

## Members

Duke York, *Chair*  
Katie Chase, *Vice-Chair*  
JD Elquist  
Chris Granfield  
Jonah Jensen  
Daniel Rahe  
Lysa Schloesser  
James Steel  
Jeff Williams

Ross Buffington, *Wedge Neighborhood Ex-Officio*  
Marshall McClintock, *North Slope Ex-Officio*

## Staff

Reuben McKnight, *Historic Preservation Officer*



# MINUTES

## Landmarks Preservation Commission Planning and Development Services Department

Date: February 12, 2014

Location: 747 Market, Tacoma Municipal Bldg, Conference 248

### Commission Members in Attendance:

Duke York *Chair*  
Chris Granfield  
James Steel  
Jeff Williams  
Lysa Schloesser  
JD Elquist  
Jonah Jensen  
Daniel Rahe  
Ross Buffington  
Marsall McClintock

### Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight

### Others Present:

Stephanie Clabaugh  
Jordan Kiel  
Greg Hepp  
Jeff Dunning  
Tommy Brake  
Darius Thompson

### Commission Members Absent:

Katie Chase, *Vice Chair*

Chair Duke York called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

## 1. ROLL CALL

## 2. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Excusal of Absences  
Vice Chair Chase was excused.
- B. Administrative Review
  - i. 1415 N Steele Street (windows) 1/27/14

Mr. Reuben McKnight reported that there had been no questions or comments from the Commission and the approval had been issued. The consent agenda was approved.

## 3. NOMINATIONS TO THE TACOMA REGISTER – PRELIMINARY REVIEW

### A. 2105 and 2109 S C Street

Chair Duke York noted that there would be a public comment period and provided the procedures for the public hearing. Mr. Reuben McKnight cited the procedural notes and read the staff report.

### BACKGROUND

The J. E. Aubry Wagon & Auto Works was constructed in 1910 as a wagon building shop, and was later used as an auto repair and fabrication shop. The building is an example of industrial vernacular design.

The building is nominated to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places under the following criteria:

- Criterion A, for being, "...associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The building is associated with the overall pattern of industrial development in the Warehouse District and is associated with the second major period of growth in the district.
- Criterion C, for "[Embodying] the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction". The building is an intact example of the practical masonry construction that characterizes industrial vernacular construction.

- Criterion E, as *"part of, adjacent to, or related to an existing or proposed historic district, square, park, or other distinctive area which should be redeveloped or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif."* The building is adjacent to the Union Depot-Warehouse Historic District as well as within the Union Station Conservation District.

This is a nomination for the exterior of the existing building.

### **EFFECTS OF NOMINATION**

- Future changes to the exterior will require approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission prior to those changes being made, to ensure historical and architectural appropriateness.
- Unnecessary demolition of properties listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is strongly discouraged by the municipal code, and requires approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.
- Future renovations of listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places may qualify for the Special Tax Valuation property tax incentive.

### **ANALYSIS**

1. The J.E. Aubry Wagon Works Building was constructed in 1910.
2. The building has been minimally altered on its exterior. The west and north elevations have been painted.
3. Based on the above, the building appears to meet the threshold criteria for age and integrity.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Commission may recommend designation to the City Council, deny the nomination, or defer if additional information is needed. Based upon the criteria listed in TMC 13.07.040, if no further public comments are received, staff recommends that the nomination be forwarded to City Council with a recommendation for designation.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Hunt-Mottet Warehouse was constructed in 1907 as a two story warehouse, with plans to construct an additional six stories to house retail operations above the warehouse levels. It is an example of industrial vernacular architecture from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The building is nominated to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places under the following criteria:

- Criterion A, for being, *"...associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.* The building is associated with a period of significant growth for the city, and particularly a time of local expansion for the regionally important Hunt-Mottet Hardware Company, one of Tacoma's leading businesses of the 20th century.
- Criterion C, for *"[Embodying] the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction"*. The building an excellent example of industrial vernacular design by prominent local architectural firm Bullard and Hill
- Criterion E, as *"part of, adjacent to, or related to an existing or proposed historic district, square, park, or other distinctive area which should be redeveloped or preserved according to a plan based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif."* The building is adjacent to the Union Depot-Warehouse Historic District as well as within the Union Station Conservation District.

This is a nomination for the exterior of the existing building.

