

KING COUNTY LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES*

*Thursday, February 23, 2017
Issaquah City Hall, Eagle Room
130 E. Sunset Way
Issaquah, Washington
(Approved 4/27/17)*

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Poppi Handy, Chair; Lorelea Hudson, Vice Chair; Kji Kelly; Cristy Lake; Caroline Lemay; Ella Moore; David Pilgrim

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Rebecca Ossa

STAFF PRESENT: Jennifer Meisner, Todd Scott

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Handy called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Introductions of commissioners and staff were made.

Convene ISSAQUAH LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER PRESENT: Todd Sargeant

STAFF PRESENT: Christen Leeson, City of Issaquah

GUESTS: Dr. & Mrs. Mark Miller, Sue Friddell, Wendy Winslow, Mary O. Fricke, Diana Kelsey Kutas, Deborah McConnell, Becky Johnson, Eirlys Vanderhoff, Cherilyn Widell, Jennifer Mortensen, Chris Moore, Steve Stroming, Steve Pereira, Jeff Matson, Gisela Levi, Geri Potter, Steve Thues, Helen Bell, Valerie Moore, Rosemary Carrel, Joanne Van Deurzen, Theo Nassar

PUBLIC HEARING: William Conrardy House Landmark Nomination

Cherilyn Widell, historic preservation consultant and author of the nomination, informed the commission that she met the Secretary of the Interior's standards as an architectural historian. She provided the commission with a brief history of the house and described the minimal changes made over time. She said it was an excellent, intact example of a mid-century post and beam house and was eligible for landmark designation under Criterion A3. It has many of the defining elements of the style including a horizontal orientation, clerestory windows, low-sloping roof, large window walls open to the expansive views, and a bomb shelter. The wood trim is birch and cedar. The house was completed for \$40,000, and was built by George Rowley who developed the entire subdivision. When the house was built, the area had been mostly clear cut, so there were significant views to the east and north.

The original owner, William Conrardy, worked for the federal General Accounting Office and had the account for the Atomic Energy Commission. In part due to this familiarity, and in part due to the recent Cuban Missile Crisis, Conrardy was concerned about safety in the event of a nuclear attack. He identified this location as a strategic safe zone, on the north side of Squak Mountain, thereby shielding the house from a nuclear attack on Ft. Lewis or McChord Air Force Base to the

*May include minutes for cities who have interlocal historic preservation agreements with King County.

southwest. She closed by saying the current owners have been great stewards of the property for many years. She also provided staff with a short list of minor changes to the landmark nomination.

Scott then described the process for designation of Issaquah landmarks. He indicated staff felt the house met Criterion A3 as an excellent intact example of a single family home built in the Mid-Twentieth Century style. He recommended the commission designate the building as a City of Issaquah landmark, and that the features of significance include the exterior of the building and all of the land area within the nominated boundaries.

Handy opened the public hearing and asked for testimony from the audience.

Public Testimony:

Mark Miller indicated that it had been a privilege for him and his wife to own the house. They have visited with the Conrardy family and learned many things about the property. He said Mr. Conrardy had developed criteria for the type and location of a property he wanted and Mrs. Conrardy had located the property based on that criteria. Dr. & Mrs. Miller feel it is important to keep some of these places intact.

Handy asked for additional testimony. Hearing none she closed the public comment period and opened the floor to commissioner deliberation. Pilgrim asked if the windows had been replaced. Scott said that a number of them had been, but the openings had not changed. Miller indicated that only the glass had been replaced with shatterproof glass because the windows were so close to the floor. The clerestory windows have not been replaced. Hudson asked if the specific landscaping was not called out, couldn't someone change it significantly. Scott said yes, but it's difficult to regulate landscaping in particular, as it is constantly changing.

Kelly asked about the significance of the house in the broader context of mid-century houses throughout the county. Scott said the county is currently finishing up a context statement for single family mid-century houses, and it is clear that the Conrardy House is one of the better examples, primarily because it contains important elements that define the style, and because it is so intact. Lemay asked if the bomb shelter should be called out as a feature of significance. Scott said that it could be, but it would be nearly impossible to know if changes are made to it. There was a discussion about whether regulating any changes is most critical, or calling out that it is an unusual feature and should specifically mentioned. Lemay still felt it was important to add it. Handy suggested that based on the consultant's testimony the findings of fact should be adjusted to indicate that the setting for the property had changed, since much of the area was clear cut at the time the house was built.

Handy called for a motion. Commissioner Sargeant moved to designate the William Conrardy House as a City of Issaquah landmark based on the staff recommendation, and including the features of significance and findings contained in that recommendation, with the addition of the bomb shelter as a feature of significance. Hudson seconded. The motion passed 8-0.

OTHER BUSINESS: Handy indicated that the landmark nomination for Providence Heights College had been withdrawn, so there would not be a public hearing on that issue. As a result, the Commission would not be taking testimony for designation of the college, however anyone who wanted to make comments on any item could do so during the public comment period of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were a number of people who chose to comment on Providence Heights College (PHC):

Diana Kelsey Kutas, 2437 277th Ave SE, Sammamish, stated that her children had been baptized in the chapel. She is not against development and progress, but PHC is historically, architecturally, and artistically significant. She urged the commission to keep the building.

Jeff Matson, 22121 SE 40th Lane, Issaquah, stated that he lives at Providence Point, right next to PHC campus and has been in many religious buildings. The stained glass in PHC chapel is a treasure we cannot afford to lose. The chapel itself is special and could serve as a great concert or lecture hall, an art gallery, or a library. He later asked what happens to the testimony given tonight.

