

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers

April 15, 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 pm.

ROLL CALL – ITEM 2:

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

Commissioners Excused: Michelle Dieffenbach and Paul Caruana.

Staff Present: Planner Rosemary Johnson

Planner Johnson noted for the record that no audience was present so the formalities could be waived.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 3(a):

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

Commissioner Burns moved to approve the minutes of March 18, 2014 as noted; seconded by Commissioner McHone. Ayes: President Gunderson, Commissioners Stanley, Burns, Osterberg, and McHone. Nays: None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ITEM 4(a):

EX 14-01 Exterior Alteration EX 14-01 by Mike Bruhn to replace a pair of 1/1 windows with double wood French doors with a single lite on the east side elevation in the same location and same approximate dimensions; and to relocate the windows toward the front, south portion of the east elevation of an existing single family dwelling at 1692 Franklin in the R-3, High Density Residential Zone.

President Gunderson asked if any member of the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) had a conflict of interest, or any ex parte contacts to declare.

Commissioner McHone declared that the Applicant is one of his customers, but he did not believe that would affect his impartiality in this matter.

President Gunderson called for the Staff report.

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

Commissioner Osterberg asked if any of the proposed windows were currently found elsewhere on the house and if the fiberglass French door was new. Planner Johnson confirmed that the French door would be new and would replace the paired windows. The paired windows would be relocated to the front and the single window would be stored on site.

Commissioner McHone believed the project was within all guidelines and that the cosmetic changes seemed appropriate.

Commissioner McHone moved that the Historic Landmarks Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Exterior Alteration EX 14-01 by Mike Bruhn, with conditions; seconded by Commissioner Stanley. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS: There were none.

NEW BUSINESS:

ITEM 6(a):

Dr. Edward Harvey Award Historic Preservation Nominations - Planner Johnson noted that Sherri Williams would be advertising the due date of nominations through the usual media outlets, including radio, newspaper, the Lower Columbia Preservation Society, Astoria Downtown Historic District Association website, and the City's website. Anyone can nominate a property by calling Staff with the address. Details of the renovation work are helpful, but if unknown, Staff can research the property. The award is for exterior alterations that have been completed in the last two years. Nominations will be included in the meeting packet for the May 20, 2014 HLC meeting. The Mayor will present awards to one commercial and one residential property, and an institutional property could also be awarded. The HLC can award honorable mentions at their meeting. Properties discussed in past years that are still eligible will be presented to the HLC by Staff. Staff will do research to verify that properties nominated are eligible.

Commissioner Osterberg noted this year's theme was *New Age of Preservation: Embark, Inspire, Engage*, and asked if nominations should fit within the theme. Planner Johnson explained the theme is set by the National Historic Preservation Society and could be used to break a tie between two properties, but it is not a criteria for the Dr. Harvey Award. The theme was included in the memo for informational purposes only.

ITEM 6(b):

SHPO CLG Grant Award Approval - Planner Johnson reported that SHPO approved the City's CLG Grant for this year. The last grant was approved two years ago because the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) now uses a two-year cycle. The grant was last used to fund the Adair-Uppertown Inventory. This year, the City requested the grant to provide pass-through grants. Grants will be given to property owners to do facade renovations on residential or commercial properties in Astoria. After reviewing applications for the grant, a packet will be prepared for Commissioners to review and, unless a Commissioner notifies Planner Johnson that a property does not qualify, the application would be approved. No comment from the HLC essentially means the HLC approves. Packets will also be sent to SHPO for approval. Any projects with concerns would be brought before the HLC. Grants would be for a maximum of \$3,000 each with a 50/50 match and can only be used on National Register properties, which include historic properties within a National Register District that are contributing. A majority of downtown buildings would be eligible. This grant will be widely advertised beginning in late May 2014. The SHPO grant also includes \$1,000 to pay for consultation time with John Goodenberger for assistance with HLC applications and design work.

President Gunderson confirmed that all of the Commissioners had returned their documents from the Ethics Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm to convene the work session.

WORK SESSION – PAINTING CONDITIONS:

Planner Johnson noted that questions were raised at the last meeting about color and what control the HLC has regarding color as she often includes conditions of approval about painting. She noted three sections of the Historic Properties Ordinance that refer to color:

- Exterior Alteration Exemptions: Storm windows, for example, must complement or match the color, detail, and proportions of the building. These alterations must be complementary, but the actual color is not being controlled.

- Historic Design Review Criteria: When it is necessary to replace architectural features, the new materials should match the existing in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
- Contemporary Design: Any contemporary material or design must be compatible with the size, scale, color, materials, and character of the property.
- Essentially, the ordinance does not identify a specific color, but requires compatible colors. She showed an example of a previously approved, fiberglass clad window, noting the material gives the appearance of wood. Vinyl windows generally have larger elements and do not have the detail of a wood window. Fiberglass, fiberglass-clad wood, vinyl-clad wood, and some composite materials have similar designs and dimensions of wood windows. The intent is to give the overall appearance of wood.
- Requiring a paintable material ensures that the windows will blend in with the architecture of the building. Milgard's fiberglass and composite windows, for example, can be painted or ordered in a specific color. She showed an example of vinyl windows on a local building that could not be painted, which stood out after other windows on the building had been painted. The HLC does not generally approve vinyl windows, and would not require specific colors.
- She clarified that vinyl is not paintable, but wood, fiberglass, aluminum, or composite such as fiberglass-clad wood or vinyl-clad wood, could all be painted. Vinyl-clad wood has composite vinyl material embedded into the wood, so not only are the physical dimensions different, but vinyl-clad windows have different chemical properties. Staff tries to avoid recommending vinyl-clad windows on primary elevations, but the Commission has considered them.
- She confirmed that Mr. Goodenberger was speaking as Staff at the last meeting because she was unable to attend. She explained that his comments were not about avoiding white or that white was a wrong color, but that the windows could not be painted and would therefore always stay white if the rest of the building was painted.

Commissioner Osterberg confirmed his questions had been addressed.

Planner Johnson noted that new Commissioners may not have an understanding of how standard conditions came to be established, adding no recommended conditions are set in stone and can be changed by the HLC. The conditions have been developed over the years and the Commission can change procedures as long as the changes are in compliance with the Code and policies that have been formally adopted. Staff can offer more information any time a Commissioner has a question.

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


Rosemary Johnson, Planner/Historic Preservation Officer