



**CLARK COUNTY**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Public Service Center  
1300 Franklin St., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Vancouver, WA  
[www.clark.wa.gov/planning/historic](http://www.clark.wa.gov/planning/historic)

**MEETING NOTES**

Wednesday, August 5, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor Hearing Room, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver, WA

These are summary, not verbatim, minutes. Audio recordings are available on the Historic Preservation Commission’s page at [www.clark.wa.gov/community-planning/historic-preservation-commission](http://www.clark.wa.gov/community-planning/historic-preservation-commission).

Members Present:	Julie Bohn, Sean Denniston, Feli Garcia, Andy Gregg, Greg Fuz, Michelle Kapitanovich, and Donald Trost
Members Absent:	
Staff Present:	Sharon Lumbantobing, Jacqui Kamp, Christine Cook (Clark County), Mark Person, Jason Nortz, Sree Thirunagari, Greg Turner, Keith Jones, Philip Gigler, Brent Boger, Chad Eiken (City of Vancouver)
Guests:	David Pearson, Marc Thompson, and Holly Chamberlain (Trust), Annie Weizenecker; Chris McGhie, Les Davis, Mark Hughes, Jan Klimas, Mark Stoker, Ryan Wilson, Jessica Engeman, and Brad Richardson (Clark County Historical Museum). This was a virtual meeting that did not have a sign in sheet, therefore, we were not able to capture the names of all attendees. There were 24 panelists and 23 attendees.

- 1. Roll Call & Introductions:** Commission members introduced themselves.
- 2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2020.** Kapitanovich provided an edit to the minutes. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.
- 3. Public Comment** on any items NOT on the agenda. There were no public comments
- 4. Public Hearing: Certificate of Appropriateness for a Storage Shed for Summit Grove Lodge (30810 NE Timmen Rd, Ridgefield, WA)**



No commission members had any ex-parte contacts and conflicts of interest. Denniston stated that he volunteered to assist with writing the nomination of Summit Grove Lodge on the WA State Heritage Register but was not paid to do so.

Lumbantobing gave a summary of the Staff Report, Findings and Recommendation of HST 2020-00001 Summit Grove Lodge, Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed storage shed at Summit Grove Lodge located at 30810 NE Timmens Rd, Ridgefield, WA, 98642). The property owners, Genteel Investments, applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a proposed new storage shed. The application states that Summit Grove Lodge is proposing construction of a 22 x 26-foot one-story storage shed located behind the part of the building that is an addition to the original footprint of the building. It will have an asphalt shingle roof matching the historic lodge roofing by type and color and will not be visible from the main street. The exterior walls of the storage shed will be board and batten siding to match the back of the lodge adjacent to the new shed. The siding will be stained to match the color of the siding on the main lodge adjacent to the proposed structure.

The applicant submitted their application for a Certificate of Appropriateness on February 18, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Historic Preservation Commission was not able to hold meetings and public hearings until today. On June 10, 2020, the applicant notified staff that the storage shed had already been constructed.

In accordance with CCC 40.250.030 and the Clark County Historic Preservation Program Rules and Procedures, and the findings stated in the design review criteria, staff recommends that the commission approve the certificate of appropriateness application for the proposal as submitted (See Findings in the August 5, 2020 Staff Report for HST2020-00001 Summit Grove Lodge, Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed storage shed at Summit Grove Lodge located at 30810 NE Timmens Rd, Ridgefield, WA, 98642).

The commissions' questions and answers from the applicant included archaeological remains and the purpose of the shed. The applicant stated that the shed is to be used for the storage of tables and chairs for events and that no archaeological remains were found.

No public comment was made during the public comment period.

The commission deliberated.

Commissioner Bohn stated that she had no concerns or comments. The applicant kept the shed compatible with main structure and stands alone as a detached building.

Commissioner Fuz thanked the applicant for ensuring that the shed was screened as well as possible and supported the staff findings.

Commissioner Garcia stated she supported the staff findings.

Commissioner Kapitanovich agreed with the staff findings and stated her appreciated that the shed is a tasteful addition to the site.

Commissioner Denniston concurred with Julie's comments about making the shed a product of its time.

