stanley, and McHone. Nays: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 4(a):

President Gunderson asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the December 15, 2015 meeting.

Commissioner Burns noted that Andrew Bornstein's name had been misspelled on Page 1.

Commissioner Osterberg moved to approve the minutes of December 15, 2015 as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Burns. Ayes: President Gunderson, Commissioners Caruana, Osterberg, Burns, Stanley, and McHone. Nays: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

President Gunderson explained the procedures governing the conduct of public hearings to the audience and advised that the substantive review criteria were listed in the Staff report.

ITEM 5(a):

NC15-07 New Construction NC15-07 by Ed Overbay, Overbay Houseworks for Craig MacPherson to add an attached garage connected by a breezeway to an existing single family dwelling at 676 Irving in the R-2, Medium Density Residential zone. This item was continued from the December 15, 2015 meeting.

President Gunderson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the HLC to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. President Gunderson asked if any member of the HLC had a conflict of interest, or any ex parte contacts to declare. None declared. President Gunderson requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Director Cronin presented the updated Staff report and recommended approval with conditions.

President Gunderson confirmed there were no questions for Staff. She opened public testimony for the hearing and asked for the Applicant's presentation.

Ed Overbay, 221 South Street, Astoria, said the updated Staff report now included larger elevations that show what work has and has not yet been completed. He asked if there were any questions about the new documentation.

President Gunderson noted the Applicant had provided a lot of the information the HLC had requested at the last public hearing. Commissioner Osterberg added that his questions had been answered by the newly submitted information, which included information about the lighting fixtures. He thanked Mr. Overbay for the additional information. Commissioner Burns confirmed he had no questions and thanked Mr. Overbay and Staff for refilling the application. Commissioner Stanley stated he had no objections.

Commissioner Caruana confirmed that the barge and fascia boards on the garage would match the house. He asked for information about the attachment to the application and wanted to know if the beam that carries the deck on the back side would be painted. Mr. Overbay explained the attachment shows the existing siding around the house, which will be repeated on the garage. He confirmed the beam coming down off the stairs, shown on the north elevation, would be concrete.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons in favor of, impartial to or against the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks of Staff.

Director Cronin asked if there was a difference between a beauty board and a belly board.

Mr. Overbay said a belly board is generally on the bottom. He has seen beauty boards in several different applications, like over the windows or on top of the soffit. However, he did not have a technical answer.

President Gunderson closed the public testimony portion of the hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Caruana moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve New Construction NC15-07 by Ed Overbay; seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

President Gunderson read the rules of appeal into the record.

Mr. Overbay thanked the HLC for being thorough as a panel and for their service to the process.

ITEM 5(b):

NC15-08 New Construction NC15-08 by Daniel Peters to construct an approximate 484 square foot detached garage on the south elevation, adjacent to an historic structure at 726 27th Street in the R-2, Medium Density Residential zone.

President Gunderson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the HLC to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. President Gunderson asked if any member of the HLC had a conflict of interest, or any ex parte contacts to declare. None declared. President Gunderson requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Ferber presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions.

Commissioner Osterberg asked how he should interpret Condition of Approval 2 on Page 8 of the Staff report, which stated the windows shall be installed at a historic depth. Planner Ferber explained the windows would need to match the other existing windows on the house and not protrude out from the house.

President Gunderson noted Page 4 of the Staff report states tongue and groove siding would be used, but Page 7 states the siding would be cedar shingles. Director Cronin confirmed the Applicant would clarify this and noted no communications had been received after the public notice was published and mailed.

President Gunderson opened public testimony for the hearing and asked for the Applicant's presentation.

Daniel Peters, 726 27th Street, Astoria, said the siding would be horizontal 1-inch by 6-inch tongue and groove and the cedar shingles will be the fish scales on the gable end.

Commissioner Osterberg asked if the photo of the proposed garage door in the Staff report was an exact representation of what the Applicant had planned or just a similar looking door.

Mr. Peters said the photo showed a door of a similar style to what he planned to install. He might build the door to look exactly like the photo. If the door installed is different, it would not be significantly different. The only difference would be that the door might have four lights in each panel instead of six.

