

Members

Michael Fast, *Chair*
Roger Johnson, *Vice-Chair*
Greg Benton
Ross Buffington
Elizabeth Chambers
Phillip Hill
Tim McDonald
Mark McIntire
Jonathan Phillips
Catherine Sleavin
Kathryn Longwell, *North Slope Ex-Officio*



MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Commission Community and Economic Development Department

Staff

Reuben McKnight, *Historic Preservation Officer*

Date: December 13, 2006
Location: 728 St. Helens, Tacoma Municipal Building North, Room 16

LPC2007

Commission Members in Attendance:

Michael Fast, *Chair* (Arrived at 5:06 p.m.)
Roger Johnson, *Vice-Chair*
Greg Benton
Ross Buffington
Tim McDonald
Jonathan Phillips
Catherine Sleavin
Kathryn Longwell
Phillip Hill
Mark McIntire

Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight, *Historic Preservation Officer*
Donna Bosinski, *Office Assistant*

Others Present:

Fred King
Lea Armstrong, *Eldridge Hotel*
Michael Sullivan, *Artifacts Consulting*
Eugenia Woo, *Artifacts Consulting*
Spencer Howard, *Artifacts Consulting*
Blaine Johnson, *Passages Building*
Melissa McGinnis, *MetroParks*

Commission Members Excused:

Elizabeth Chambers

Vice-Chair Roger Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

The minutes of November 8, 2006, were approved, as submitted.

B. Excusal of Absences

Commissioner Elizabeth Chambers was excused from this meeting.

2. PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF NOMINATIONS

A. 747 St. Helens (Eldridge Hotel)

Mr. Reuben McKnight said that the Tacoma Register listing follows procedures that are outlined in the Municipal Code, under Chapter 13.07.050, and consists of a minimum of two separate Commission meetings for consideration. This initial meeting determines whether or not the property meets the threshold criteria in the ordinance for age and integrity. The Commission may then have the nomination scheduled for a public hearing and comment period, at which time the public may enter comments into the record for consideration. Owner consent is not required for the Commission to recommend designation. The effects of listing on the Tacoma Register: Exterior design changes and alterations must be reviewed by the Landmarks Commission for compatibility with the historic character of the building. Projects that require review under SEPA that are on, or near the site may require measures to avoid impacts to the listed structure. Properties subject to property taxes may qualify for the Special Tax Valuation Program. Future use of the property is not restricted by this designation.

Mr. McKnight further stated that the Eldridge Hotel was built in 1891 and served as a hotel, and later (from 1895-1909) a YMCA. The eastern façade has retained its original 1891 character, whereas the western façade is an historic 1936 Art Deco influenced design. The building is located within the boundaries of the Old City Hall National Register District, and is adjacent to the Tacoma Register Historic District, which begins on the east side of

the Broadway Street center line.

The threshold criteria for Tacoma Register listing are indicated at 13.07.040B(1), to include that the property is at least 50 years old at the time of nomination; and the property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association – such that it is able to convey its historical, cultural, or architectural significance. The building is currently being rehabilitated. Staff recommends scheduling the nomination for public testimony at a hearing in February 2007, as well as a site visit.

Ms. Eugenia Woo stated that the building is eligible for individual listing for the Tacoma Register under criteria A and C. Under criterion A, the property has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development of the City and is associated with a significant person in the past. In this case, Dr. Henry C. Bostwick, a Tacoma pioneer and physician who developed the building. Under criterion C, the property exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historic heritage of the community. The architect for the building was Frederick A. Sexton, who came to Tacoma during its first construction boom period in 1887.

The block on which the building is located was very significant in the development of Tacoma. The building served as the first headquarters for the local YMCA. Ms. Woo continued with a PowerPoint presentation, which showed some historic images of the building. The YMCA owned the building from 1895 to 1909 and converted spaces to a gymnasium and classrooms. To finance construction of a new building, the YMCA sold the building to William Jones and was converted back to hotel use in 1910 and was renamed the Lindum Hotel. In the early 1930's, the building was in danger of being demolished, but was sold to a California company and underwent renovation. In the late 1940's, R. E. Anderson and Company purchased the building. For the next sixty years it was used for real estate and insurance. Today, the building is occupied by Armstrong Universe, a 470-employee personal care services company, and continues to serve an important contributing role within the Historic District as a defining member of the Broadway streetscape.

