

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

**March 24, 2009**

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

Members Absent: Tom Neff

Guest: Sally McLarty, Bolton Neighborhood Association

Staff Present: Tom Soppe, Associate Planner

Agenda Topics: Business Items; Consultant Correspondence; Status of CCHRB; SHPO Update; Willamette Industrial Research Update; Miscellaneous Items of Interest

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:16 PM.

**2. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**2.a. CONSULTANT CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Soppe read aloud an email from consultant Mildred Andrews. She said she and Julie Koler were working on the historic overlay code and they wanted to come to the April meeting to present the draft. She wrote that the contract called for the Buck Street reconnaissance survey work to be done this month, but the consultants needed an extension to June 1<sup>st</sup>. The board was to hear from a SHPO representative at the April meeting, so Mr. Soppe had asked them to come to the May meeting. Ms. Holmes observed a consensus to agree to that. The board also had copies of the consultants' letter to SHPO about the fire station

**2.b. STATUS OF CLACKAMAS COUNTY HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT**

The staff had received an email from the Clackamas County Historic Review Board, announcing that board would no longer provide services to the City of West Linn. However, Mr. Soppe reported no one he spoke with at the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) could recall or find a copy of such a letter. He reported that Mr. Spir and Mr. Kerr were to meet with the county staff and board to learn more about the county board's decision and to advise them the intergovernmental agreement required them to give the city a year's notice. Mr. Soppe had drafted a response letter and emailed copies to the West Linn HRAB members. He asked them if that was what they wanted to say to the county board. Members indicated they were reluctant to say anything that would start the "12-month clock" and they wanted to find out the specific reasons for the county decision and try to straighten out any misunderstandings first. They recalled it might be because recent surveys had not been totally accurate and other information the county board had been given might not have been complete enough. Mr. Awalt feared the

volunteers on the county board might simply chose to not show up at West Linn hearings. He suggested the local board put two local people on the county board. He said they should be preservation professionals and strong advocates of preservation. They might eventually become the core of a local review board. Board members recalled he had previously related that architect Gary Hitesman might be interested. Ms. Holmes related that the Mayor wanted the city to have its own review board. She acknowledged it would take time for the city to set that up.

The board wanted the official list of grievances and concerns that had caused the county board decision. They hoped that when city staff met with the county staff and board representatives they would find out. They worried that SHPO might revoke West Linn's CLG certification. Ms. Holmes acknowledged the local board had to work on a better process for preservation, but she noted they had only existed for three years. The members asked the staff to send them a written report after their meeting with the county board. Then they would decide how to go forward. Mr. Awalt agreed to contact two historic-preservation-focused architectural firms in Portland and ask them to identify potential professionals in West Linn who might agree to serve on the county board.

### **2.c. SHPO UPDATE**

Ms. Holmes wanted the issue of the historic district boundaries to be resolved one way or the other at the next meeting. That was why she wanted both Ian Johnson of SHPO, and Todd Eisner, who had experience dealing with SHPO, to be there. The board hoped to convince the SHPO representative to agree to expand the boundaries of a proposed historic district to include a commercial area before SHPO brought the proposal before SACHP in June.

Mr. Awalt stressed that the addition to the district HRAB wanted included only ten properties. Mr. Soppe clarified that the south side of that block and an adjacent building had already been surveyed as part of last year's grant work. However, only the residential part of the district had been nominated so far. Now, only the north side of the street needed to be surveyed, and one or two of those buildings were already protected. He advised the entire area was already within a commercial design overlay district. The board discussed how else they could persuade SHPO. Mr. Awalt confirmed that the old railroad use was on Sanborn maps and that PGE had documented the fact that there was once a plan for a 1,600-acre "Manufacturing City."

### **2.d. WILLAMETTE INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH UPDATE**

Mr. Soppe agreed to find out if Mr. Spir was fashioning code to address the industrial aspect of Willamette as well as the residential aspect. Mr. Awalt recalled that the consultant wanted to make the Holly Grove overlay zone a model for the Willamette Historic District overlay zone.

## **3. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST**

This year's Heritage Conference was to be held in Portland April 14-18. More information was on the SHPO website.

The board discussed the concept of mitigation. Mr. Awalt suggested one way to bypass having to get individual property owner consent to protect a building would be to adopt code that put stricter controls on tearing down any building over 50 years old, anywhere in the city, and to require mitigation for it. Other members saw the board's role as protecting buildings of "historic significance," or that were already Landmarks, rather than a requirement for mitigation for absolutely all buildings over 50 years old. They acknowledged that there were some ugly, run-down, 1940's and 1950's houses that probably needed to be replaced. Board members generally favored getting neighborhood associations involved in protecting what they valued in their neighborhood. For example, some neighborhoods featured mostly older, smaller houses, or ranch style houses, and to build something different would adversely impact the character of the neighborhood. That might justify a mitigation requirement in the form of money paid to a preservation fund, or building a larger replacement house that fit the neighborhood architectural style, rather than a larger replacement house that fits a standard modern style. The members seemed to generally support sending a recommendation to protect buildings over 50 years old that made a significant contribution to the continuity and character of a block or a neighborhood. Mr. Soppe agreed to refine the draft "mitigation" memo and bring it back to the board to examine.

The Board decided to provide maps showing the historic houses in each neighborhood to each neighborhood association so they could look at them when they were considering what reflected neighborhood character and what elements in their neighborhood they wanted to protect. They also decided to develop better communication with the Sustainability Board. They planned to begin an educational campaign to make people less fearful of the concept, "overlay zone." They hoped neighborhood associations would decide to fashion them.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Holmes adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THE PUBLIC RECORD FOR THE MEETING OF  
MARCH 24, 2009**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Doc Date</b>	<b>Document Description</b>	<b>Document Number</b>
2a	See description	March 6, 2009	Andrews History Group letter to SHPO regarding historic Buck Street houses affected by TVFR plan	090324HRAB01
2b	See description	March 2009	Draft letter to CCHRБ encouraging them to continue to serve City	090324HRAB02
3	See description	March 24, 2009	Draft memo from HRAB to City Council encouraging the adoption of a mitigation policy	090324HRAB03

MINUTES APPROVED:

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Gail Holmes, Chair

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Date