On December 18, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission reviewed the nomination and forwarded it for public comment.

### **EFFECTS OF NOMINATION**

- Future changes to the exterior will require approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission prior to those changes being made, to ensure historical and architectural appropriateness.
- Unnecessary demolition of properties listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is strongly discouraged by the municipal code, and requires approval of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.
- Future renovations of listed on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places may qualify for the Special Tax Valuation property tax incentive.

## ANALYSIS

1. The Hunt Mottet Warehouse Building was constructed in 1907.
2. The building has been minimally altered on its exterior.
3. Based on the above, the building appears to meet the threshold criteria for age and integrity.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Commission may recommend designation to the City Council, deny the nomination, or defer if additional information is needed. Based upon the criteria listed in TMC 13.07.040, if no further public comments are received, staff recommends that the nomination be forwarded to City Council with a recommendation for designation.

There were no comments or questions from the public.

There was a motion.

*"I move that the Landmarks Preservation Commission recommend to the City Council that the Hunt-Mottet Warehouse building and the J. E. Aubry Wagon & Auto Works building be included in the Tacoma Register of Historic Places finding that they meet the criteria of Tacoma municipal code 13.07.040."*

Motion: Steel  
Second: Jensen.

The motion was approved.

There were no further comments.

## 4. DESIGN REVIEW

### A. 1415 N Steele Street (North Slope Historic District)

Mr. Reuben McKnight read the staff report.

#### BACKGROUND

The home at 1415 N Steele was built c. 1920 and is a contributing structure in the North Slope Historic District. This home has been vacant and was recently purchased by the current owner. The home is undergoing a remodel involving interior and exterior work, including a partial window replacement that was reviewed informally on January 22, 2014 by the Commission and subsequently administratively approved on January 27.

The current proposal is to install a French door to access the deck in the location of two existing (deteriorated) original windows. There is a single door adjacent to the existing windows that will be removed and sided over. Due to the orientation of the building to the street and the fact that the alley runs adjacent to the house, it is similar to a corner lot and thus is on a visible side of the house. However, the grade change and deck configuration obscure most of the area in which the door will be installed.

The proposed door is a 71.5" x 79.5" Feather River fiberglass clad French door. The trim around the door will match the original trim on the house. Based on previous feedback, the doors will be installed near the back of the wall, in the existing opening where the single door is currently located, as well as one of the paired windows. The remaining window opening will be infilled with siding to match the original siding on the house (the existing cedar split shake will be removed and the original siding restored).

#### REQUESTED ACTION

Approval of a single set of French doors in existing openings.

#### STANDARDS

##### North Slope Historic District Design Guidelines:

##### Windows

##### 5. New Window Openings/Changing Window Openings

Changes to window configurations on secondary (side and rear) elevations in order to accommodate interior remodeling are not discouraged, provided that character defining elements, such as a projecting bay window in

the dining room, are not affected. A typical example of this type of change might be to reconfigure a kitchen window on the side of a home to accommodate base cabinets.

#### **Additions**

3. Additions should be sensitively located in a manner that minimizes visibility from primary rights of way. Where this is not possible, the design should respect the style, scale, massing, rhythm, and materials of the original building.

#### **ANALYSIS**

1. Built in 1920, the home at 1415 N Steele Street is a contributing structure in the North Slope Historic District. As part of the North Slope it is listed on the Tacoma, Washington and National Registers of Historic Places.
2. The Landmarks Preservation Commission has jurisdiction to review and approve, or not approve, changes to this building per TMC 13.05.047, prior to those changes being made, by virtue of its status as a City Landmark.
3. The proposed door change will be visible from the primary right of way; however, because the house is on a corner lot that is small and angled, it is not possible to locate door to the deck on a non-visible elevation.
4. The existing deck is not original to the house. The new door would be mostly obscured by the deck railing and grade change, making the visual impact relatively minor.
5. The design guidelines do not discourage changes to windows on secondary elevations to accommodate remodels.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval

Ms. Stephanie Clabaugh commented that she was doing what she could to historically preserve the house, but that the existing door was in a serious state of deterioration.

Mr. Jeff Williams asked if the windows would be true divided light windows. Mr. McKnight responded that they would not be true divided light windows, but single light with no grids. Ms. Clabaugh added that after some research she had found that the period style did not use a grid.

