



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 N. Anderson St., Ellensburg WA 98926**

MINUTES OF THE LANDMARKS & DESIGN COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Date and Time: Wednesday, January 19, 2022, 5:45 p.m.
Place of Meeting: Hybrid Meeting In Person and via Zoom
Present-In Person: Darren Reid
Present-Via Zoom: Amy McCoy, Dorothy Stanley, Zane Kanyer
Absent: Lathan Wedin, Marty Blackson
Others Present (in person): Stacey Henderson, Senior Planner – Historic Preservation; Kirsten Sackett, Community Development Director; Sarah Desimone, MAHP; 8 members of the public, including David Cross, Tom Stahl, Pat Michl, Linda Graf, Frank Crimp, Jason White and John Mouusey, Tatiana Gunn.
Online: Shane Scott, Dale and Stephanie Hubbard, Ken Gerrard and Patricia Cutright, Karen and Larry Gookin.

Note: These are **Summary** Minutes *not* Verbatim Minutes

1. Call to order and roll call of members

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Amy McCoy at 5:48 pm.

2. Approval of the agenda

The commission will approve the January 4, 2022 meeting minutes at the next LDC meeting.

3. New Business

a. Reconnaissance Level Survey

Planner Henderson explained that this is a preliminary meeting to introduce the upcoming survey. The City is conducting a survey of the local and national First Railroad Addition Historic Districts. Today it will be explained why the survey is being done. Everyone within the boundaries of the district was invited. She has heard from several owners who were unable to attend, so she may hold another meeting in the spring if there is enough interest.

Henderson said she would introduce some basics about the district to provide context for the project. She introduced members involved, including herself as a historic preservation planner, Kirsten Sackett the Community Development Director, and Sarah Desimone as the City's historic preservation consultant. Sarah works with other Certified Local Governments (CLG's) and has done a lot of survey work for other consulting firms. Henderson also introduced the members of the Landmarks & Design Commission and explained their qualifications and the work that they do. She also stated that Sadie Thayer, director of the Kittitas County Historical Museum could not attend tonight, but is excited about this project and interested in helping in any way possible.

Planner Henderson explained that this survey is being completed due to a grant awarded by the State Dept of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) through their CLG Grant Program. The City was awarded a CLG grant in Spring of 2021 to complete this survey.

Planner Henderson provided some background about the First Railroad Addition district and displayed a map of the boundaries. She explained that the City has two National Register districts, and two Local Landmarks districts. The one under review is the First Railroad Addition Historic District, which is residential in nature and located west of campus. She depicted the boundaries of the national register versus the local register district to demonstrate that they are not the same. She said that the First Railroad Addition historic district was formed in 1987. At that time several of the buildings were not old enough (50 years) to be considered historic, and since then several structures have also been heavily modified or demolished. As such, it is time to update the historic district. The first step to updating this district information is to perform this survey. Through assessment and research, the City will look towards updating the survey forms for each of the structures, and also analyze whether the boundaries of the district should be modified. None of these updates would occur without further notification to the residents. For now, they are just performing a survey to lay the groundwork for updating the district.

Planner Henderson said that this district is very important, with several varieties of architectural styles, including Craftsman, Victorian, mid-Century modern, etc. Many residents of this neighborhood have contributed to the area adding an additional layer of significance. Planner Henderson displayed several pictures that were included in the original national district nomination form. She provided some examples of homes where the City has much more information now than what was portrayed in the original nomination, including the Otto Klug house, the Henry Hale House, etc. There are also several houses that had no information included because they weren't 50 years old at the time. She said that they have also found some discrepancies in the nomination forms that they would like to clarify.

Planner Henderson explained what type of information would be gathered during the survey, and that it would help determine if the boundary should be updated. She said that the City utilizes historic documents quite frequently to help preserve the character of the historic buildings when alterations are proposed, and when community members want to find out more information about a house they just purchased.

City Staff and the consultant will be conducting a sidewalk survey within the boundaries of both historic districts. They are looking to be out near the end of February, and then again possibly next fall. The survey will take place only from outside, by taking photographs from the sidewalk. The survey will be conducted in the winter because it is easier to take photographs of the buildings without leaves on them. The City will also work with several volunteers within the district, who have stated that they have additional information about the structures, the architects, and the original homeowners.

The City will hold another meeting in August to share the information that was gathered during the survey. The City will complete historic inventory property forms on the State's WISAARD program. She explained what type of information will be included in the structural evaluation as well as the survey report. It provides a great base of information for future use.

Planner Henderson then provided some information about the benefits that come with being in a historic district. Taking care of the historic structures contributes to the community by preserving the local history and culture. The property owners are also eligible for historic preservation grants from the City of Ellensburg. There are also some Special Tax Valuations and Credits available either locally or with the Federal Government

Planner Henderson then concluded the presentation and opened the meeting for questions:

Pat Michl 115 W. 9th, corner of 9th and Main. She asked if there was a possibility that anyone in the district would be expected to pay for anything, or required to make any improvements to their home. Planner Henderson said that it wouldn't be required. Ms. Michl then asked about the requirements to go before a committee to make changes.

Planner Henderson said that yes, the Landmarks & Design Commission does still review exterior changes to homes within the landmarks district. The review is required by City code, it doesn't cost any money, but documentation does need to be submitted for review by the Commission. If approved, then the City issues a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Tatiana Gunn 115 W. 10th Ave. She asked if she needed permission to paint her home and asked about covering up graffiti.

Planner Henderson reiterated that the commission does a review if the exterior is going to change to make sure the exterior work is compatible with the district. Director Sackett noted that in special circumstances the maintenance work like graffiti cover up could be done without going to the commission, but would be a case by case decision.

Dale & Stephanie Hubbard, 1006 E C Street. Dale asked how in depth are we going to go with history. He asked if Planner Henderson would like owners to provide any history on a structure. He said their home is very unique and they have a lot of information.

Henderson stated that she would welcome any and all information homeowners have about their residences.

Tom Stahl, 115 W 9th Ave. stated they all heard about the stick (that they can't paint their house without permission.) But he wanted to know if there were any tax breaks for living in the district.

Henderson explained that there is a program called Special Tax Valuation. She said when people rehabilitate a structure, the value of the improvements is removed from the tax valuation, which can lead to a reduction in the taxes. She also said that there is an annual historic preservation grant available for owners of historic structures listed on the local or national register.

John Mounsey, 106 E. 10th Ave spoke. He said that there is a historic district Facebook group. They are pretty tight as a network to get information out. He also said that they all have a lot of information available at the public library about their homes. He said that they have a QR code on the homes that take you straight to information about their structure.

Planner Henderson said that she would send out another mailing to the residents to see if anyone would be willing to share information.

She also said that historic preservation month is coming up in May.

Tom Stahl asked about the historic district plaque, and Planner Henderson said that it would be on the public right of way, not on anyone's property.

At the conclusion of the discussion additional property owners said that they would be willing to share the historic information about their homes.

4. Citizen Comment

5. Staff Update/Discussion Items

Senior Planner Henderson said that she received notice from Mollie Edson that she has resigned from the Commission. She said that she would get a thank you card sent around for all the commissioners to sign. This also means that they would need to nominate a new chair and vice-chair at the next meeting when all members are in attendance. In addition, she said we will also need try to recruit a new member for the commission. Ms. Edson had been filling the position of being a historic property owner.

She said that they will hold a meeting on February 1 to review Darren Nelson's walk-in cooler proposal, as well as hold elections for chair and vice-chair if all commissioners are in attendance.

Planner Henderson updated the commission on the Historic Preservation awards that commissioner Stanley mentioned at the previous meeting. Stanley had suggested that John Graaf be nominated for this award. Henderson will be sending out information regarding this award nomination process, and is happy to submit a letter of support.

6. Commission Representative Update

Commissioner Stanley asked where the photos came from that were used in the presentation. Planner Henderson said that they came out of the original historic district nomination forms.

Commissioner Stanley noted that she and Sadie from the Kittitas Museum are working on a project to celebrate local Architects and developers for Historic Preservation Month.

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Reid seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.