Because of the many changes in usage during the past 115 years, Ms. Woo reported, the building has been altered extensively on the interior; however, the exterior facade maintains the character of the late 19th Century on the Broadway side, and the continuity of streetscape on the St. Helens Avenue side.

There was a motion:

"I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Eldridge Hotel/YMCA building meets the threshold criteria A and C and; therefore, is eligible to be submitted for placement on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places".

Motion: Phillips

Second: Hill

Motion: Carried (McDonald abstained)

3. DESIGN REVIEW

A. 747 St. Helens (Eldridge Hotel)

The Eldridge Hotel has been nominated as a City Landmark and is currently undergoing rehabilitation. The project includes: restoration of the Broadway facing storefront level and the addition of a roll-up garage door and awnings. It will consist of cleaning, repainting and repair of both St. Helens and Broadway Street elevations, seismic anchoring of the masonry walls, repair and restoration of historic wood windows, replacement of non-historic aluminum windows with wood windows, rehabilitation of the Broadway elevation fire escape, and the addition of a penthouse on the roof-level, located to reduce and/or eliminate adverse visual impacts.

Mr. Sullivan stated that one of the purposes of having the building listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is because the renovation will present the opportunity for Special Tax Valuation, as well as the Federal Investment Tax Credits. Both State and Federal Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation will apply. The Eldridge Hotel has not been formally listed on the Tacoma Register as yet, but is currently under construction.

There will be some modifications made to the building to accommodate a growing healthcare company, Armstrong Universe. Mr. Spencer Howard briefly went through some of the proposed changes to the building. On the Broadway Street side: 1. Restore the original two-bay division on the east Broadway façade, removing lower portions of the contemporary additions of non-compatible brick veneer, aluminum sash windows, and faux pediment

entry, resulting in overall improvement of visual character and compatibility with historic storefronts along that street. 2. Preserve the dense, previously painted brick cladding and accent terra cotta, stone and metal elements by cleaning and repainting. 3. Preserve the windows by repair and cleaning and restore to operational. 4. Relocate vertical ladder (fire escape) to the south side, and scrape, clean, and repaint. Also, provide a protective cage.

Seismic: Provide 8-mm helical veneer wall ties through the mortar joints and re-point at the anchor locations; strengthen the floor and roof diaphragms and floor/wall connections; connect masonry walls to floors; lay blocking at the roof; provide parapet anchors from the backside to avoid visibility from the front, public side. St. Helens: 1. Preserve façade through patching of cracks in the concrete, repair broken parapet detailing, repaint, install fabric awnings, and attach bolts for frames. 2. Preserve windows through cleaning, repair and repainting of existing wood sash windows, and install retractable fabric awnings above the upper windows. Roof: Add a low, gable-roofed, penthouse to serve as a mezzanine level for the fourth floor. Roofing will be done with a single-ply, torch-down system. Interior: First floor will provide office space, which will be accessible from Broadway. Provide a second stairway between the first and second floors.

Commissioner Greg Benton inquired if the applicant had a color slide of the paint available. Mr. Spencer stated that the general color scheme selected will be in the earth-tone range. Commissioner Benton then asked if they had considered stripping the paint as an option. Mr. Sullivan said that in order to get down to the original brick, it did not seem like a viable option. The decorative elements on it are all sheet metal, which have been painted as well.

Vice-Chair Johnson asked if the windows on the St. Helens side had been restored. Mr. Sullivan said that those windows are original, but have been double-paned. Fabric awnings will be installed, and will probably be retractable. Mr. Sullivan indicated that they will eventually make paint and awning samples available to the Commission. Chair Michael Fast stated that the Commission would appreciate having the final façade details come before the Commission before a final approval will be given.

Commissioner Jonathan Phillips inquired about procedure, since the building has not yet been designated to the Tacoma Register. Mr. McKnight said that the Commission can give a preliminary approval, on the condition that it continues through the landmark process. This will be an advisory vote. In the case of where a project is already underway, the nomination includes the project briefing at the same time. By the Commission forwarding and approving the Landmarks Nomination, they have also (in effect) approved the work that has been occurring on the property.

There was a motion:

"I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission provides preliminary approval, finding that the renovation on the Eldridge Hotel/YMCA building meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards 4, 6, and 9; but reserving the right of final approval on the Broadway finish façade and the awnings".