Mr. McClintock commented that he had some concerns previously, but after visiting the property he was now okay with the changes.

There was a motion.

*"I move that Tacoma Landmarks approves the application for 1415 N Steele Street as submitted."*

Motion: Jensen

Second: Granfield

The motion was approved

### **B. 1708 Pacific Avenue (Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District)**

Mr. McKnight read the staff report.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Russell T. Joy Building was built in 1892 as an industrial building and is a contributing building in the Union-Depot Warehouse Historic District. Vacant for many years, in 2010 it was rehabilitated by the University of Washington Tacoma for use as classroom and educational space, with retail on the Pacific Avenue street level. The renovation included the construction of new aluminum storefronts.

This is an application for (1) 36" non-illuminated projecting blade sign and (1) 14" X 123" reverse channel letter sign for a new restaurant tenant. The signs will be mounted using wedge anchors in the mortar joints. The awning shown in the sign packet is not included in this request.

On October 23, 2013, the Commission approved two similar blade signs for other restaurant tenants on the same building.

## REQUESTED ACTION

Approval of the sign application.

The Union Depot/Warehouse Design Guidelines pertaining to signs apply:

### Location and Size

- (1) Signs shall not dominate the building facades or obscure their architectural features (arches, transom panels, sills, moldings, cornices, windows, etc.).
- (2) The size of signs and individual letters shall be of appropriate scale for pedestrians and slow-moving traffic. Projecting signs shall generally not exceed nine square feet on first floor level.
- (3) Signs on adjacent storefronts shall be coordinated in height and proportion. Use of a continuous sign band extending over adjacent shops within the same building is encouraged as a unifying element.
- (4) Portable reader board signs located on sidewalks, driveways, or in parking lots are prohibited.
- (5) Existing historic wall signs are a contributing element within the district and should be restored or preserved in place. New wall signs shall generally be discouraged.

### Messages and Lettering

- (1) Messages shall be simple and brief. The use of pictorial symbols or logos is encouraged.
- (2) Lettering should be of a traditional block or curvilinear style which is easy to read and compatible with the style of the building. No more than two different styles should be used on the same sign.
- (3) Letters shall be carefully formed and properly spaced so as to be neat and uncluttered. Generally, no more than 60 percent of the total sign area shall be occupied by lettering.
- (4) Lettering shall be generally flat or raised.

### Color

- (1) Light-colored letters on a dark-colored background are generally required as being more traditional and visually less intrusive in the context of the Union Station District's predominantly red-brick streetscapes.
- (2) Colors shall be chosen to complement, not clash with, the facade color of the building. Signs should normally contain not more than three different colors.

### Materials and Illumination

- (1) Use of durable and traditional materials (metal and wood) is strongly encouraged. All new signs shall be prepared in a professional manner.
- (2) In general, illumination shall be external, non-flashing, and non-glare.

### f. Other Stylistic Points

- (1) The shape of a projecting sign shall be compatible with the period of the building to which it is affixed, and shall harmonize with the lettering and symbols chosen for it.
- (2) Supporting brackets for projecting signs should complement the sign design, and not overwhelm or clash with it. They must be adequately engineered to support the intended load, and generally should conform to a 2:3 vertical-horizontal proportion.
- (3) Screw holes must be drilled at points where the fasteners will enter masonry joints to avoid damaging bricks, etc.

## ANALYSIS

1. The Russell T. Joy Building is a contributing structure in the Union Depot/Warehouse Historic District, and as such, installation of signs requires Landmarks Commission approval per TMC 13.05.047.4.
2. The proposed sign is non-illuminated and will be attached using lag screws in mortar joints. It will be located near the business entrance and will not obscure or cover any contributing architectural features on the building.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the application.

There were no comments from the applicant.

Chair Duke York clarified that the awning was not part of the current application. Mr. Tommy Brake confirmed that the current application was for the blade sign alone.

There was a motion.

*"I move the Landmarks Preservation Commission approve the application for the installation of the signs as put forward in the proposal for 1708 Pacific Avenue."*

Motion: Rahe



Second: Williams

The motion was approved.

## 5. BOARD BRIEFING

### A. 5010 Pacific Ave (Stewart Middle School)

Mr. Reuben McKnight read the staff report.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Stewart Middle School was constructed in 1924 and was nominated to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places by the Tacoma School District in 2010. Nominated for its association with the expansion of middle schools following the 1923 school bond, and was named for Tacoma's first schoolteacher, James P. Stewart. The building consists of the main 1924 structure, along with two noncontributing additions (1963 and 1973). Jason Lee, Stewart, McCarver, and Gault Middle Schools all date from this time period.