Gisela Levi, 4048 220th Place SE, Issaquah, stated the chapel is the only building she knows of in the area with such architectural significance. The benches in the building have been sold off, in her estimation this is already a mutilation of it. She thinks it might be possible for the city to re-collect the benches.

Joanne Van Deurzen, 1000 Cabin Creek Lane, Issaquah, stated she has seen chapels all over the world and this is significant. There is nothing in Issaquah as beautiful. The building shouldn't be torn down for another school.

Mary Fricke, 4520 226th Terrace SE, Issaquah, stated the chapel is special and it would be a shame to tear it down. It needs to be preserved for our children and grandchildren.

Becky Johnson, 4 172nd Place SW, Bothell, stated the state capitol has a religious statue of Mother Joseph. The campus was built because women needed a place to learn. The sisters who attended PHC went on to make a difference in the world and that should be recognized.

Mark Miller, 350 Mt. Jupiter Drive, Issaquah, stated that Europeans wonder why Americans tear things down so regularly. He feels the commission is the gatekeeper for heritage and they have to protect the city from itself. Tearing PHC down for a school is short-sighted. He is asking for the commission's help to save it.

Steve Pereira, 170 NE Dogwood Street, Issaquah, stated that he feels PHC is significant for both the religious education of women and female culture in general.

Eirlys Vanderhoff, 3500 E Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, Sammamish, stated she is a member of the Sammamish Heritage Society (SHS) and the organization decided to get involved when they heard the property would become a new residential subdivision. She feels we need to tell the story

of our past and keep it. SHS feels the property is important to both Issaquah and Sammamish, and that's why SHS submitted the nomination. She has seen a letter from City Church stating they would file suit if the property were designated, and SHS doesn't have the resources at this time to deal with the legal issues. But PHC is still a highly significant property that should become a landmark.

Tim Frederick, no address given, Issaquah, stated the chapel and campus are unique, and the stained glass is moving, but there is also significant mosaic work. As a parent he is also concerned about the school district. Chapel could be saved as is and re-used. He indicated he is not always trusting of the decisions of the school district.

Steve Thues, 21313 SE 13th Place, Sammamish, stated that he is also a member of SHS and there is no question about the historical significance of the campus. The campus was originally built for \$6 million. There are too many regulations in modern school buildings to make this campus work as a modern school. But the chapel is much more, and suffers from a lack of awareness. It's not feasible to remove the windows, because of their design, so the entire chapel should be saved, particularly if the rest of the campus cannot be.

Jennifer Mortensen, 1204 Minor Avenue, Seattle, stated that she is a co-author of the landmark nomination for PHC and has spent many hours with the plans of the building. It is both an elegant and functional layout. As a whole, it is significant because the education that occurred here happened in the classrooms, not in the chapel. It is a well-built and intact complex. Adaptively reusing the campus is both environmentally responsible and preserves this significant resource for the larger community.

Chris Moore, 1204 Minor Avenue, Seattle, indicated he is the executive director of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation (WTHP) and PHC was placed on their list of most endangered historic properties in 2016. The purpose of placing it on the list is to help locate the tools for preserving this important resource. He believes the municipal code is in place which allows for submittal of the landmark nomination, and that the process to date has been legal. He applauds SHS for withdrawing the nomination at this time, and for spending some time determining whether to resubmit in the future. He also feels the attempt to landmark the property does not preclude redevelopment of the site.

Rosemary Carrel, 20814 NE 26th Place, Sammamish, stated that we are a waste society, and urges the commission to think of possible reuses for the building.

After the last comment, Scott indicated that the public comment would be included in the minutes of the meeting, along with the audio recording, and if a nomination is resubmitted for PHC, the minutes and audio recording could be entered as part of a new record.

ADJOURN: Issaquah Landmarks Commission

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Handy asked for any changes/corrections to the minutes. There were none.

Pilgrim/Lake moved to approve the December 15, 2016 minutes of the King County Landmarks Commission. The motion passed 4-0-3 with Lemay, Kelly and Moore abstaining as they were not present at that meeting.

ELECTIONS: Handy asked for nominations for Chair and Vice Chair to serve one year terms.

Pilgrim/Kelly moved to approve Handy as Chair. There were no additional nominations, and the motion passed unanimously. Moore/Kelly moved to approve Lemay as Vice-Chair. There were no additional nominations and the motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS: Scott asked for an alternative date for the March design review committee meeting, as he is not going to be in town. March 16 was selected, with a start time of 10 am.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER'S REPORT: Meisner reported that the new round of the county's barn grant program is underway and that she will be making a presentation to the county council next week. She also reported that the sale of the Mukai barreling plant is still moving forward, but it has slowed a bit in order to make sure that the council is fully briefed on the project. She reminded the commission that *RevitalizeWA*, the statewide preservation conference would be held in Ellensburg April 24-26.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Kelly asked the commission and staff to be thinking of potential Preservation Action Fund projects. Kelly and Meisner agreed to make a presentation about the PA Fund at the next commission meeting. Hudson indicated that she and Bob Kopperl would be providing an educational opportunity at the Bear Creek archaeological site on Saturday. Scott stated he was looking for someone to co-author an article about the façade rehab of Georgia's Bakery in North Bend, for *The Alliance Review*. Lake agreed to work with him on the article.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.