

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers

October 21, 2014

CALL TO ORDER – ITEM 1:

A regular meeting of the Astoria Historic Landmarks Commission 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, Thomas Stanley, Paul Caruana, and Mac Burns.

Commissioners Excused: Vice President Michelle Dieffenbach and Kevin McHone.

Staff Present: Planner Rosemary Johnson and City Manager Estes

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 3:

President Gunderson asked if there were any changes to the minutes of September 16, 2014. There was none.

Commissioner Burns moved to approve the minutes of September 16, 2014 as presented; seconded by Commissioner Caruana. The minutes were approved 4 to 0 to 1. Ayes: President Gunderson, Commissioners Caruana, Burns, and Stanley. Nays: None. Abstentions: Commissioner Osterberg.

Commissioner Osterberg noted that he abstained from voting because he did not attend the meeting of September 16, 2014.

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):

HD14-02 Historic Designation HD14-02 by Kris Haefker to designate the residential structure as historic within the Shively-McClure National Register Historic District. Designation will be based upon proposed alteration plans to restore the building to its historic design at 665 12th in the R-3, High Density Residential zone.

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

President Gunderson declared that Easom Property Management managed this property until it was purchased by the Applicant, Mr. Haefker. However, she had not discussed the remodel with Mr. Haefker.

President Gunderson requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Johnson presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions. No correspondence has been received.

President Gunderson called for questions of Staff. Hearing none, she opened public testimony for the hearing and asked for the applicant's presentation.

Kris Haefker, 2034 N. Killingsworth, Portland, stated he was present to answer questions.

Commissioner Osterberg said he appreciated much of the detail work the Applicant planned to do, particularly the restoration of the building's small-scale elements, like the belt course between floors. He believed this was important, but would have preferred to review a set of architectural elevations. Because Mr. Haefker had shown the repairs and changes already made to the back of the building, he understood the project would be a good one. Even though there were no architectural elevation plans, the quality of work that had already been done combined with the Applicant's detailed written statement gave him confidence in Mr. Haefker's work.

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

John Goodenberger, 856 Harrison, # 2, Astoria, stated he supported the project. He lives in the neighborhood and was pleased to see that the neighborhood would get another historic structure and to see the work of previous owner Roberta Stramiello be completed after so many years. He said Mr. Haefker has restored another house in the neighborhood and has worked on the Home Apartments. He believed Mr. Haefker had the capability of doing good work and he looked forward to seeing Mr. Haefker's work again on this building.

President Gunderson called for presentations by persons impartial to or against the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks from Staff. There were none. President Gunderson closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

President Gunderson stated she was familiar with the building and believed Mr. Haefker had done excellent work on his projects, following through with what he said he would do. She supports anyone who is going to bring the glory back to a historic home.

Commissioner Stanley said he supported the application. He was pleased to see that the building would be restored back to its original condition. Commissioners Burns, Osterberg, and Caruana said they supported the application. Commissioner Osterberg noted he had already stated his reasons for supporting the application.

Commissioner Caruana moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Historic Designation HD14-02 by Kris Haefker with the conditions listed in the Staff report; seconded by Commissioner Burns. Motion passed unanimously.

President Gunderson read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(b):

NC14-04 New Construction NC14-04 by Warren M. Williams to construct a new approximate 1,800 square foot single family dwelling adjacent to properties designated as historic at 3011 Grand in the R-2, Medium Density Residential zone.

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

President Gunderson declared that her company manages property at 3008 Grand, which is directly across the street. However, this would not affect her decision. She requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Johnson presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions. No correspondence has been received.

President Gunderson called for questions of Staff.

Commissioner Osterberg asked how the required variance would be processed. Planner Johnson replied the variance would be approved administratively. She explained that administrative variances are publicized just as for public hearings. After a 20-day public review period, she would prepare a Staff report and approve or deny the request. The public review period for this variance had passed and no correspondence in objection to the request was received. Therefore, it was Staff's intent to approve the variance. No one was on record to appeal the decision.