This is a briefing to introduce the Commission to an upcoming renovation project, including the site and the building. In addition, the design team will be seeking feedback and discussion from the Commission on several issues, including:

- ADA access that is both equitable and respectful to the landmark
- Parking on the site
- Athletic fields
- The front lawn
- Significant trees
- The auditorium
- The light wells

This is a no-action briefing.

Jordan Kiel, Greg Hepp and Jeff Dunning provided an overview of Stewart Middle School. The school had no specific historic style, but is representative of the work of Roland Borhek who produced a number of significant buildings in Tacoma. Only Jason Lee and Stewart remain of the schools that Borhek was commissioned to design. Changes to the building over time were discussed including replacement of the roof, modification of the kitchen, and closing the south front door. Additions were also constructed including the gym. The building was described as a symmetrical structure with a long narrow gym that has not been used since the addition of the larger gym in 1971. The non-contributing structures that had been added would likely be proposed for removal. It was noted that the centrally located auditorium creates issues that will need to be addressed as it creates a separation within the center of the building. It was suggested that since the historic designation exclusively focuses on the exterior of the building, internal features like the auditorium could be modified. The addition of the parking lot and planting of trees was discussed. The trees were considered to be of poor quality, and interest was expressed in possibly removing them. Access to the front terrace, a prominent element, was discussed as it created significant challenges. Several options were reviewed that would provide universal access to the building such as entering below the terrace level. It was also noted that the bus drop off was on the street adjacent to the service yard, though students would arrive at the school from all sides.

There was a question as to whether one of the photos showed a ramp that descended to a lower entry door. The response was that there was a ramp, intended to lead to bicycle storage that was too steep for ADA access, though the slope of the ramp could be modified.

The north side of the building was considered one of the less pleasing elevations due to a service entrance and a visible light well. The south elevation had been modified by the addition a covered entryway that connected to the 1961 building addition. Many of the remaining original features were discussed. It was commented that beyond the building additions, the school was largely original with only some minor changes. The rosettes on the exterior were added in the 1990s to tie the brick back into the frame of the building and it was unclear if they were considered landmarked since they were in place when the building was nominated. There was some discussion of the building code requirements as applied to the rosettes.

Mr. James Steel asked about whether adding ADA access to the Pacific elevation would make it the primary entrance. The response was that for historical buildings compliance standards are flexible, but they want to maintain

the primary entrances. Mr. Steel commented that he would like to see the primary entrances preserved. Some discussion ensued on options for providing ADA access while preserving the original design of the building. Mr. Steel commented that if the main entry is moved to another location the historic entrances should be aesthetically preserved. There was further discussion on the optimal location for ADA accessible entrances.

There was a question as to the scope of work and if it included removing auxiliary buildings, renovating the existing structure, and creating a new entrance. It was explained that the program did not explain the scope precisely, but provided educational goals to meet and performance aspects of the space that are still undergoing discussion. It was acknowledged that they were leaning towards tearing down the additions, constructing a new gymnasium and restoring the historic building.

There was a question about the plans for the gymnasium. Options were reviewed including a detached gymnasium that could be connected to the building or expanding the existing gym.

There was some discussion of landscaping options. Mr. McKnight confirmed that landscaping was not likely considered a historic feature unless specifically noted in the nomination.

There was a question as to whether the service yard or the bus drop off might be relocated. The feedback from the school district seemed to suggest that there was flexibility to the idea of moving the service yard, but not the bus drop off.

The interior was discussed. Many of the features of the interior were original including a 900 seat auditorium. There was some discussion on plans to alter a light well adjacent to the auditorium. The lower floor presented a challenge due to the ceiling being very low.

There was some discussion of placing mechanical units on the roof. There was an inclination against adding large visible units to the roof from the Commission. There was some discussion on options for the kind of units to be used and possible screening. Mr. Steel voiced a preference for locating the mechanical units elsewhere.

The direction received from the Commission was reviewed. The entrances should be maintained as historic elements. The west side is where modifications should be made if necessary. The entry ways and corner pieces should be maintained as they are prominent features. The cornices and the parapet will be maintained. The front terrace balustrade was briefly discussed as it presents a challenge by not meeting current code requirements. Raising the terrace was explored as an option to improve the front entry of the building.