Motion: Phillips

Second: McIntire

Motion: Carried (McDonald abstained)

B. 708 Broadway (The Passages Building)

The building is an individually listed City Landmark, Mr. McKnight reported. The property was approved for Special Tax Valuation in 2000. Following the Landmarks Commission's November 2006 meeting, there were successive storms and staff was notified that significant water incursion was occurring on the upper southern wall, which is a side wall that extends above the adjacent building and is unprotected. The top story is non-historic, and was added to the building prior to the rehabilitation. During the rehabilitation, the corrugated material was removed and the wall was sealed with an elastomeric coating to prevent water intrusion. The coating has been re-applied several times in the past. However, significant amounts of water entered the wall, both through the mortar joints and through the face of the CMU blocks, causing the internal insulation to become wet, as well as causing damage to the internal walls. Staff was notified of the issue and made a site visit to the building. The ARC was scheduled to view the building. Following guidance from Mr. Cap Pearson, Building and Land-Use Services, and Commissioner Benton, staff issued an emergency approval for the southern wall to be clad in a standing seam metal. Staff requested a report of the work to be furnished to the Commission.

Mr. Blaine Johnson said that it was difficult to know if the wall had been properly sealed when it was put on in the 1960's, but several water fabrication specialists said that there was a clear need for more permanent protection in order to preserve the integrity of the building and; therefore, recommended metal cladding as the best method for

eliminating any future damage. Also, that method was deemed to be compatible with other historic buildings. The chosen color was a general match to the brick paint color.

Mr. Johnson stated that because of the swift and responsive action taken by staff and the Commission, he believed it saved thousands of dollars in more extensive repairs.

Chair Fast said that, according to the photographs, it does not seem that the metal cladding adversely affected the appearance of the building; in fact, it may have increased its aesthetic appeal.

There was a motion:

“I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission approves the work completed on the Passages Building – that it does not adversely affect the historic nature of the building”.

Motion: Johnson

Second: Phillips

Motion: Carried

5. BOARD BRIEFINGS

A. Fort Nisqually Design Update

Ms. McGinnis informed the Commission of changes to the plans, which occurred since her last briefing. The primary change being the addition of another building – a large store. Originally, the plan was to build a 1,500-square foot men’s dwelling house, with a 3,000-square foot basement underneath. At the inception of the Interpretive Center expansion, concrete was much less expensive than it is at this time. In fact, it would cost more per square foot than it will be to build an entire new building. The funding is from a MetroParks \$84.3 million bond issue that was passed last year, along with the State’s Capital Heritage Project grant money. The additions are the result of a need for archival storage, research library, and office space. There is ample documentation that both buildings previously existed at historic Fort Nisqually. The newest plan is to eliminate the basement under the Men’s Dwelling House and; instead, reconstruct Store #1. Both buildings will have an historic appearance and construction is expected to commence March 2007.

Commissioner Phillips asked for clarification regarding the exterior of the structures. It was determined that they will be made of rough-sawn boards with metal flashing. The roofing will be larger shingles, if they are affordable. If not, the smaller shingles will be used.

Ms. McGinnis said that another briefing will be forthcoming in the near future.

4. CHAIR/COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chair Fast asked for information regarding his re-appointment to the Commission. Mr. McKnight stated that Chair Fast’s application was received and accepted in the Mayor’s office. The Appointments Committee is scheduled to meet on January 22, 2007. In the interim, he will continue to serve on the Commission, per the Municipal Code.

Because of the downsizing of the Commission, Commissioner Osborne’s position has expired and; therefore, he will not be re-appointed.

5. BOARD BUSINESS/PRESERVATION PLANNING

OFFICER ELECTIONS/NOMINATIONS

Due to the recent board transition, the officer elections have been on an irregular schedule, as follows:

- On January 25, 2006, Sharon Winters was elected Chair and Michael Fast as Vice-Chair.
- Due to the reduction in Commission size, Chair Winters resigned the Chair position and Commissioner Fast assumed Chair position.
- On April 26, 2006, the Commission elected Roger Johnson as Chair and Elizabeth Chambers as Vice-

Chair. It was determined that Chair Fast would remain as Chair until the conclusion of his term in December. At the time, Chair Fast's position was going to be dissolved due to the reduction of Commission sized.

