

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers

March 15, 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, Vice President Michelle Dieffenbach, Commissioners Jack Osterberg, Paul Caruana, and Thomas Stanley.

Commissioners Excused: Mac Burns and Kevin McHone.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 3(a):

President Gunderson asked if there were any changes to the minutes. There were none.

Commissioner Stanley moved to approve the minutes of February 16, 2016 as presented; seconded by Vice President Dieffenbach. Ayes: President Gunderson, Vice President Dieffenbach, Commissioners Caruana, Osterberg, and Stanley. 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 4(a):

EX15-14 Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters to rebuild the exterior stairs and add a two-story deck on the NW corner elevation and change a 1:1 window to multi-lite 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. The application was continued from the February 16, 2016 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.

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

Commissioner Osterberg asked if Staff had received a written response to each of the criteria from the Applicant. Planner Ferber said Staff did not receive a narrative, but she had met the Applicant on site to discuss the issues.

President Gunderson asked which changes were suggested by John Goodenberger. Planner Ferber said Mr. Goodenberger had provided ideas about the design of the newel posts, suggested the front porch extend all the way to the bay window, and that lattice work be added underneath the porch and stairs. She understood that the renderings on Page 6 of the Staff report were based on a discussion between Mr. Goodenberger and the Applicant about the design issues.

President Gunderson asked if Mr. Goodenberger supported what was proposed for the upstairs. Planner Ferber explained that if the Applicant were to do the upstairs, he would be required to complete all of the specific

modifications listed in the Staff report. A double porch is not traditional for Queen Anne style homes, but Mr. Goodenberger has said that if the double porch were to be built, it would need to be built as described in the Staff report. However, Mr. Goodenberger never indicated whether he was in favor of or opposed to the double porch on this house.

Commissioner Osterberg believed the Staff report indicated the porch would not meet the criteria for approval even with all of the compromises, which only affect a few things.

Commissioner Caruana said he reviewed the Staff report online and it appeared as if Staff had no desire to approve the second story deck. Planner Ferber confirmed Staff has remained neutral and the Staff report indicates how the deck does and does not meet the criteria. It is up to the HLC to decide whether the deck is appropriate.

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

Daniel Peters, 726 27th Street, Astoria, said he met with both Planner Ferber and Mr. Goodenberger. Mr. Goodenberger met with him primarily at the house and suggested the porch be narrower and longer. The first floor deck is the same width as the side of the house and he shortened it by two feet. Mr. Goodenberger suggested he lower the handrail to make it more similar to a height used in the 1900s and increase the length of the second floor porch so that it extended over the bay window, but leave the width at six feet. Lattice work is typical for a Queen Anne era house. When he purchased the house, the real estate agent told him the house would be bulldozed if he had not bought it. He has done extensive remodeling to bring the house back to the way it was with the same windows and everything as original as possible. He just wants a place to have a cup of coffee with his wife on the second floor and have friends over to watch the ships go by, which he can only do now by looking through the windows of the house. He is trying to make the house look as original as possible and has done everything that has been asked of him by Mr. Goodenberger and Planner Ferber. He has brought the house back and made it look like a nice place. Mill Pond is one of the few places in the city from where the house can be seen. The house can also be seen from the Riverwalk, but it is so far away that the front is difficult to see. He would like to be able to make the outside of the house better than it is now.

Commissioner Osterberg asked if Mr. Peters agreed with Mr. Goodenberger's recommendations and planned to implement them. He also wanted to know what Mr. Peters thought about the conditions of approval listed on Pages 8 and 9 of the Staff report. Mr. Peters said he wanted to build a deck so that he can use it. The upstairs deck is bigger than what he originally needed, but if Mr. Goodenberger believes the larger size will make the deck look historically correct, he was fine with it. While the square footage is about the same, the recommended deck is longer. He just needs a spot for him and his wife to sit and have a cup of coffee. The bottom deck will be used as a place to sit and watch the ships go by when he has friends over. Only two people can sit on the existing recessed deck, so guests must sit in the house or in the grass. He has been on the Riverwalk and from his house, there is a very small window of visibility to anywhere else. He understood the house is historic and that is why Mr. Goodenberger and Planner Ferber came over. He is trying to keep the historic theme of what already exists. Most of the houses in the neighborhood are Queen Anne houses with protruding decks, so he did not understand why Staff has said Queen Anne style houses do not typically have protruding decks. According to paperwork he has, all Queen Anne houses have protruding decks. This paperwork was included in the original Staff report. He did not bring any photographs of Queen Anne houses with protruding decks because he did not believe it would be part of the issues now. However, photographs of Queen Anne houses with protruding decks in his neighborhood were included in the original Staff report from January.

Director Cronin confirmed Staff was looking for the photographs in the January Staff report and in documents that may have been submitted during the January public hearing. President Gunderson did not recall seeing any such photographs during the January hearing. Commissioner Osterberg remembered hearing the Applicant describe photographs of other houses in the area that showed protruding decks at the January hearing, but the photographs were not submitted at that time. He also remembered telling the Applicant that since the hearing would be continued, the photographs could be submitted to the City. However, he did not see that those photographs had been submitted by the Applicant. Mr. Peters believed the original Staff report that he received included those photographs.