It was suggested that the Commission could make a visit to the building. There was some discussion with Mr. McKnight to work an appropriate date for a visit.

## **B. 17<sup>th</sup> Street Alignment (Union Depot/ Warehouse Historic District)**

Mr. Reuben McKnight read the staff report.

### **BACKGROUND**

The University of Washington Tacoma has expressed a desire to re-align South 17th Street into a continuous Street and to reconfigure the intersections at South 17th/Broadway/Jefferson and South 17th/Commerce/Jefferson. This work will include a new rock wall on the Northside of 17th between Commerce and Broadway, new ADA ramps at both intersections, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and a grind and overlay of Jefferson between 19th and 17th and a road section on 17th between Commerce and the Westside of Broadway. Some utilities in the roadway will be upgraded.

### Schedule:

This project is currently in the design phase. Construction is estimated to begin in July 2014, with completion in November 2014. 17th Street and adjacent streets will remain open to all vehicles and pedestrians during construction.

This is a no-action briefing on scope and schedule, as well as an opportunity to provide feedback.

Mr. Darius Thompson commented that he was bringing the project before the Commission due to its location in the Union Depot Historic District. He called attention to the concept drawing that illustrated some of the changes that were being proposed. He noted that the UWT was fully funding the project. The plan was to go to bid in April with construction to begin in July. Mr. Thompson also provided detail on the proposal for a new rock wall. Discussion ensued on the history of the area and the future plans for it.

There was a question as to whether the angle of the parking spots would create traffic issues. The response was that the street was intended to be slower than it is currently and they had found back-in parking to not be an effective alternative.

There was a question as to what the plans were for maintaining the open space. Mr. Thompson responded that discussion was ongoing to on how best to make it an inviting area, while not fully turning it into a public park.

There was a question as to whether the new stone wall was intended to be a retaining wall. The answer was that it was likely to be made of reinforced concrete and was intended to hold up the road. There was some concern expressed that a concrete wall would not enhance the area. The response was that they were open to possibly putting up a brick façade.

There was a question as to if there was a plan to use the space between the building and the retaining wall. Mr. Thompson confirmed that the space was being used.

There was a comment that the historic street pattern should be preserved as they move forward with planning on how to use vacated space in the future.

## **6. BOARD BUSINESS**

### **A. Marketing and Events Committee**

Mr. Reuben McKnight provided an overview of the discussion leading to the concept of a marketing and events committee.

There has been interest expressed in forming a subcommittee of the Commission for the purposes of promoting the activities of the Commission, engaging the public in preservation issues, and increasing the profile and visibility of preservation efforts.

Staff is working on several strategies for meeting some of these objectives that will be implemented in 2014, as well as over the next biennium. One strategy includes the development of new events and programming to occur on a regular basis, in addition to events surrounding preservation month.

This will be a discussion to gauge interest from other commissioners working on this and to potentially formally establish this as a committee of the Commission, per the Commission bylaws.

Mr. JD Elquist commented that he felt it was important to reach a younger audience with the message of why preservation is important. He felt that utilizing social media would be an effective tool in spreading a message of why specific buildings are important. He also talked about a partnership with bike month. Mr. Elquist welcomed any feedback or involvement that other Commission members might provide.

Mr. Reuben McKnight commented on a public profile plan, which could be an opportunity for the Commission. He also noted that he would be working with the committee as they brainstormed on how to find a broader audience.

The Commissioners were provided a review of the bylaws necessary to establish the committee.

There was a motion.

*"I motion that the Landmarks Preservation Commission establishes a marketing subcommittee."*

Motion: Elquist

Second: Jensen

The motion was approved.

### **B. Preservation Month Discussion**

Preservation Month is May of each year. Typically the Commission prepares an annual address to City Council, gives awards for outstanding projects, and discusses possible activities and outreach. The Commission may consider establishing a planning committee for this purpose.



There was some discussion of possible preservation month events among the Commissioners during the Marketing and Events Committee discussion.

**7. CHAIR COMMENTS**

There were no Chair Comments.

**8. STAFF COMMENTS**

There were no staff comments.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Submitted as True and Correct:



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Reuben McKnight  
Historic Preservation Officer