Planner Johnson confirmed for Commissioner Osterberg that no street improvements had been proposed. The street is a substandard street and the City allows a certain extent of in-fill development on substandard streets. When the building permit application is submitted, any street improvements would be reviewed by the City Engineer. Commissioner Osterberg asked if a sidewalk extension would be proposed or required. After speaking with the City Engineer about this project, it was her understanding that no additional street improvements would be required. However, this would still need to be reviewed by the City Engineer.

Commissioner Osterberg said he assumed the review by the City Engineer would be completed prior to Staff's approval or denial of the variance request. Planner Johnson explained that street improvements are not a condition of the setback variance because the Applicant is only asking for a small variance that would still allow a five-foot setback. This would create a typical side yard, but one that is substandard for a street side yard. She confirmed that this would not be tied to a land use application, but would be under the review of the City Engineer.

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

Andrew Olson, 3710 Harrison Avenue, Astoria, said he had attended on behalf of Warren Williams to answer any questions.

Commissioner Caruana said he would like to see a cornice return on the roof and fascia to give the house a historic feel. He believed the proposed boxed cornice dated the house as new construction and asked if the Applicant would be opposed to making the roof and fascia wrap around the eave. Mr. Olson said he would not be opposed, but could not speak specifically for Mr. Williams. However, he would be working with Mr. Williams on the project. Commissioner Caruana said cornice returns would require a little more work, but it really would give the house a more classic feel. This is the only feature on the home that stands out as new construction. Mr. Olson said he appreciated the idea and planned to make the house beautiful.

President Gunderson asked if the stone veneer would be limited to the minimal amount shown in the Staff report. Mr. Olson said Mr. Williams obtained the architectural drawings from Mascord. He believed stone veneer must be done well or it looks cheesy. He might choose the look of stacked concrete like a lot of the older homes in the area. President Gunderson and Commissioner Caruana said they preferred the stacked concrete over the stone. Mr. Olson said he understood and believed that Mr. Williams was not set on having stone veneer.

Commissioner Osterberg asked Commissioner Caruana to consider specifying a specific length for the return. He wanted the condition of approval to be clear. Commissioner Caruana said typically, the return is the same as the depth of the eave as it turns a corner to form a box. The roofing rolls around the corner as well.

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

Planner Johnson verified that the HLC wanted to add the following conditions:

- Install full cornice returns the full depth of the roof eve
- Stone veneer shall be concrete or other stucco style or wood siding to match the house

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

Commissioner Stanley said he had no objections with the conditions that were proposed. Commissioners Caruana and Burns and President Gunderson said they supported the request with the additional conditions. Commissioner Osterberg said he agreed with the Staff report and the additional conditions of approval for the design. He added that he is always disappointed when new construction occurs without street or sidewalk improvements. However, he understood that in some circumstances, the City might find that such improvements are not warranted.

Commissioner Burns moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve New Construction NC14-04 by Warren M. Williams with the conditions listed in the Staff report and the addition of the following new conditions:

- "4. The applicant shall install full cornice returns the full depth of the roof eaves.

5. The applicant shall use a concrete, stucco, or wood siding material in lieu of the stone veneer on the front entry."

Motion seconded by Commissioner Caruana. Motion passed unanimously.

President Gunderson read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(c):

NC14-05 New Construction NC14-05 by Steve Hockman, Steele Associates Architects to construct an approximately 5,200 square foot, two-story commercial building adjacent to structures designated as historic at 1122 Duane in the C-4, Central Commercial Zone.

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

Commissioner Caruana declared that he banks at Columbia Bank. Commissioner Burns stated he also banks at Columbia Bank and that the Applicant is a member of the Clatsop County Historical Society. He stated this should not affect his opinion or judgment.

President Gunderson requested a presentation of the Staff report.

Planner Johnson presented the Staff report and recommended approval with conditions. No correspondence has been received.

President Gunderson called for questions of Staff.

Commissioner Osterberg understood that virtually all glazing on similar structures must have some amount of tinting or reflection in order to meet energy codes. He believed he understood Staff's intention with regard to the condition of approval requiring clear glass. However, Staff should keep in mind that the building plan examiner would know that some amount of tinting or reflective glazing would probably be required to meet the energy codes. Planner Johnson said the condition could be edited to say that no additional tinting or reflective glazing be allowed. She has worked with the building official and the minimum glazing required by Code would be allowed. The condition is intended to prevent tinted glass like the State Office building (450 Marine Drive) with blue tinted glass and would not supersede Building Code requirements.

