

**CITY OF WEST LINN
HISTORIC RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

March 3, 2009

Members Present: Charles Awalt, Sandy Carter, Gail Holmes, Tom Neff and Midge Pierce

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Tom Soppe, Associate Planner

Guests Present: Mildred Andrews and Julie Koler, Andrews History Group

Agenda Topics: Minutes, Update by CLG Consultants; Next CLG Grant Discussion; Presentation of Goal 5 List from Previous Grant; Discussion of Fields House Potential for Landmark Status.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. BUSINESS ITEMS

2.a. MINUTES of 2-3-09

The minutes were approved after modifications were made to the draft.

2.b. UPDATE FROM CURRENT CLG GRANT CONSULTANTS

Consultants Julie Koler and Mildred Andrews asked for HRAB guidance regarding the final draft of the Holly-Grove overlay zone. They circulated examples of how Los Angeles, California and Everett, Washington had fashioned their code and guidelines. They advised that Chapters 25 and 26 of the West Linn code needed to be updated, streamlined, and lacked definitions. They indicated they could work on that if the scope of their current contract was expanded. Mr. Soppe related that fellow Associate Planner Peter Spir was already drafting changes to those chapters. He offered to relate the consultants' views to Mr. Spir and ensure that Mr. Spir contacted the consultants.

Mr. Soppe related that the Clackamas County Historic Review Board had written to say they no longer wanted to serve as the review board for West Linn. Their letter indicated that was effective immediately, however a City/County intergovernmental agreement required them to give the city a year's notice. The consultants related that Washington State cities were deciding to take over that role for themselves and have been appointing local historic review commissions. They asked if the HRAB wanted them to draft code that set up a local review commission. That would also require an expansion of their current contract.

Mr. Awalt was concerned that the city was allowing historic houses to be torn down or moved from their original sites. He opined that recent city approval of the fire station development application in the Bolton neighborhood meant that two historic houses that contributed to the “fabric” of the neighborhood would be torn down, and should be saved. The board members recalled that a SHPO representative had advised them that a multiple property submission within a district could be nominated to the National Register of Historic Properties as well as nominating an entire district. They wondered if a local code overlay of an entire area could be a means of protecting more properties sooner than attempting to protect individual structures. The consultants advised that it was perfectly acceptable for a city to protect properties they cared about without state or national approval. Mr. Awalt saw a possibility that the state might not support the city’s action related to the houses affected by the Bolton fire station project. However, he suggested that if the houses were torn down, the city should require mitigation money. The developer should be required to pay into a preservation fund. He said that money could be used, in part, to survey Bolton and other areas with older, unprotected structures. Members were relieved to learn the old firehouse itself, next to the new firehouse site in Bolton, would not be torn down. The discussion then returned to Holly-Grove, and the members examined the examples of code in LA and Everett that were provided by the consultants. They envisioned fashioning such an overlay for areas of West Linn too. Some felt the current planning process was not working in favor of historic preservation. They suggested there either should be a preservation specialist on staff, or the staff needed more training. The members liked a suggestion from the consultants that they examine the code “holistically” and then draft code related to Holly-Grove for the board to comment on.

The consultants again asked if the board wanted them to draft code that set up a review board with authority to designate and regulate. They said it could be made up of the existing board members (with some training) plus an architect and a contractor. Mr. Awalt then explained the County review board was supposed to have two citizens on it from West Linn, but it did not. He suggested recruiting some. He said Gary Hitesman had expressed interest. The members agreed it would be good to have representation on the county board, and they thought that if both boards began communicating well, the county board might reconsider its decision. Otherwise, with two experienced county board members, the city could make a better transition to a local review board. Mr. Awalt explained one reason the county board had decided not to review West Linn cases was the TVF&R application. The consultants offered to write a letter to the state that supported the West Linn HRAB’s position on that issue. The board agreed.

The consultants polled the board to see if they wanted them to draft code that set up a West Linn review board. Ms. Pierce said if the West Linn HRAB could reestablish connectivity with the county board they should remain with the county. Mr. Neff did not take a position. Mr. Awalt indicated there were things the county did right and he could agree to work with the county as long as their staff and board makeup stayed the same and if the two boards could establish a better connection. If not, that would at least give West Linn time to transition to local review. Ms. Carter said the city would need the transition time to establish a preservation office, and adopt new code, without any “loopholes.” She said for now she wanted to stay with the county, and she noted a county board helped buffer the local board when some in the community took issue with preservation initiatives. Ms. Holmes wanted a West Linn review board but she

acknowledged she was the only board member who thought West Linn should move more aggressively towards this already. The consultants then agreed to a scope of work to revise the code to update and clarify it; draft code that set up a local review board (in case the local board ever decided to ask the city to adopt it); talk to the state about the houses being affected by the new fire station development; and look at current CLG requirements and advise the board what they had to do to keep their CLG certification. They also advised there were many places board members could seek training, including the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC).

When the consultants were asked if they thought Holly-Grove could be a national register district, they said it might be “marginal,” but they needed to finish the project before they could make a conclusion. They said it might just need cosmetic changes that a code overlay and some incentives might bring about. The board recalled that an overlay helped Willamette District get past looking like a ghost town, allowing it to be at the stage it is at currently, with a pending nomination to National Register.

The consultants said they would work with Mr. Spir on the code revisions. Ms. Holmes asked Mr. Soppe to arrange for a SHPO representative to come back to talk to the HRAB in April and clarify why part of the business district could not be part of a National Register district. Ms. Holmes thought at least half that business district should be included.

2.c. DISCUSSION OF WHAT TO APPLY FOR NEXT CLG GRANT

Mr. Soppe asked the board to examine the application form for the next Certified Local Government grant and fashion their request. The maximum grant might be \$12,000 to \$15,000 depending on funds availability. Ms. Holmes suggested asking the city for more than just matching funds. Mr. Awalt added that mitigation funds would help. Ms. Holmes suggested a project to finish surveying Bolton, Sunset and the industrial area at the mill and locks. Some members worried the board might be taking on too much and should remain focused on finishing the Willamette District and the industrial district. Ms. Holmes explained that was part of the first year’s grant program that was not finished and that overlapped the work of the consultants, which was being funded by last year’s grant. The members recalled the industrial area inventory had already been done by PGE. Some suggested nominating Bolton, and maybe Sunset, to be national historic districts. Mr. Awalt stressed that being on the National Register did not protect a property as well as West Linn landmark status, because landmarks were protected by city code.

Properties had to be surveyed before they could be considered for landmark status. Approved landmarks were listed in the code. Mr. Soppe distributed a list compiled by the previous consultants as part of the previous CLG grant, of all the buildings recommended for the Goal 5 inventory. The board planned to examine them to find those to propose as landmarks that were not yet landmarks. Mr. Awalt suggested that all properties over 50 years old, not just those on or proposed for the landmarks list, should be also be mitigated for if demolished. The board discussed how intensive the survey work to be paid for by grant money should be. The consultants suggested a reconnaissance level survey of Bolton to identify potential landmarks there. Mr. Awalt suggested board members could examine old surveys and do the work themselves. They

had several old Winterbrook surveys and the Goal 5 potential properties list and database Mr. Soppe had just distributed. Board members could walk their own neighborhoods and look for other potential landmarks. The ones that had already been surveyed had to be approved as landmarks in a formal HRAB hearing. Owners had to be notified first. The board thought it was best to wait until the Willamette District was done before they did that. They worried about possible opposition if there were too many preservation initiatives at once. They decided to hold a work session to go through the various old lists of properties and sort them into potential landmark candidates. They acknowledged they would likely have to do some fact checking in the process. The board agreed to schedule an interim meeting on March 24th. They hoped the grant and match money would be enough to pay for what they wanted to accomplish this grant cycle.

2.d. PRESENTATION OF GOAL 5 LIST MATERIAL FROM PREVIOUS GRANT

Mr. Soppe distributed copies of the list of potential Goal 5 properties and the supporting documents for each property, as also discussed above. The board noted they had multiple lists of properties from several studies over the years. They needed to verify the information and sort through them and eventually put them on one list to be considered. The Winterbrook study had never been adopted by the city because the list had never been vetted or validated. Mr. Awalt said Winterbrook had passed over many small houses because they did not score small houses very high on the rating sheet. Someone said the National Parks Department rating system was the one that should be used. They recalled they had previously agreed they wanted to “go back to the drawing board” to identify structures that deserved to be protected. Mr. Awalt said the mitigation money could pay for such an endeavor.

2.e. DISCUSSION OF FIELDS HOUSE POTENTIAL LANDMARK STATUS

Mr. Awalt suggested the board ask the city to take strong action and require governmental developers in the city to pay mitigation into a preservation fund. He cited the case of the houses around the new fire station and the removal of the Fields House as examples of why that was necessary. He worried the school district would sell a valuable archeological site near the river. He said the fire department had not followed correct procedure and had used inaccurate studies to support their application. He said it might not be too late to save the Bolton houses if the state intervened. When the members wondered how to value structures to be mitigated for, the consultants recalled they had simply negotiated an amount on a case-by-case basis in King County, Washington a few years ago using a Section 106 review. The money went into a mitigation fund that paid for landmark preservation projects.

The board then focused on the issue of Fields House. Mr. Awalt clarified that the “Fields House” he was referring to was the house that had been in the park (but was now in pieces in a local barn) - not the structure still erect in the park. He suggested asking for mitigation for its removal.

Mr. Awalt **moved** that the HRAB ask the city to aggressively pursue mitigation from any governmental agency doing business in the City of West Linn. Mr. Neff **seconded** the motion and it **passed** by unanimous agreement.

3. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST

Ms. Holmes handed out the “West Linn Historical Resources Advisory Board Annual Report to the West Linn City Council” that she had presented to the City Council the previous evening.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Holmes adjourned the meeting at 9:17 PM.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF
MARCH 3, 2009**

Agenda Item	Title	Doc Date	Document Description	Docum Numb
2a	Minutes of February 3, 2009	February 4, 2009	See title	09030
2b	See description	March 3, 2009	Consultants' handout of examples of historic codes in other cities	09030
2b	Intergovernmental Agreement: Shared Use of Historic Preservation Review Commission	September 2005	Intergovernmental agreement between City of West Linn and Clackamas County to use Clackamas County Historic Review Board (CCHRB) for City of West Linn historic preservation review	09030
2b	See description	February 26, 2009	Email from CCHRB Chair Todd Iselin regarding CCHRB desire to no longer serve City of West Linn	09030
2c	Oregon Certified Local Government Program Grant Application 2009-11	February 2009	See title	09030
2c	Certified Local Government Grant Timelines	February 2009	SHPO's table of the new grant cycles and their deadlines	09030
2d	Architectural Survey Data for City of West Linn Local Inventory	August 11, 2008	Previous CLG grant consultants' list of recommended Goal 5 properties, data sheets on each property, and map locating properties	09030
3	West Linn Historical Resources Advisory Board Annual Report to West Linn City Council	March 2, 2009	See title	09030

MINUTES APPROVED:

Gail Holmes, Chair

Date