Commissioner Osterberg understood that the Applicant agreed with all of the conditions listed in the Staff report. Mr. Peters said the new drawings, which are based on Mr. Goodenberger's recommendations, reflect that his plans had changed to accommodate Conditions of Approval 1(a), 2(a), and 3(a).

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 Caruana said he did not mind the first floor deck, but he did not like decks that stop on bay windows. The deck should stop just short of the bay window with a return newel post. This would narrow the deck by about three feet. Or, the deck should extend all the way back to encompass the bay window completely. The first floor deck and railings will add charm and it seems fitting for a house with a view. He referred to a photograph on Page 4 on the Staff report and explained where he preferred the deck to stop. He did not believe there was a way to make a second floor deck look authentic on the house unless it was a mirror image of the first floor. If the Applicant wants a second floor deck, it should be recessed.

Vice President Dieffenbach did not mind the Applicant's drawings. The Queen Anne style is a distinct style; however, there are many variables within the Queen Anne style. She did not mind the deck extending past the bay window, but did not like the deck stopping a third of the way over, as shown in the drawings. There are so many different aspects of the Queen Anne style and she believed Commissioner Caruana's suggestions would look good. She did not mind the second floor deck because it stops short of the roof and hangs out over the bay window. It is important to keep the character of the style, but as history changes, no style is perfect. Every style is a bit of a give and take and she believed the plans worked with the Queen Anne style. The plans are not an exact match to the Queen Anne style, but she believed the plans do encompass the style and facilitate the needs and use of the house.

Commissioner Caruana explained that the deck does not stop short of the bay and the roof of the deck actually goes into the roof of the house. There will be a newel post right on the window because the new railing will have to be 36-inches high, even though the house is historic. He suggested Vice President Dieffenbach consider the visual impact of this railing underneath the windows. He explained in detail how the house would look if the top deck stopped at the beginning of the bay window and the bottom deck extended beyond the bay. The bottom deck would look wider from several perspectives. Vice President Dieffenbach agreed with Commissioner Caruana.

The Commission discussed Commissioner Caruana's ideas about the upper and lower decks.

Commissioner Osterberg did not want to talk to the Applicant about cutting away part of the house. He preferred to discuss modifying elements of the house that the Applicant had already proposed to add.

Commissioner Stanley said he liked Commissioner Caruana's suggestions, but only if the Applicant agreed. He did not believe it was his place to say what needs to be part of the house. He agreed the deck should be extended all the way around to the back of the house. If the Applicant did not agree with Commissioner Caruana's suggestion for the top deck, he would go along with the proposed plans. Commissioner Osterberg agreed with Commissioner Stanley's basic direction.

President Gunderson preferred a cut-out and was not thrilled with the proposed second floor deck. However, she did like the suggestions for the lower deck. She reopened the public hearing and asked the Applicant to come forward.

Commissioner Caruana and Mr. Peters discussed the details of Commissioner Caruana's suggestions. Mr. Peters said this would shorten the walkway and eliminate useable space. He described the topography of the property and stated which areas would be used. He did not want to make the changes Commissioner Caruana had suggested for the second floor deck because of the additional construction that would be necessary. His original drawings showed the deck stopping at the beginning of the bay window, but Mr. Goodenberger said the deck should extend all the way. He preferred a smaller deck on the top and a larger deck on the bottom. He also showed a code-compliant railing in his original drawings, but Mr. Goodenberger said the railing should match the historic value of the house.

Commissioner Osterberg said there might be some exception to the railing height.

Mr. Peters added that the ceiling would be a bead board that would match the existing ceiling.

Commissioner Caruana continued explaining his ideas to Staff.

Vice President Dieffenbach said she did not like certain aspects of Commissioner Caruana's plans.

Commissioner Osterberg noted that Queen Anne houses did not need to be symmetrical and a variety of different details that are not uniform would be appropriate on a Queen Anne house.

Vice President Dieffenbach explained her idea for extending the decks.

Commissioner Caruana confirmed the Commission would be voting to approve a narrower top deck that stopped at the beginning of the bay window. He asked where the Commissioners believed the bottom deck should stop.

Commissioner Stanley believed the deck should stop short of the bay window, but the decision must be the Applicant's.

Mr. Peters said he preferred the bottom deck stop at the first corner of the bay window. He liked the idea of having the newel posts and railing on the inside of the top deck. He and Commissioner Caruana discussed photographs of the house.

Vice President Dieffenbach said the second floor decks on Queen Anne houses were always very small and personal. Wrapping the deck around the house would make the deck too big.

Commissioner Stanley noted that the Applicant just wanted enough room to have a cup of coffee. Mr. Peters said the view from the window was not as good as it would be from the deck.

Commissioner Caruana asked if the multi-pane door would be changed if the deck were approved. Mr. Peters said there was another entrance door off the south side of the house, which he did not believe was original.

Mr. Peters confirmed he did not have the original window and the door was missing glass. It was a nightmare trying to find replacement glass.

Director Cronin suggested the Commission organize their ideas according to architectural features when a motion is made to allow Staff to keep track of the individual features that are approved.

Commissioner Caruana believed the proposed railings and the lower deck were fine.

President Gunderson closed the public hearing.

The Commission and Staff discussed options for amending the Staff report and how to word the motion.

President Gunderson did not believe a protruding upper deck was appropriate on a Queen Anne house.

Commissioner Osterberg said he was in rough concordance with Mr. Goodenberger's recommendations for the second floor deck because Mr. Goodenberger was able to determine that the deck met the criteria.

Commissioner Caruana believed it would be strange to leave the bay window and deck sticking out with the first floor deck wrapping around the house. Vice President Dieffenbach agreed.

The Commission took several minutes discussing the details of some proposed changes with Staff.

President Gunderson confirmed that the Applicant wanted to speak and reopened the public hearing.

Mr. Peters answered Commissioner questions about the house as the Commission described the details of the changes they wanted Mr. Peters to make to his project.

President Gunderson closed the public hearing. She appreciated that everyone was working together and the Commission wants to give the Applicant what he wants. However, there has been a lot of back and forth about the details. Therefore, she proposed the hearing be continued so that Staff could present renderings of what has been proposed. She did not want to make the Applicant return, but believed it was worthwhile for the Commission to have a solid plan with specific details and drawings.

Commissioner Caruana understood issues with the upper deck had been resolved and the materials were fine, but the Commission needed to give the Applicant direction on the lower deck so that he could come back with plans that would be approved.

The Commission discussed details of the house and options for the lower deck. The Commission agreed that two design alternatives met the criteria and the Applicant could choose which design to build. Commissioner Caruana had concerns about one of the design alternatives, but noted it would not be highly visible. Commissioner Osterberg said once a design is chosen, the Applicant will present the design details to the HLC for review and specific issues can be addressed at that time.

President Gunderson stated the motion would need to be very specific so that the Applicant would not have to come back next month with a new set of ideas. She asked Staff to recommend wording for the motion.

Director Cronin said the architectural features could be listed individually with direction to the Applicant about what to bring back to the HLC. The Commission could also provide general direction with one motion so that Staff could work with the Applicant based on the discussions at this hearing. He confirmed that the sketches made during this hearing would be added to an updated Staff report.

Commissioner Caruana moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters with the following additional condition:

- The HLC will approve the architectural details with respect to the posts, balustrades, materials, and lattice work.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice President Dieffenbach moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters with the following additional conditions:

- If the bottom of the lower deck aligns with the bottom of the bay window, the deck must stop at the corner of the first outside corner of the bay window.
- If the bottom of the lower deck does not align with the bottom of the bay window, the deck must extend past the bay window.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice President Dieffenbach moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters with the following additional conditions:

- The second floor deck shall extend out six feet, as proposed.
- The northeast corner of the deck must be eight to ten inches from the corner of the building, set to the west.
- The newel posts on the east side of the deck must align with existing trim on the corner of the porch.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Caruana. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice President Dieffenbach moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) continue the hearing of Exterior Alteration EX15-14 by Daniel Peters to the April 19, 2016 meeting and direct Staff to present more accurate drawings, information, and accurate scale drawings that support the Findings and Conclusions. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS – ITEM 5: - None.

NEW BUSINESS – ITEM 6:

Item 6(a): 2016 Dr. Edward Harvey Historic Preservation Award Nominations

Director Cronin said a press release was sent out about the award. He encouraged the Commissioners to submit their own nominations. All nominations will be discussed at the April meeting.

Item 6(b): Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant Application

Director Cronin stated the application has been submitted. This \$12,000 grant will provide funds for a pass-through façade renovation funds for historic commercial and residential properties particularly on windows, storefronts, and entryways, funds for architectural assistance for historic buildings, and funds to help the City determine approvable materials and products.

Item 6(c): State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Tax Incentive Training

Planner Ferber stated she had been nominated for tax incentive training in Washington D.C. in July and the application to attend has been submitted. The tax incentives were applicable to small towns, restoration, development, etc.

Item 6(d): Columbia Pacific Preservation (CPP) Goals

Director Cronin said the CPP has been meeting regularly and recently prioritized goals for the work program. Goals will focus on Uniontown, the Flavel commercial building, and the maker space that the Historic Preservation Program has been wanting to implement.

STATUS REPORTS – ITEM 7(a):

Planner Ferber has included status report photographs of the following: EX14-07 for 813 14th Street and NC15-02 for 1542 Grand. The projects are complete or near completion and conditions have been met. These status report photographs are for Commission information.

The Commission and Staff briefly discussed the projects. Director Cronin encouraged Commissioners to provide feedback on the new construction projects because there were issues with the application and permitting process that he was trying to resolve.

Planner Ferber added that a new house was being built at 275 29th Street in Mill Pond. The property owners are working with their contractor to make changes that would address some of Staff's concerns about the project.

PUBLIC COMMENT – ITEM 8:

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

APPROVED:



Community Development Director