Commissioner Osterberg believed the condition would satisfy the HLC's purpose. The existing language would allow the developer options or alternatives. However, he preferred the Staff report be edited to include Planner Johnson's revised language.

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

Steve Hockman, Steele Associates Architects, 760 NW York Drive # 200, Bend OR 97701, said the design of the new bank was driven by several factors; branding of the bank in the cream-colored stucco, the blue metal roof, and blue awnings; and the function of the building, which will be asymmetrical so that each side of the building will be different. He wanted to tie everything together to meet the historical aspects of the City and meet the branding aspects of the bank. He worked with the bank and City Staff to come up with some accent colors for the branding elements. The awnings and pyramid will be blue to represent the bank. The field colors will be earth tones. Jumbo brick will be used on the base with smaller field brick above. The windows will be slightly articulated with mullions to help bring in a more historic look. He intends to develop and repair some of the sidewalks and has spoken with the City about the elevated sidewalks. The project will be phased because demolition is involved. The building will be constructed first, and then the old building will be removed.

Commissioner Osterberg understood that Staff worked with the Applicant on the domed tower roof. However, he was concerned about the choice to use standing seam metal on that roof. He believed the scale, size, and height of the roof feature was appropriate and roughly mirrored some of the same features on other downtown buildings. However, to his knowledge, the standing seam metal was not found elsewhere in the downtown area.

Other similar roofs described in the Staff report are covered with terra cotta or ceramic, which is the character of the historic nature of the domed roof features. He asked if the Applicant would be willing to consider a different material for the roof that would be more appropriate. Mr. Hockman said metal is a standard material used by Columbia Bank. He would have to speak with staff about this. He believed terra cotta was available in blue, but his team would need to do some research. The proposed roof, which is one small element of the entire building, is a branding element for the bank. Therefore, he would need to discuss alternative materials with the bank. He confirmed for Commissioner Osterberg that he was not able to suggest an acceptable alternative at this time. He believed he had seen another bank in Astoria with a standing seam metal roof.

Commissioner Osterberg said it was possible to find standing seam metal, but not on historic structures. He was not sure that he would want to see standing seam metal introduced as a desirable building material in such a prominent location. The proposed design is prominent, well balanced, and reasonably attractive, but he believed the metal was not appropriate with the historic character the bank is trying to achieve. The metal is also not compatible with the surrounding buildings or the buildings cited in the Staff report.

Commissioner Burns asked how this building would be different from a bank building in Longview. He understood branding, but he wanted to know how this building would be unique to Astoria. Mr. Hockman said most Columbia Bank buildings are one-story instead of two-story buildings and have not been in a historic area. The one-story buildings have sloping roofs, gabled roofs, a lot of blue standing seam metal, and stucco and earth tones below the roofs. He tried to introduce those features and originally had a more prominent roof in mind. After working with the City, he scaled it back so the parapet would be more prominent. The Staff report includes the schematic design package, so the building is not fully designed yet. There are definitely some items that can still be tweaked, but he is not sure about the roof and would have to do some research.

Commissioner Burns asked what the difference in square footage would be between the old and new buildings. Mr. Hockman believed the existing building footprint is about 10,000 square feet, which includes a full basement. The new building would have a footprint of about 5,200 square feet. A reduction in square feet appears to suit the needs of the bank, allowing for more parking and a better drive-through lane.

Commissioner Caruana asked Mr. Hockman to clarify what would be brick and what would be stucco. Mr. Hockman confirmed that only the stucco would be cream colored. He pointed out on the plan elevations where the stucco would be located. The jumbo brick would be used along the base and the field brick would be a lighter tone. He has not yet decided if standard faced brick would be used. Materials have not yet been selected, so the Staff report includes established concepts. Materials would still need to be approved by the bank and City Staff. The north side of the building will have more stucco because a portion of the north side is just one story. A lot of steel would be necessary to support the weight if brick was used on the inset second floor. However, the same horizontal elements would still be used on the north side.

President Gunderson noted that she did not see any rooftop mechanical equipment. Mr. Hockman explained that the roof was flat. He intended to install the mechanical equipment below the roof or set them back far enough that they could not be seen. The mechanical equipment have not yet been developed and he would be speaking with the mechanical engineer to find out how large the equipment would be. The preliminary schematic design stated there would probably be one unit on the roof.

President Gunderson said she looked at the Columbia Bank website to get an idea of the branding and noticed that branding features were across the board. She asked how the blue proposed in the Staff report compared to the blue she saw online. She also wanted to know if the proposed building featured a new branding style. Mr. Hockman said the bank would be following the same standard color scheme, like the cream-colored stucco. The computer images do not replicate the exact shades.

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

Heather Seppa, 89471 Shady Pine Road, Warrenton, said she is a regional manager for Columbia Bank and thanked the HLC for listening to their presentation. She believed the new building would be a nice asset to downtown Astoria. Her office will be relocated to the new building. The bank is swimming in its current building that is about 10,000 square feet. A lot of the space is unused. She is excited for her employees, customers, and the community.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons impartial to the application.

Cindy Price, 1219 Jerome, Astoria, said she has an account at Columbia Bank. She thanked the HLC for encouraging as much historical quality and materials as possible and for making the building as distinctive as possible. The location is very prominent.

Lucien Swerdloff, 1087 11th Street, Astoria, noted that the Staff report showed a stairwell on the east side of the building, which he assumed was the required second egress. The second floor plan shows a hallway connecting the main building to the stairwell was shown. However, no indication of this connection was shown on the elevation. Mr. Hockman explained that an exterior exit was located on the roof. Mr. Swerdloff said it still appeared as if the building was not high enough for a roof level door. He believed this would change. Mr. Hockman said the height shown should be pretty close, reminding that the Staff report contained a schematic design. The intent was to have the second exit on the roof. Steele Associates Architects has done this on its own roof.

Chris Haefker, 2034 N. Killingsworth, Portland, believed historical continuity downtown was very important. He did not object to the shape of the roof, but did object to the color. He believed zinc aluminum roofing and the colors proposed were post war features. Standing seam roofs on historic buildings are usually galvanized and painted red or copper. He believed the HLC should consider this because blue clashes. He understood branding, but did not care for branding when he looks out his window.

President Gunderson called for any presentations by persons opposed to the application. Seeing none, she called for closing remarks of Staff.

Planner Johnson asked if the HLC wanted to change the Staff report to require a different roof material and add a condition concerning the texture of the brick façade. She explained that on new construction, color is not a criteria reviewed by the HLC, but the materials need to be compatible, not necessarily historic, with the downtown area. There are newer downtown buildings with standing seam metal, but none are historic.

President Gunderson understood the HLC could not review colors. However, if the HLC were presented with something the Commission believed did not compliment the surrounding historic area, they could make a statement.

Planner Johnson said the criteria specifically states scale, mass, height, architectural details, and materials must be compatible with adjacent historic structures. The HLC can consider the orientation of the building and the location of the entrances. The HLC does have the authority to state that a feature is not compatible when compared to adjacent historic structures. She understood her answer was not clear because color is not a criterion. However, if color plays into the overall design and material, the HLC may address the issue.

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

Commissioner Caruana said metal roofs have been around for thousands of years. Color may not be a factor, but he believed the HLC would prefer galvanized, stainless, or copper instead of standing seam metal. Blue with the right materials could be gorgeous. He understood the branding aspects and recognized that this may be something the HLC could not enforce, but would like the Applicant to consider using a more appropriate combination of color and material.

President Gunderson believed the color and material proposed for the pyramid dome did not complement the downtown area and was concerned about the shade of blue. She understood the branding aspects, but would prefer a different material on the roof.

Commissioner Stanley believed the branding could and should be compatible with the historic aspects of the City. He did not believe it would be necessary to conduct research before making a decision on this request. The size, scope, and scale of this project at this location justified the argument that the type of roof proposed was not acceptable. Terra cotta or copper would be more appropriate materials. If the roof was blue, the shade of blue would not need to be one that electrified the City. He suggested a shade of blue that would be more complementary. He was thrilled about the building and loved the idea of filling in the corner, but did not support the request as proposed.