Commissioner Caruana asked if the size of the door and window trim, fascia, and barge boards was included in the Staff report.

Mr. Peters confirmed all of those details would match the house, which has 1-inch by 6-inch corner boards and window trim. He also confirmed the garage would also have a freeze board underneath the soffits and overhangs to match the house.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons in favor of, impartial to or against the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks of Staff. There were none. She closed the public testimony portion of the hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Burns said the garage would look better than the existing structure.

Commissioner Osterberg believed the proposal looked fine. He was pleased with some of the details because they will match the house substantially. Commissioner McHone agreed.

Commissioner Caruana was fine with the plans but wanted the Staff report to state that the corner boards, window trim, and soffit details would match the house. The Staff report already includes a photo of these details on the house, which can be used as a reference.

Commissioner Caruana moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve New Construction NC15-08 by Daniel Peters, with the following addition:

- On Page 8, Section V. Conclusion and Recommendation, add the following Condition of Approval 4: The corner boards, window trim, and soffit details on the garage shall match the house.
- Seconded by Commissioner Burns. Motion passed unanimously.

President Gunderson read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 5(c):

EX15-14 Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters to rebuild the exterior stairs and add a two-story deck on the northwest corner elevation and change a 1:1 window to a multi-light door on the north elevation (2nd floor) of an existing single family dwelling at 726 27th Street in the R-2, Medium Density Residential zone.

President Gunderson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the HLC to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. President Gunderson asked if any member of the HLC had a conflict of interest, or any ex parte contacts to declare. None declared. President Gunderson requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Ferber presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions.

Commissioner Osterberg believed the Staff report was well thought out and the conditions of approval address several criteria that the proposed project did not meet. He asked if any changes would need to be made to the Staff report because none of the Conditions of Approval address Criteria 9, which was not met. Planner Ferber

explained the Staff report did not expand on Criteria 9 because it also states the second story deck shall not be constructed. The deck is not in style with the house, but this does not mean the entire project should be denied.

Commissioner Osterberg confirmed that Condition of Approval 5 states the second story deck shall not be constructed.

Commissioner Caruana asked if there are pictures of the historic stairs on the house. Planner Ferber said the only historic photos she was able to find were from 2013.

Commissioner Caruana understood that while some criteria have not been met, the stair case going down to the existing concrete landing would be acceptable. However, the stair case would need to be submitted at another time with details. Planner Ferber noted the stair details were included in the Staff report and Page 5 discusses the Findings for the staircase and railing. Director Cronin added that Staff can try to find historic photos by contacting resources outside of City Hall.

Commissioner Caruana believed that in order for the stair case to be approved, even if it was not on a historic structure, the Staff report would need to include more than just a photo of a staircase on another house. The only part of the proposed deck to be approved is the stairs. Therefore, the HLC would need an application for the stairs alone. Director Cronin confirmed the stairs could be approved by the HLC as part of this application or administratively as part of a new application.

Commissioner Stanley confirmed that Condition of Approval 5 did not include the stairs.

President Gunderson opened public testimony for the hearing and asked for the Applicant's presentation.

Dan Peters, 726 27th Street, Astoria, said he had paperwork not included in the Staff report showing that the house across the street is a Queen Anne style house with a protruding deck. Virtually every house in his neighborhood has a protruding deck and a few of them are Queen Anne style. The rest of the houses are Victorian. The Flavel House on 15th Street has a protruding deck with a second story deck, which is similar to the style of his house. There are existing footings on the north side of the house, so he is not trying to add anything to the front of the house. He just wants to add a useable deck. The windows on the second floor were busted out for many years and the wood was all rotted. Removing all of the rotted wood left a big opening, so he decided to install a door in hopes of building a deck off the second story. His deck would not extend out as far as the existing footings. He believed the original deck was removed when the stairs were removed. He purchased the house in 2014, just before it was to be bulldozed. He has put a lot of time and money into getting the house back to its original look. He did not believe a small deck on the side would change the look of the house and he has done everything the City has requested. He spent extra money fixing the windows and even purchased the wavy glass. He confirmed he wanted to present pictures of other houses in his neighborhood because the Findings state his proposed project is not compatible with the neighborhood or the Queen Anne style. Other Queen Anne style houses in the neighborhood have protruding decks. He wanted to know why his house could not have a deck, but all the other houses could.

President Gunderson explained the HLC was only reviewing the Applicant's house. The predominant view of most of the houses in the neighborhood is the back of the house. Even though this house is on 27th Street, the HLC is concerned about the deck because the back side is the predominant side.

Mr. Peters said he did not understand why the deck was not in style with the house. His house matches the other Queen Anne style houses in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Caruana confirmed the Applicant planned to install Grace Water Shield on the second floor deck. The first floor deck would be open so that water could run through. He did not believe Grace Water Shield would be sufficient because it would be used as an undercoat with the deck material on top. He was concerned that a lot of pressure treated materials would be used rather than materials with the finished quality typical on a house of this caliber. Pressure treated materials would not match the house.

Mr. Peters said the wood could be painted to match the rest of the structure and he could enclose the bottom portion if necessary.

Commissioner Caruana stated the City is not able to approve pressure treated wood. The project needs to be redrafted in more detail.

Mr. Peters believed the original porch was removed because it was made with regular lumber that rotted or was destroyed by termites. He wants to avoid redoing the porch in 10 or 15 years and asked what material the HLC recommended.

Commissioner Caruana believed that if the lower porch were approved, there would not be any requirement that the porch be waterproof. The porch could be left open so that water could pass through. If the Applicant wanted the porch to be waterproof, he recommended a membrane roof under the finished decking materials. He understood the second floor porch would not be approved.

Mr. Peters asked why he could not build the second story deck.

Planner Ferber said Staff was glad Mr. Peters was improving the house, but a second story deck is not part of the general aesthetic of a Queen Anne style house. Even if the Applicant's neighbors have second story decks protruding from their homes, the Queen Anne style houses do not have decks stacked above the first floor decks.

Mr. Peters said the Flavel House on 15th Street has a second story deck over a first floor deck.

Commissioner Caruana explained that the Flavel House is not a Queen Anne style house.

Commissioner Burns asked if Mr. Peters had done any research to find historic photos of his house, possibly at the heritage museum or Lower Columbia Preservation Society.

Mr. Peters said he had not done any research on the house. He confirmed he did not have any idea what had originally been on the concrete footings, but he presumed they were for a deck of some sort.

Commissioner Caruana recommended Mr. Peters consult with someone who could point him in the right direction with this project so that he could get the work completed.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons in favor of, impartial to or against the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks of Staff.

Director Cronin reminded the HLC that the recommendations in the Staff report were nothing more than recommendations. The HLC could choose to make other Findings, revise Staff's Findings, approve the recommendations as is, or continue the hearing to February to allow the Applicant to revise certain elements of his project.

President Gunderson asked the Commission to discuss the proposed second story deck.

Commissioner Osterberg said the Applicant requested to rebut Staff's Findings for Criterion 2, which states the distinguishing characteristics of a Queen Anne style house includes recessed porches but do not include protruding decks. The Applicant had stated he had photos of such houses with protruding decks. He believed the HLC should have allowed the Applicant to submit those photos and review them so that the Commissioners could determine if the houses in the photos were Queen Anne style. He believed this might be an application that could benefit from a continuance if the HLC believed the Applicant could provide new details.

Commissioner Burns said he would like to consider the other houses in the area and confirmed he understood other houses were not being evaluated. He also wanted to see historic photos of the house if they exist and recommended a continuance.

Commissioner Stanley agreed a continuance would be better than denying the request.

Commissioner Caruana also preferred a continuance, but wanted to send the Applicant away with some information about how to proceed. The project will not be approved with pressure treated materials because the

side of the house facing Grand is quite visible. Some redesign and additional details will be necessary. He did not believe the second story deck would be approved unless it was recessed and mirrored the bottom porch.

Commissioner Stanley recommended the Applicant consult with John Goodenberger, who also consults with the City. He wanted the project to be approved, but also wanted to make sure the project did not move forward with improper elements. A 20-year old deck addition does not necessarily make a house historic.

Director Cronin confirmed that the HLC wanted to continue this hearing to give the Applicant time to do some research, find photos of the house and other houses in the area, and address the porch and the second story deck. There were no issues with the stairs, balustrade, and the front porch.

President Gunderson said she would be more inclined to consider a second story deck if she could see historic photos of such a deck on the house. She would not approve a deck simply because the neighbors had one because she had no way of knowing what style house the neighbors had. It is not in the HLC's best interest to allow a feature to continue just because a neighbor did if it is not correct for the house.

Commissioner McHone agreed with the other Commissioners and said he was concerned about the pressure treated lumber.

Commissioner Caruana moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) continue the public hearing for Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters to the next regular meeting, with the following recommendations:

- Provide historic pictures of the existing house if the Applicant can find any
- Submit pictures of some of the surrounding homes that the Applicants believes might be helpful
- Show a design for the porches and stairs that do not use or have exposed pressure treated material
- Submit details about the stairs and balustrade

Seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5(d):

EX15-15 Exterior Alteration EX15-15 by RDA Project Management LLC for The Armory to add 1st floor: mezzanine windows, repair and/or replace windows and door on south elevation, replace windows on north elevation, replace arched windows with insulated glass to match historic windows on east and west elevations; 2nd floor: install mezzanine windows, replace windows with double panes, add stairs to deck, replace door, and install awning on north elevation at 1636 Exchange in the MH, Maritime Heritage zone.

President Gunderson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the HLC to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. President Gunderson asked if any member of the HLC had a conflict of interest, or any ex parte contacts to declare.

President Gunderson declared that Mr. Stemper is a personal friend and is building a home for one of her clients. However, she did not believe this would have any bearing on her decision.

Commissioner Burns declared that Mr. Stemper is a board member of Clatsop County Historical Society but they have not discussed this project. The Heritage Museum is also connected to The Armory building. He did not believe any of this would affect his impartial judgment.

Commissioner McHone declared he was currently doing business with The Armory. He recused himself and stepped down from the dais.

President Gunderson called for a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Ferber presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions.

Commissioner Stanley confirmed the HLC was being asked to approve an ongoing restoration process that would occur over a period of time as funding became available.

Commissioner Burns asked if the staircase was original. Staff deferred to the Applicant to answer the question.

President Gunderson believed the north elevation originally had a staircase. Planner Ferber agreed and said there is a boarded up door on the north elevation now.

President Gunderson opened public testimony for the hearing and asked for the Applicant's presentation.

Randy Stemper, RDA Project Management, P.O. Box 1417, Astoria, thanked Staff for the time they put into the Staff report. He understood the project was very complicated. He was originally asked to look at the windows on the east side of the building that had been blown out. Getting those windows repaired is urgent. Cost is not a consideration of the Applicant, but it is for the owners of the building. He decided to create a master plan for the building instead of asking for an HLC review every time something needed repaired or replaced on the building. Therefore, he has reviewed the entire building as well as the feasibility study that was done in March 2014. The building was originally built with different products for different reasons. Over time, the owners have not been kind to the building and have deferred maintenance. A single-glazed aluminum slider has been placed where steel windows used to be and the building is a hodge podge mess. The new owners want to add to the community, so they created the master plan. As funds become available, the owners can move forward with their goal. He would like direction from the HLC. He tried to be consistent with the pictures he submitted. Columbia Memorial Hospital, Sunset Transit, Columbia River Maritime Museum, Clatsop Community College, and the Senior Center have all used some version of what The Armory is now asking for. He believed the project was very compatible to the building and to the community. Even the entry way to the new City Hall is using the same type of material. He brought documentation that he hoped would answer any questions, including the original blueprints. The building is much different today from when it was originally built. The doors to the south were added where windows were and the doors to the north are boarded up and the owners plan to install a stairway and deck on that side to increase the occupancy use. The entire plan is designed around creating a building that can sustain itself. Instead of going to the community to ask that everything be given for free, the owners are trying to repurpose the building and make it sustainable. The existing stairway was added about two years ago after being approved by a City commission. The proposed stairway on the other side of the building will be manufactured by the same company that made the existing stairway.

Commissioner Burns asked if there were any historic photographs of the north side of the building.

Mr. Stemper said he did not have any pictures, but the original blueprints indicated the north side of the building did not have a stairway when it was originally built. The windows were removed and the doors were added to the same size opening. He was not proposing to change the size of any of the openings. Some of the windows have had concrete placed over them.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons in favor of the application.

Bruce Jones, 455 45th Street, Astoria, said he was on the board of the Friends of the Astoria Armory. Over the last 18 months, the building has become very useful to the community. The Armory has hosted about 175 events, including a full house on skate nights, which are held every Friday from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Windows and doors have rotted and need to be returned to a good state of repair and as historically accurate as possible but within the means of the 501(c)(3). He appreciated Mr. Stemper's efforts to develop proposals that match the existing windows and doors as closely as possible and that are functional. Other buildings in Astoria have done similar projects over the last couple of decades. The Friends hope to get another 50 years of service out of the building. On the north wall, there is a shadow of the old stairway and there is a cement block at the bottom. However, he could not find a picture of what the landing actually looked like. Currently, the building's occupancy is about 750 because of the absence of the north exit. Once the four doors are unboarded and have a stairway, the occupancy can double. With other planned improvements, the Friends anticipate 1500 people in the building again, as it was in the 1940s and 1950s. He has pictures of USO shows with 2500 people listening to Bob Hope.

Walt Postlewait, 36468 River Point Drive, Astoria, said he was speaking on behalf of the property owner Craft3. The Friends are the long term tenant of the building and Craft3 plans to sell the property to them in the near future so they have The Armory as an asset on their balance sheet. Historic preservation is important in any community, even more so in Astoria because of its rich history. When historic preservation and the act of preservation are not economically feasible, the preservation will not occur. In this case, the issues with the stairs and windows are different components of economic feasibility. The stairs are important to increase occupancy of

the property. Right now, 700 to 750 people are allowed. The addition of the stairs that existed at one time will more than double the occupancy, which means The Armory can sell more and generate more income. The windows must be replaced in a cost effective manner while preserving the look of the property. The proposed windows will match the property even though they will not be an exact match. From a preservation standpoint, it would be great if wooden windows could be installed. But from a cost perspective, the wooden windows would cost four or five times the cost of metal windows. If The Armory must install wooden windows instead of metal, it will not function as a community asset. He did not believe a private party would purchase the building if it had to be renovated at that cost. The building has been more of a blight than a community asset, but in 18 months, the Friends have returned it to a community asset. That asset needs to be preserved. He encouraged the HLC to approve the request.

President Gunderson called for any testimony impartial to or against the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks of Staff. There were none. She closed the public testimony portion of the hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Osterberg believed the application met all of the requirements and conditions of approval. Not only is aluminum acceptable, it is preferred. Aluminum was first introduced in the Internationalist style and was seen in many military and related buildings. This building is that type of building. Immediately after World War II, aluminum became extremely popular and was used in a variety of office towers. He had no problem with the use of aluminum and believed it was superior to wood and was very appropriate architecturally. He also believed the design of the window changes proposed are very appropriate in style, scale, and type to this kind of building.

Commissioner Osterberg moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Exterior Alteration EX15-15 by RDA Project Management LLC; seconded by Commissioner Burns. Motion passed unanimously.

President Gunderson read the rules of appeal into the record.

Commissioner Stanley appreciated the work being done on The Armory. The building was an eyesore for so long and it is exciting to see it become a part of the community again.

Commissioner McHone returned to the dais.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Gunderson called for public comments on non-agenda items. There were none

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS – ITEM 6:

President Gunderson thanked Planner Ferber for doing such a great job preparing the Staff reports.

Director Cronin said the appeal of Verizon's application would be heard by City Council later that night and there was a chance the decision would be remanded back to the HLC. He also noted that the HLC reviewed 15 applications for exterior alterations in 2015, which is amazing and a result of the good work being done by the HLC, Staff, and private investors. In 2016, the HLC will receive a survey to help Staff prioritize the City's investments.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

APPROVED:



Community Development Director