

WEST LINN MEETING NOTICE

HISTORIC RESOURCES ADVISORY BOARD

May 4, 2010

7:00 PM

**Willamette Room, 1st Floor City Hall
22500 Salamo Road**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. BUSINESS ITEMS**
 - a) MINUTES OF 4-6-10**
 - b) UPDATE ON 09-10 CLG GRANT WITH CONSULTANT: Design Guidelines and Survey** Staff: Sara Javoronok
- 3. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS OF INTEREST**
- 4. ADJOURNMENT**

For special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please call City Hall 48 hours prior to the meeting date, 503-657-0331 or TDD 503-657-7845.

I. Existing Characteristics (this section will be refined considerably including an overall narrative description of the district)

The Willamette Falls Industrial District’s Western Bank (aka Mill District) is significant for the critical role it played in the generation of electricity in Oregon’s early days, and for its association with manufacture of paper products for more than 100 years. The Willamette Locks...significant resource of the District. (THIS STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE IS A PLACEHOLDER AND WILL BE REFINED)

The Mill District is characterized by a variety of long linear industrial buildings, exposed structural systems, and a neutral palette of poured concrete and weathered metal. Most of the buildings have been significantly altered, and new ones have been added to the site since 1893 when the oldest extant building was constructed. These changes have introduced a wide variety of new materials and forms to the district; however, many of these changes are illustrative of the evolution and use of the site over time and therefore are significant in their own right.

II. Design Standards

Basic Principles

1. Do not remove historic material. Distinguishing original qualities defining a building or structure’s character should not be destroyed. Removal or alteration of original or historic materials or distinctive architectural features should be avoided.
2. Repair rather than replace. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced, whenever possible.

In addition the following principles should apply:

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Siting and Relationship to the River

- *Mill District Character*
Most of the buildings in the District are sited close to the water. A small percentage of the buildings actually span areas of the river.
- *History*
The earliest buildings on site used the hydraulic power



of the Willamette Falls to power the mill, and to provide power to the local community. Later buildings did not need to be placed over the water, so they filled the island created by construction of the locks.

- *Why these characteristics are important*
The Mill District’s relationship to the water is the most important characteristic of the site. It is a unique relationship that doesn’t exist elsewhere in West Linn.
- *Specifications*
New construction or additions should be placed no further from the water nor closer to the water than immediately adjacent buildings or facade

Building Form

- *Mill District Character*
Most of the buildings in the District are rectilinear in form, and more horizontal than vertical. There are a few specific exceptions, including the weighmaster’s office and bleach plant.
- *History*
The form of nearly all buildings on site is a specific result of the original use of these buildings. Long rectilinear buildings were used for paper production and storage; vertical buildings were used to provide views of the locks, retrieval of long logs, or gravity flow of materials. Consequently most of the buildings still in active use are those most adaptable to new equipment, particularly the long rectilinear ones.
- *Why these characteristics are important*
In many ways the building forms reflect the topography of the Willamette River Falls area. Long narrow banks along the river’s edge, nestled below higher cliffs that provide dramatic views. But these forms are punctuated by the vertical elements that indicate a history of trying to harness the river.
- *Specifications*
New construction or additions should be linear and horizontal in form. New buildings or additions with a footprint smaller than 2000 square feet may be vertical in form. Larger buildings that are squarer in footprint should be composed of linear elements.



Roof forms (insert photo)

- *Mill District Character*
The majority of roofs in the district are flat. Several of the flat roofs are topped with shallow gabled doghouses, mechanical penthouses, or skylights. A number of buildings, particularly the older ones have gabled roofs with varying pitches. Most of the gabled roofs are quite small in area.
- *History*
Roof form was often indicative of the use within the building, or the materials and methods of construction available. Smaller gabled roofs were used in the older buildings, primarily to shed water, and to make use of shorter wood roof members or smaller metal trusses. Newer buildings were able to minimize the interior volume of a building by taking advantage of stronger materials and more highly designed structural components.
- *Why these characteristics are important*
Roof forms are one of the most prominent visual features of the district. Not only are they useful as landmarks for specific parts of the district, they provide visual interest for the district as a whole.
- *Specifications* New roofs should be flat or gabled with no pitch greater than 12/12.

Height

- *Mill District Character*
Most of the buildings in the district are relatively low in height. A few stand out as tall singular elements, and some of those closest to the falls have tall sides on the downriver side of the falls.
- *History*
The height of buildings on the site is a specific function of the use of the building. Lower buildings often housed long paper machines, or were used for storing paper. Taller buildings were



intended to provide views of the locks or take advantage of gravity flow of materials for the mill or power station.

- *Why these characteristics are important*
Aside from providing some indication of the building's function, the varied height of the buildings within the district provides visual interest.
- *Specifications*
New construction or additions should be no taller or shorter than adjacent buildings.

Windows

- *Mill District Character*
The majority of windows in the District are steel casements, with a high percentage of window area covered with glass block. Older sections of the mill have double hung wood windows.
- *History*
The window forms are mostly indicative of the age of the buildings. The earliest buildings had double hung wood windows as these materials were readily available, and the windows offered a method of ventilating interior spaces and providing daylight. Steel casement windows were installed mostly on buildings constructed from 1920 on, and are indicative nationally of industrial uses. These windows could span greater openings, and would provide even more natural light. They also had operating panels within the windows that functioned as hoppers, awnings, or casements to provide adequate ventilation. Glass block became prevalent in the 1930s and 40s, as mechanical ventilation took over, and the primary need for windows was just to provide sufficient daylight. The glass block was also an aesthetic component of many International or Moderne style buildings.
- *Why these characteristics are important*
Ordinarily windows are significant components of historic buildings. This is true of buildings in the District, but less so than it is in other types of districts. Many of the original windows in the district have been replaced with other window types. For the older buildings, the rhythmic placing of double-hung wood windows is an



important character-defining feature. For newer buildings with large banks of windows, the actual window style is probably less important than the proportion of wall surface to window surface.

- *Specifications*

New construction or additions should utilize steel casement windows or glass block for concrete buildings. Double or single-hung windows should be used with wood and metal sided buildings.

Primary Facades

- *Mill District Character*

Facade treatments vary widely within the district. There are very few common elements between them. However, most do not have clearly visible primary entries, and it is often not clear which elevation is the facade. As a result, facades will be considered those that are most visible from Willamette Falls Drive and from the locks.



- *History*

The district consists entirely of industrial buildings, often with the original primary entry oriented toward the river or locks, which were never intended for public use and did not therefore have significantly defined entryways.

- *Why these characteristics are important*

Facades are the visible face of the district. This is the first close-up view people will have of the district's character. They should reflect the history of the mill's buildings and should not be altered unless they're being restored to an original condition.

- *Specifications*

New construction or additions should not block primary facades. New facades should have minimalist entries and be oriented to the water.

Exterior Finish Materials

- *Mill District Character*

The majority of the buildings in the District are constructed of poured concrete. A large number are also constructed of wood or steel structural components, with vertical corrugated paneling made of metal or mineral fiber. A few of the older buildings have horizontal wood siding. There are a few other materials used including terra cotta block and brick, but these are minimal parts of the materials palette.



- *History*

The earliest buildings on site were composed of wood timbers and wood siding, because these were easily accessible in the Willamette Valley before 1900. As the mill grew, more permanent materials were used including brick and steel or iron. By the 1920s, most buildings were constructed of poured concrete because it was superior in terms of cost and durability.

- *Why these characteristics are important*

Exterior materials are often the strongest visual indicator of the evolution of a site over time.

- *Specifications*

New construction or additions should have poured concrete, vertical corrugated siding or horizontal wood siding as the exterior finish material.

Exposed Utilities

- *Mill District Character*

Many of the buildings in the district have exposed utilities both inside and outside the building. The most visible are electrical transmission lines and variously sized round pipes. Many of these utilities are grouped near corners of buildings.



Square shaped ductwork however is not typical.

- *History*

Exposed utilities are typical in most industrial buildings. Electrical transmission lines are especially common in this district because of its continued hydro-power generation. Pipes carrying water, steam, or other liquids have also been used off and on over the history of the site.

- *Why these characteristics are important*

The exposed utilities in and on buildings are one of the most character-defining features, evoke most indicative of the site's industrial heritage and continued use.