President Gunderson said Leavenworth, Washington has done a great job of helping national corporations make their branding fit with the town. She believed Astoria could do the same with Columbia Bank.

Commissioner Osterberg agreed with the other Commissioners. He asked if the application would go through a design review process. Planner Johnson explained that this hearing was the last step in the design review process. Commissioner Osterberg said he would not restate his comments about the roof, but noted that his focus was the material; the color was of less concern. However, other Commissioners made some good points about the color. The Applicant stated the design process was not complete and some details are yet to be decided. Commissioner Osterberg said that some of the concerns stated during the public hearing seemed to argue in support of additional review of two or three design details. He hoped the Applicant would consider requesting a continuance of the application and come back to the HLC to address the concerns. He did not believe the application met criteria with the proposal of standing seam metal because materials must be compatible with the surrounding historic structures and the historic district. He believed the other Commissioners and members of the public who gave testimony agreed, even though the public testimony was impartial to the application.

Planner Johnson said the HLC could approve the request with the condition that the Applicant comes back with a revised roof plan.

Commissioner Caruana believed the roof material was not the only concern. A two-story building will look great, but the HLC would need to see brick and roof samples before approving the request. He wanted to allow the Applicant to move forward with the architectural aspects of the building and return to the HLC for final approval of the details.

President Gunderson asked the Applicant to state whether he preferred a full continuance of this hearing or a decision now with the additional conditions desired by the HLC. Mr. Hockman stated he would need to speak to the bank about the standing seam metal roof and the color. He would like clarification on whether the color was an enforceable issue, but was sure the bank wanted to work with the HLC to come to an agreement with all of the materials.

President Gunderson said the HLC definitely wants the project to move forward and does not want to be a stumbling block. However, she believed the Applicant could bring some other material options to the HLC.

Mr. Hockman said he would work with the HLC regardless of its decision tonight.

City Manager Estes said if this hearing were continued, it could be continued just for certain issues. However, he believed the City would prefer a continuance of the entire request.

Commissioners Osterberg and Stanley agreed that the entire request should be continued.

Commissioner Caruana asked if it would be advantageous to the Applicant if the HLC approved the request contingent on the final selection of brick and roof materials.

Mr. Hockman understood that the bank wanted approval of this request before going any further. However, they would probably need more time to finish the design because there are underground issues that must be resolved.

City Manager Estes explained that requiring the Applicant to come back to the HLC to have material approved would result in a new land use application because the issue could be appealed.

Commissioner Osterberg believed it would be faster for the Applicant to have the entire request continued for one month. Having some items come back at another time would require the public review process to start over from the beginning, which would take longer.

Commissioner Stanley moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission continue New Construction NC14-05 by Steve Hockman to the November 18, 2014 Historic Landmarks Commission meeting at 5:15 pm at City Hall, Council Chambers; seconded by President Gunderson. Motion passed unanimously.

Planner Johnson confirmed for Commissioner Osterberg that Staff would not need an extension to the 120-day land use decision requirement.

City Manager Estes clarified that the HLC wants additional materials to be considered for the pyramid roof. Staff will provide clarification on the issue of color. However, he agreed with Planner Johnson that the Code does not allow for any discretion with regard for color, only on specific material. He did not hear any concerns about the mass or scale of the building and confirmed that the HLC wanted material samples.

Commissioner Burns believed, and Commissioner Osterberg agreed, that the footprint, mass, and size of the project was acceptable to the Commission. City Manager Estes added that Staff would work with the Applicant on any possible issues with the rooftop mechanical equipment.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS – ITEM 5:

ITEM 5(a): Update on Oregon Heritage All Star Community application

Commissioner Burns said Planner Johnson had already completed most of the work. He made a few inquiries to organizations like the Columbia River Maritime Museum. He has received nothing but support for this project and did not believe it would be too difficult to complete the application. He would collaborate with other Commissioners to gather the rest of the information necessary to complete the application. Planner Johnson added that Staff would like to submit the application in December. Commissioner Burns said he had asked the other organizations to begin gathering information within two weeks.


ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


City Manager