- Because of Commissioner O'Neil's resignation, Chair Fast's position is being re-appointed.
- The Commission may choose to retain its elected slate of Johnson and Chambers, or call new elections.

Chair Fast stated that the nominations/elections that were previously held, became rather complicated due to the downsizing of the Commission. Mr. McKnight said that when he went through the chronology, Roger Johnson was elected Chair and Elizabeth Chambers was elected Vice-Chair. The Commission deferred that election result until the end of the year because it was expected that Chair Fast's position was going to be part of the attrition.

He said however, that is no longer the case. The question is whether or not the Commission should retain the previous election results, or shall the Commission call for new elections? Mr. McKnight favored the action of re-opening the election, since Commissioner Chambers was absent from this meeting. Chair Fast recommended opening the floor for nominations at this time, for elections in January.

Commissioner Phillips moved to defer the actual election until January. Commissioner Phillips said that between now and January, there could be a nomination committee that contacts the existing Chair/Vice-Chair/Interim Chair to determine whether they still wished to run for office. He then asked Chair Fast if he wanted to continue as Chair. Chair Fast stated that he was willing to continue. Commissioner Phillips proposed that Michael Fast be nominated as Chair – but that elections be deferred until January when there's a full Commission. Chair Fast stated that the Commission will allow nominations up until that meeting actually begins.

There was a motion:

"I move to defer the election until January 2007".

Motion: Phillips
Second: McDonald
Motion: Carried

ADOPTION OF BYLAWS

There was a motion:

"I move to adopt the bylaws, as submitted in the draft".

Motion: Phillips
Second: McIntire
Motion: Carried

Mr. McKnight said that the bylaws can be amended, annually, at the first regular meeting in December.

DESIGNATE PRESERVATION MONTH PLANNING COMMITTEE

Commissioners Phillip Hill, Mark McIntire, and Ross Buffington volunteered to be on the planning committee for Preservation Month, which is May of every year.

COMMISSIONER/STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Hill wanted to discuss Councilmember Anderson's ethic complaint. He said that it seemed unfair that a public citizen is unable to receive the same privileges as a private citizen, and the process of renovating and landmarking is certainly not a lucrative venture.

Chair Fast indicated that Councilmembers do not differ from any other citizen in the City, as far as applying for the tax abatement programs that are available to anyone who meets the necessary criteria. He further stated that we, as a Commission, acted in proper order without regard as to whom it would benefit. Unless we had been given a directive stating that "this group of people" is not eligible for this tax valuation, we had to proceed accordingly.

Mr. McKnight said that the application was processed according to all the requirements that are currently in place.

The City Attorney had never issued a formal determination on whether or not the City Council could apply for this program. At the time, the Commission was operating under a correct assumption. Because the ethics complaint was filed, it triggered a formal investigation, for which the City hired outside counsel to avoid conflicts of interest. What is currently at issue, Mr. McKnight reported, is whether or not that approval – or that program – can be executed for a City Councilmember, under the required agreement that they have to sign with the City to maintain their property for ten years (the duration of the program). There is a portion of the City Charter that prohibits Councilmembers from having contracts with financial implications. There is nothing wrong with receiving tax abatement, but the issue is whether or not they can legally enter into that agreement without violating the City Charter. Currently, the determination is that Councilmember Anderson asked that her application for Special Tax Valuation be withdrawn from the process; however, her property was successfully added to the Landmarks Register. Commissioner Phillips remarked that a covenant remains with the property and, therefore, any new owners would receive the benefit and the agreement would terminate upon the sale of the home.

Commissioner Hill said that Art-at-Work Month was very successful and surpassed everyone's expectations. He was hopeful that the City Council would approve significant funding for maintenance of public art for the next budget.

Mr. McKnight reminded the Commission of the surplus copper from the Union Station, which has been in storage for seventeen years. The City established a program where artists and project people could propose ways in which to use the copper for public benefit. Mr. McKnight said that the excess copper was to be sold as scrap. He said that no applications to reuse the copper have been received in several years. He said that he visited the storage site and noted that most of the copper that is remaining is indistinguishable. Architectural elements will be retained, but the rest will be removed as surplus to create storage space.

There were no comments.

Commissioner Phillips reported the grave illness of a former Landmarks Commissioner, Mr. Ben Gilbert, and asked that Commissioners wish him well.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted as True and Correct:

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer