



LANDMARKS COMMISSION

MINUTES

May 1, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Hybrid – Council Chambers

Approved: June 5, 2024

Call to Order

Commissioner Robinson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Chad Robinson, Camron Settlemier, Mason Cox, Cathy Winterrowd, Bill Ryals, Richard Engeman, Rayne Legras

Members absent: (none)

Approval of Minutes

6:02 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Winterrowd moved to approve the minutes from April 3, 2024, as presented. Commissioner Settlemier seconded the motion, which passes 7-0.

Business from the Public

6:02 p.m.

Albany Downtown Association, Executive Director, Lise Grato provided an update and announcement of the community events for May Historic Preservation Month.

Scheduled Business

Public Hearing—Type III – Quasi-Judicial Process

6:04 p.m.

File HI-04-24: Historic Review application for use of substitute materials to replace the existing siding at 906 11th Avenue SW.

Chair Robinson opened the hearing at 6:04 p.m

Commission Declarations

No members declared a Conflict of Interest or any Ex-parte contact.

Commissioners Settlemier, Cox, Engeman, Winterrowd and Legras reported site visits.

No members abstained from participation.

There were no challenges to participants in these proceedings.

David Martineau read the hearing procedures.

Staff Report

6:08 p.m.

Project Planner II Alyssa Schrems began describing the application. Commission reviewed the application using Review Criteria Eligibility Standards 7.170 – 7.210. She noted the applicant submitted descriptions of two different materials for the commission's consideration.

Commissioner Winterrowd procedurally inquired how to determine whether the original materials are too far deteriorated to repair or whether it would be cost prohibitive to make that repair. Schrems responded that it is up to the applicant to prove deterioration and then it is up to the Commission's best judgment.

Applicant Testimony

The applicants testified that the siding options are both fiber cement material. They noted that the rear side of the residence the siding was severely deteriorated, and past paint job wasn't done well. They chose the fiber cement siding as it is considered more durable than other materials.

Commissioner Questions

Commissioner Settlemier asked about applicant getting cost estimates, and availability of matching cedar siding.

Commissioner Robinson asked about the material brand name, and difference in the reveal from the original. He agreed that the Commission may need more details on the materials.

Commissioner Cox requested comparisons be done on the life expectancy of material.

Public Testimony

6:21 p.m.

None.

There was no Applicant Rebuttal, or additional Staff Response.

Procedural Questions

Commissioner Winterrowd was concerned that the entire scope of work seemed uncertain at this time. She asked staff about the process for assuring that the approved materials are used. Schrems noted that is a condition of approval.

Chair Robinson called the public hearing closed at 6:24 p.m.

Commission Deliberations

Commissioners Robinson and Settlemier stated that they wanted more information on the extent of the deterioration and exactly what the substitute materials are. Commissioners Winterrowd and Cox added they would appreciate some cost comparisons of the materials. Winterrowd expressed concern that allowing substitute materials on the entire home could potentially diminish the historic nature and status of the residence. Commissioners Robinson, Engeman and Legras concurred on the need for additional information.

David Martineau counseled that the hearing could remain open with a continuance to the next meeting on June 5, 2024. The applicant was given clarification on the additional information requested.

Motion: Commissioner Engeman moved for continuance of the hearing until the next meeting on June 5 2024. Commissioner Winterrowd seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Public Hearing—Type III – Quasi-Judicial Process

6:36? p.m.

File HI-05-24: Historic Review of exterior alterations to install new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) louvers in existing window frames on the Central Elementary School building at 336 9th Avenue SW.

Chair Robinson called the public hearing to order at 6:37 p.m.

Commission Declarations

Commissioner Cox declared a Conflict of Interest as General Albany Public Schools is his employer. No other members declared a Conflict of Interest.

Commissioner Ryals reported an ex-parte contact touring the school and providing gratis advice regarding these system issues.

Commissioners Settlemier, Engeman Winterrowd, Robinson and Legras reported site visits.

No members aside from Commissioner Cox abstained from participation. There were no challenges to participants in these proceedings.

David Martineau read the hearing procedures.

Staff Report

Alyssa Schrems noted for the record that she attended elementary school there. Central Elementary School is located on the corner of 9th Avenue SW (primary façade) and Ferry Street. Using Review Criteria 7.120 – 7.165 staff recommended Option 2: Approve the request with conditions of approval. She asked that the conditions include final inspection.

Applicant Testimony

Marlene Gillis, President, Soderstrom Architects testified regarding the effects on student learning with the current system, which is contributing to an unhealthy, unsafe environment. The new plan replaces the radiators with modern controlled units which allow consistent monitoring and control. This design would minimize cost and internal structural changes and minimize changes to the exterior as well.

Lorin Stanley, Facilities Director for Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS) summarized that the goal is to improve safety, indoor air quality and temperature. Current unsafe conditions include the potential for burns with the steam radiators, uneven heating due to lack of air circulation requiring frequent manual adjustments to thermostats. He further explained the benefits of the new HVAC system.

Commission Questions

Commissioner Settlemier asked about the potential of a roof mounted HVAC system and available funds. Stanley responded that the current roof structure will not support the weight or energy load required by the equipment. He went on to explain in more detail the louver size and placement minimizing the gap in the window for a good weatherproof connection. Settlemier asked about restoration of the other windows. Stanley shared concerns over the windows but noted the expense and issue of lead paint in any replacement effort.

Commissioner Ryals commended the applicants for their project solutions and noted that this is on the National Historic Register of Places, not Buildings and this project retains the historic place and systems. He suggested painting the louvers black not white, so they look like an open window.

Public Testimony

7:09 p.m.

Bernadette Niederer provided testimony in addition to written testimony provided. She commended the project as a low-profile solution but expressed concern about the lack of specific details on the louvers and the fasteners and expressed her frustration in not immediately addressing the repair of windows not containing louvers.

Jill Nelson testified as a parent/volunteer/PTA member at the Central Elementary School advocating for approval of the application. She provided background and shared concerns, reiterating that in her view this project meets the criteria for approval as it maintains the historic characteristics of the building.

Reese Nelson, a current fifth grade student at the Central Elementary School provided testimony regarding the conditions at the school.

Shannon Richards, Principal of Central Elementary testified that her primary role is ensuring student safety. She is a proponent of improving the system but her biggest concern with student safety is the windows.

Dick Olson, Albany resident testified to his experiences with Central Elementary School planning back in 1966 when there was deliberation about demolishing the school. He suggested that the Commission reject the request to replace the louvers as he believed there are other cost-effective ways to address the issues.

Applicant Rebuttal

Marlene Gillis began by addressing the concerns in order of mention. This solution was the most respectful to the architecture and most effective and affordable option.

Lorin Stanley noted louvers should not be visible from the ground exterior and the plan is to build covers in the classrooms for the ductwork behind the louvers. He is continuing to work on window repairs to have at least two safely working windows per classroom.

There was no additional response from staff or procedural questions.

Chair Robinson closed the Public Hearing at 7:52 p.m.

Commission Deliberation

Commissioner Settlemier was in agreement that painting the louvers dark should be a condition of approval. He noted that the school hasn't changed much over the last 100 years, but the environment now is significantly hotter than 1915 and changes should strive to keep up with the environmental changes to ensure that Central Elementary School stays a viable space.

Commissioner Robinson concurred that even though it may not be an ideal solution, the school is a valuable part of the community, and the plan is a good compromise. Painting the louvers dark should be an important condition to any motion.

Commissioner Ryals added ensuring that the louvers are recessed and painting them black maintains a light touch visually, and that the building continues to serve its function as a school loved by many. He believes the plan is a good solution.

Commissioner Legras called attention to the picture of the current window louvers and box fans sitting next to them and noted it wouldn't be a good alternative.

Commissioner Winterrowd was in consensus with the others thinking it is a very good solution meeting the standards and staff analysis was correct. She was happy the proposal is to retain the structure as a school and is in support of the project.