Trost made a motion that the HPC concur with the staff findings and recommendation to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness request for the construction of a storage shed at Summit Grove Lodge. Bohn seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the motion. Denniston stated that the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

**5. Vancouver Heritage Overlay/ Providence Academy (400 E Evergreen Blvd): Repair and ADA Work on the Providence Academy building.**

Denniston recused himself from the two reviews of the Providence Academy and appointed Andy Gregg to chair these two sessions, as allowed by the Historic Preservation Rules and Procedures.

Mark Person requested that the Historic Preservation Commission review and provide comment on the ADA and other repairs on the main Academy building, located at 400 E. Evergreen Blvd, that lies within Vancouver Heritage Overlay and is subject to advisory review by the Historic Preservation Commission. Proposed improvements include balcony repairs, Guard rails, painting, and ADA ramps.

The applicant, Dave Pearson from the Historic Trust, stated that the organization purchased this property in 2015 and has invested \$15 million in its restoration. This is a \$1.3 million project to improve the north porches and create ADA access. A PowerPoint slide detailed the repair work. Salvaged brick, if available, will be used or matching brick will be sought out.

Questions to the applicant and answers included clarification of the handling of the brick work and a statement that the building is 100% Hidden bricks.

The commission accepted public comment from Greg Yung, Paul Ryan, and Sean Denniston, which included questions about bringing the wood handrails up to code and the need to replace some, along with the importance of finding the right mortar for the historic bricks.

The commission deliberated.

Commissioner Bohn agreed with the comment that repair should be prioritized over replacement

Commissioner Fuz supported staff findings.

Commissioner Kapitanovich stated she was excited to see improvements being made to the project.

Commissioner Trost stated he was impressed with \$15 million spent over five years and the achievement of 90% occupancy. We want historic buildings to be a living

and breathing part of the community, not just a museum. He is supportive of this project.

City attorney, Bret Boger stated that the commission should do an advisory motion to advise the city.

Kapitanovich made a motion to approve the repair. Bohn made an amendment to the motion to reflect repair over replacement. Kapitanovich made a motion to recommend approval of the ADA repair with the emphasis on repair rather than replacement of materials. Bohn seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Denniston-recused.

## **6. Vancouver Heritage Overlay/ Providence Academy (400 E Evergreen Blvd): Unfit Building Determination for Laundry and Boiler Room**

Before beginning the presentation, the commission asked what the role of the HPC is on the topic, and who would be counseling them.

City attorney Boger stated that the Vancouver Municipal Code does not state a role for the commission. The commission has no decision-making authority. If the building official determines that the building is unfit, it takes the decision-making role away from the commission.

Thirunagari, the city's building official, stated that the laundry and boiler room received preliminary unfit building determinations. The city retained a third-party engineer to provide analysis of the buildings. Thirunagari shared a presentation with photos showing the deterioration of the building.

Thirunagari stated that the applicable code section for the unfit building determination is VMC Title 17, Section 17.32, which applies to buildings that are unsafe due to dilapidation, disrepair, structural defects and other unsafe conditions described in the code. The code is intended to address conditions that are inimical to health and welfare, and endanger the life, limb, health, safety and welfare.

Thirunagari stated that SEPA review will be a condition of the unfit building determination made by the Building Official. Planning staff will make the SEPA Determination following the unfit building determination.

Keith Jones, city planner, stated that a SEPA review is required. If the building official makes the unfit building determination, SEPA will be required of the applicant. The Historic Trust is proposing the following mitigation measures:

- Prepare Archaeological Survey
- Update National Register Nomination
- Interior Photographs

- Public Educational Display and Interpretation
- Social Media Postings

Jones asked The Trust to provide more detail on the mitigation measures and stated that planning staff is requesting HPC input into the applicant's proposed mitigation measures.

Questions from the commission and answers from staff included explanation and clarification about the regulatory process of an unfit building determination versus a demolition process and the differing roles the HPC plays and how each are initiated. Staff confirmed that the regulatory process of an unfit building determination only provides an advisory role for the HPC versus the demolition process, where city code requires review and approval by the HPC for a demolition permit.

The applicant, Dave Pearson, from The Historic Trust, stated that the Trust purchased these buildings in 2015 with the intent to save these buildings. The Trust does not have the ability to repair them. Sixty years ago, a fire destroyed parts of the building and there has been water damage. There is no roof or staircase. It is a significant danger to visitors and staff at the site.

Jessica Engerman stated that she was asked by The Historic Trust to determine if these buildings could be preserved sustainably and economically. Rehabilitation of the property for any use will require fire and life safety improvements, ADA, sewer connections, electrical, and plumbing. She submitted a feasibility letter with her findings. The rehabilitation costs are \$4 million on the laundry and \$1 million on the boiler. These costs would be required for any use of the buildings. She stated that there is no market interest for reuse and that the condition of the buildings is bad and there is no financial upside to rehabilitate.

Holly Chamberlain stated that mitigation will include working with the state Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation to update the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the site to reflect the many changes to the property since the first one was written in 1978. The research will not only help document the history, buildings, and designers of the Academy site but also other local properties constructed and owned by the Sisters of Providence. This expanded historical information about the operation and tremendous lasting legacies of the Sisters local work will be reflected in exhibits at the Academy and on The Historic Trust's website.

The Trust is also looking into 3-D Laser Scanning to visually document the laundry and boiler buildings. Plans are in motion to produce podcasts on Academy history, archaeology, and architecture, which can be accessed online.

The Trust will retain representative samples of building materials from the removed structures in the collections of The Historic Trust and make available samples to other relevant repositories. The organization will also keep sample materials on hand for future repairs to and rehabilitation of the Academy, other potential re-use.

HPC questions to the applicant and answers included clarification on the mitigation measures and deconstruction plans.

The commission accepted public comments which included statements about correspondence between the city and The Trust regarding the unfit building determination and the lack of a demolition order; support for more robust mitigation measures/deconstruction plans; support for the HPC to review the demolition permit proposal; and statements about the city's implementation of the code.

City Engineer Thirunagari, stated that the city is asking the HPC for input and that it is premature to talk about a demolition order without completing this process. This will be addressed once an unfit determination is made in terms of what the options are in code.

### **Public Comment**

Although this was not a public hearing, public comment was accepted.

Public comment was provided by Glen Young, Robert Hinds, Sarah Fox, Sean Denniston, Alison Moss, and Anne Denniston. Below is a summary of the comments.

- An excerpt from The Trust's email to the city regarding unfit building determination was read, which explicitly states that the developer is seeking the unfit building determination to avoid the code processes that should apply and that would require HPC approval. To order demolition when repair is still possible would be to contradict the purpose of the heritage code for the benefit of a developer who wants to circumvent the code.
- The laundry and boiler room have been in a state of disrepair for many decades. The City did not address the safety issues until after a developer wanted to tear the buildings down for a development.
- The economic valuation of the buildings that the Trust undertook treated these two buildings separately from the Academy building. A credible feasibility study would have looked at the entire site, and how these buildings can add value to the whole site, and not just the buildings in isolation. The economic hardship criteria in the code includes a requirement to analyze redevelopment of the buildings in conjunction with new development on the site.
- The mitigation measures recommended by DAHP are too minimal. If demolition is the only option, then a deconstruction plan is in order to reuse the materials, such as a courtyard with the brick.
- Assurances about the implementation of the mitigation plan can be made through requiring the mitigation plan be contained in a development agreement with the City in accordance with VMC Title 20 Division 250.
- Listing what remains of Providence Academy on the Clark County Heritage Register should be a minimum mitigation measure. The HPC recommended listing the Academy as mitigation for Phase I of Aegis. DAHP recommended listing the Academy as mitigation for Phase I of Aegis and then again as mitigation for this demolition. The City's own Environmental Impact Statement, which is the basis for the SEPA document, recommends the listing of the Academy on the local register. The Heritage Register is the highest level of protection available for historic buildings in our community. The most important historic building in Vancouver should have the highest level of protection.
- There are two paths to demolish a historic building in the city's overlay. The building official determines a building is unfit and then orders demolition. If it can be easily repaired, the

building official must order repair or remedy. The building official has not yet determined that the building is unfit. The other section of code requires the applicant to apply for a demolition permit and that requires the Commission's approval.

- The Trust wants to focus on preserving the Academy, but the entire site is a Catholic heritage site, not just the Academy building, especially when it is going to be obscured by other developments going up around the Academy.

The Commission deliberated.

Commissioner Bohn stated that the Academy is the most important historic building and the site is part of the Academy. The timing for this unfit building determination is because of impending development. Mothballing hasn't been discussed under the Secretary of Interior's Standards. Certain measures have been taken, but it is not a thorough mothballing process. She stated her concerns about talking about demolition and that demolition is the starting point. The Trust has looked into mitigation, but that doesn't address the community's desire to save them. There are other avenues to explore. In the event that mitigation does occur, the mitigation language is not strong enough. It should be compulsory and should begin before demolition occurs. Lastly, no demolished materials should go to the landfill. She agreed with recommending to the building official to require an order for repair before demolition is considered.

Commissioner Fuz stated that his main concern has to do with the process and to bring all stakeholder's concerns to light. A ministerial permit, which this would become if there is an unfit building determination and demolition order, is not the right process to evaluate all the alternatives. He recommended that the commission incorporate DAHP's mitigation language with timelines for compliance with mitigation measures. He would like the HPC to be able to review the mitigation measures. The public and HPC has many concerns about the process. Maybe staff and the attorneys could consider a parallel process to allow for discussion and further public input.

Commissioner Garcia stated that there is consensus that this building is best when it is used and feels that the applicant is thinking about the future and best use of this site. There seems to be a consensus that this building is unfit.

Commissioner Kapitanovich stated her concern about the regulatory process used on these buildings. There is development in play on this site that is having an impact on which regulatory process is used. There is correspondence between the city and the developer stating that the developer wants an unfit building determination as it is more expeditious than going through the HPC. The other regulatory process of going through the HPC will allow more public involvement. It is not known whether the buildings can be saved, but it needs to follow the right process, not just the one that is expeditious for the developer.

Commissioner Trost stated that the demolition of these two buildings is being presented as being independent of the construction of Phase II of the Aegis project. Regarding the mitigation proposal for the educational exhibit in the main building, he questioned what provisions are in place to ensure that it happens. He stated that perhaps demolition should be delayed until there is a firm commitment, enforceable, to build such an exhibit in the main building. Otherwise it could be a hollow promise.

Trost stated that the real issue is the path chosen to reach a demolition decision, which seems to be close to happening from what has been said. It may be legal under Vancouver law to take this action under the unfit building standards, shame on the city for using it on an historic resource. The city should change their code. The site is too important not to have a full SEPA review and decision-making process, with appropriate public involvement.

Trost stated that common sense says this is part of a larger action, for the phase 2 development and should be considered in that light. This is an attempt to avoid a public involvement process. At the end of the SEPA process, the commission may be in the same place as today, with a decision to demolish the two buildings and permit continued development around the Academy site, with the long-term goal of saving the main building, only. However, if there are more creative, feasible solutions, the SEPA process and public comment are the only way any feasible alternatives would come to light.

Trost stated that by proceeding down the current path, the decision is taken out of the hands of the citizens of this community and left to City staff and the property owner only and is not in the long-term public interest.

Commissioner Gregg stated that he is concerned about what precedent the commission sets by allowing any historic buildings to be demolished.

After discussions and clarifications on a motion, Commissioner Trost made the following motion:

**We recommend that the applicant not pursue the unfit building determination process, but instead pursue the more robust process of a demo permit that is clearly tied to the proposed Aegis II development.**

With questions from the HPC during their motion deliberation regarding the requirement for a demolition permit review to come before the HPC, City attorney, Boger confirmed that the historic overlay requires a demolition permit to come before the HPC.

Bohn seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Denniston-recused.

## **7. New Business**

Elections were held for Chair and Vice-Chair on the Historic Preservation Commission. Denniston expressed interest in the Chair position and Gregg expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position.

Kapitanovich made a motion for Denniston as Chair and Fuz seconded the motion. Staff took a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Trost made a motion for Gregg to be Vice-Chair and Bohn seconded. Staff took a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).



## **8. Old Business & Updates**

- Clark County Historical Museum Lecture Series Speakers Panel will be broadcast on August 6 at 7pm on the topic of the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission. Denniston and Gregg participated in the audio interview. CCHM livestreams the speaker series and posts them on CCHM's website and YouTube, so they are available long-term.
- Downtown Camas interpretive panels. Brad Richardson stated that CCHM is producing three panels for downtown Camas under a grant from the county. Richardson gave an overview of the content of the three interpretive panels he is producing for downtown Camas.
- Brad Richardson stated that CCHM has been hit hard by the inability to do important work, such as exhibitions and research, due to the pandemic. Other organizations don't have access to research materials in the museum during the pandemic. The museum will provide free resources to The Trust for their nomination amendment because the Academy is so important

## **9. Adjournment**

This meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.