Commission Engeman had some regrets but hoped that the Commission could convey to the School Board that they need to plan for more permanent solutions, rather than stop-gap measures since the proposal doesn't address active cooling of the building. In general, he supported the application.

Motion: Commissioner Ryals moved to approve the exterior alterations including conditions of approval as noted in the staff report for application planning file no. HI-05-24. This motion is based upon the findings and conclusions in the April 24, 2024, staff report and findings in support of the application made by the Landmarks Commission during deliberations on this matter. The motion adds the condition that the louvers be painted dark or black along with a required final inspection. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Legras, which passed 6-0. Commissioner Cox recusing himself from the proceeding.

Public Hearing—Type III – Quasi-Judicial Process

8:06 p.m.

File HI-01-24/SP-02-24: application for Exterior Alterations and New Construction and Site Plan Review for a 4,004 square foot addition onto an existing structure and decoupling of an existing addition into a separate structure at 133 5th Avenue SE.

Chair Robinson called the Public Hearing to order at 8:07 p.m.

Commission Declarations

No commissioners declared a Conflict of Interest.

Commissioner Settlemier reported an ex-parte contact taking photos of the building as part of the Main Street Grant, but he wasn't compensated for that or discussed this application with them.

Commissioner Ryals reported having had discussions with the owners and wrote a letter for the grant. In addition, he reported a call from a Linn County Commissioner with a question regarding parking availability in the lot across the street from the site and whether that would be an issue. The County Commissioner authorized him to share that the parking area is in use by the county from 8-5 during the day but authorized him to say that they didn't see that the policy will change, and they did not see an issue. Both commissioners reporting ex parte contact assured they would be basing their decision on the Albany Development Code and facts presented.

Commissioners Engeman, Cox, Winterrowd, Robinson, Settlemier reported site visits.

No members abstained from participation in the proceedings. There were no challenges to participants in these proceedings.

David Martineau read the hearing procedures.

Staff Report

8:12 p.m.

Project planner, Alyssa Schrems, presented the staff report clarifying that normally the Site Plan Review requires just a staff level review but the application was combined in the Type III process.

Commission Settlemier asked where the design standards in ADC Chapter 8 would apply, which Schrems addressed that staff only applied them to the annex and proposed new construction.

Staff guidance was that the Commission look at this application only as it relates to the historic design of the structure. Settlemier also inquired about the demolition of the small shed on the property. Schrems said the shed wasn't listed on the historic inventory, so they did not review that demolition.

Applicant Testimony

Matt Bennett, applicant, testified that their intent with the purchase of the property was to maintain the historical integrity of the building by renovating the depot space down to the original 1912 design and repurposing the space. New storage building construction would mitigate potential destruction from the restaurant operation and add on to the functionality.

Architect Lori Stephens, with Broadleaf Architecture testified that they had reviewed many options and choose this plan because it suited the needs of the restaurant and the restoration of the interior of the other building while providing the efficiencies needed. And decoupling the buildings enables them to restore the historic train depot.

Stephens referred to the letter sent by the Friends of Historic Albany and responded with some additional information relative to their concerns.

Commissioner Questions

8:44 p.m.

Commissioner Ryals commended the applicants on the east façade especially decoupling of the buildings. He asked for more details on the opposite side where the new construction is covering some of the exterior façade. Stephens shared they are saving all the exposed brick and sliding doors as much as possible maintaining the exterior façade on the interior space.

Commissioner Cox asked about the OER station sign, and whether they plan on retaining that. Bennett said that they do.

Commissioner Settlemier asked about the discrepancy in the designs shown in the packet. One of the designs showed parking on the station platform, but they noted it wouldn't be used like that. The public sidewalk curb will be replaced, and the original tracks will remain exposed.

Commissioner Robinson asked about the canopy at the front entrance. Bennett explained including it is a public service to their older patrons when waiting outside out of the weather, and with four main doors to the train station, they needed to limit confusion as to the entry to the restaurant.

Matt Pyburn with Pyburn and Sons shared that the new windows in the addition and entry are Marvin Ultimate Windows, which are extruded aluminum clad on the outside (replicating a wood frame) and wood on the inside and are one of the only window models that fully meet the Secretary of State standards for rehabilitation of historic buildings.

Settlemier inquired if the roll up door on the back and side are steel which are more contemporary elements. Commissioner Ryals asked about the Commission's jurisdiction over these elements as seen from the alleyway.

Public Testimony

9:07 p.m.

Albany Visitors Association, Executive Director, Rebecca Bond testified in support of the combined application HI-01-24/SP-04-24. They are eagerly awaiting this project as rehabilitation of the historic Albany

Electric Station will bring new life to an underappreciated area of the historic downtown, encouraging the commission to approve the application.

Albany Downtown Association, Executive Director, Lise Grato, shared the Association is still firmly in support of the project which had received an Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant in 2022 to revitalize the station, and that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) reviewed it and had no concerns.

There was no Applicant Rebuttal or further procedural questions.

Chair Robinson closed the Public Hearing at 9:13 p.m.

Commission Deliberations

Commissioner Ryals shared that from his experience people who have concerns about work in historic districts can agree that investments are necessary to ensure that history is preserved. He wanted to commend the applicants on their investment in taking on a very critical building to Albany's history.

Commissioner Winterrowd commended efforts as well and added that flexibility is warranted as requested on the windows. Sharing her main concern was the location of the addition being closer to the street than the main façade of the historic building. Winterrowd questioned exactly how far forward the new construction is. Schrems verified that the new construction is total width is 36 feet and the cutout is about 16 feet and actual protrusion is only about 20 feet of façade.

Commissioner Settlemier concurred with her concern, but they have adequately addressed that. He thinks the canopy hides the details and detracts from the symmetry of the building. He also believed that the new addition closer to the street is not compatible with the existing structure, and the canopy being more modern materials.

Commissioner Robinson added that comparing commercial versus residential areas many commercial areas have accessory structures out to the street. He agreed that the buildings should be differentiated to distinguish the new addition from the historic structure. He found the canopy was necessary for business reasons but noted it was removable.

Commissioner Ryals reminded members that they are there to enforce the Secretary standards not to redesign buildings. One of the standards is that additions need to be easily distinguished from the historic building.

Commissioner Cox thought that the new addition did differentiate it from the depot maintaining the historic character without mimicking it. He didn't see an issue with the addition. The awning does mimic the shape of the windows. He noted that historically things didn't necessarily line up.

Commissioner Engeman agreed with the other's opinions. He shared his opinion that this building has suffered a lot over the years, and this is an admirable effort to restore the building.

Motion: Commissioner Legras moved to approve the site plan review, exterior alterations and new construction including conditions of approval as noted in the staff report for application file no. SP-04-24/HI-01-24. This motion is based on the findings and conclusions in the April 24, 2024, staff report and findings in support of the application made by the Landmarks Commission during deliberations on this matter. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion, which passed 6-1 with Commissioner Settlemier opposing.

Business from the Commission

9:36 p.m.

Commissioner Winterrowd announced that David Lewis, PhD, Grand Ronde tribal member and assistant professor of anthropology and indigenous studies at OSU has agreed to give a presentation in July on the indigenous history of the region. He recommended a cultural demonstration from the Grand Ronde tribe on foods and plant materials as well. She described Lewis' book on tribal history and timelines. She purchased the book to share with the commission members. Schrems has asked if the library is willing to hold the event.

Business from Staff

Schrems shared that staff is working on the awards presentation ceremony being in May. Commissioners prefer it to occur in May as it is Historic Preservation Month. Staff are working to get the grant applications

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open for the pass-through grants so people can work on projects. Possibly open it up in June and then award in July. She noted the problems with July meeting dates, but she will do outreach to commissioners on dates.

Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, June 5th, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signature on file

Susan Muniz
Recorder

Reviewed by,

Signature on file

David Martineau
Planning Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@albanyoregon.gov.*