- *Specifications*

New construction or additions should utilize exposed utilities both inside and out. This includes gas, water, air, and electrical or information technology conduits. In the event that forced air is used to condition spaces, those ducts should be round rather than square or rectangular.

Parking

- *Mill District Character*

Parking for the most part consists of small surface lots near the fringes of the district. It is possible for vehicles to get on the island, but most of these are forklifts, or other small equipment used for moving materials. Another aspect of parking could relate to boats.



Currently the locks are not functioning, and boats are not tied up at the plant. However, that could change in the future.

- *History*

Parking was not a concern early in the site's history. Historically there were a number of vessels moored in or traveling through the site. Logs, goods, and other materials were delivered via the Willamette River. Eventually cars and large trucks had to be accommodated on site, but by this time much of the island had been built up and there was little space on the west bank for large parking areas due to its topography.

- *Why these characteristics are important*
Minimal parking lots are critical to continuing the dense character of the district. However, it continues to be important for trucks to access the facility adequately in order to keep the existing plant functioning. The re-opening of the locks and the mooring of vessels to the mill or nearby would contribute significantly to the active use of the site.
- *Specifications*
New or expanded parking lots should be small. Maximum area should be no greater than the largest existing lot.

Hardscape/Landscape

- *Mill District Character*
Most of the buildings are surrounded on several sides by, or at least abut, concrete pedestrian walkways or loading zones. Many of the loading zones along the locks have simple timber guards to prevent equipment movers from going off into the water. Other areas of the site adjacent to the river or falls often have pipe railings that serve to prevent pedestrians from falling into the water. Stone is prevalent along the locks and against the cliff walls. Landscaping on the island is minimal – often restricted to volunteer blackberry vines or other bushes and weeds. On the riverbank though, there are numerous plantings, usually not highly designed (most are volunteer) that help the buildings there blend into the cliff walls.
- *History*
Hardscaping has consisted almost entirely of loading docks and walkways along the water's edge. Originally these were constructed of timbers, but concrete became more prevalent in the early part of the 20th century. Some of the timbers are still in place. Cut stone was used to construct the locks in the 1870s, and is a prominent component of the hardscape, but it is limited to the locks canal.
- *Why these characteristics are important*
The minimalist approach to hardscaping is characteristic of historic industrial sites. The naturalist approach to landscaping with an occasional designed



landscape to screen incompatible views or components is also a significant characteristic of the site.

- *Specifications*

New decks or walkways should be constructed of simply finished poured concrete or timbers. Railings should not be used except where required by code. New railings should be made of pipe and painted to match existing railings (yellow) or be allowed to weather. No decorative railings, or deck finishes should be used.

Paint

- *Mill District Character*

Most of the buildings have been painted at some point. The colors used were generally fairly neutral, including grays, beiges, and an occasional red. The paint has been allowed to weather over the years and there appears to be no maintenance plan for upkeep. Paint on signage is a distinctive visual element, particularly warning signage, or signage indicating the location of particular equipment. The signs are colorful, usually red or yellow.



- *History*

The first buildings on site were wood, and were often not painted because it was rough cut wood and the dirt associated with the industrial nature of the site would have immediately stained the paint. The next buildings were covered in horizontal wood siding, and painting this siding was necessary to help preserve it. Metal sided buildings and concrete buildings that came later were generally not painted. Over the years, however, nearly all the exterior surfaces have been painted.

- *Why these characteristics are important*

The primary reason to paint the buildings is to help preserve the exterior finish materials. This is appropriate for wood, metal, or concrete. As finishes weather over time, they will slowly disintegrate without the moisture and chemical protection of paint.

- *Specifications*
New paint should be in a neutral palette or based on paint analysis of existing buildings. Signage is encouraged and can consist of any color.

III. Minor Alterations and Maintenance

- An alteration may be considered minor when the result is to maintain or restore to the original historic appearance while performing normal maintenance and repairs, such as:
- Replacement of gutters and downspouts, or the addition of gutters and downspouts, using materials that match those that were typically used on similar style buildings.
- Repairing or providing a compatible new foundation that does not result in raising or lowering the building elevation.
- Replacement of building material, when required due to deterioration, with building material that matches the original material.
- Repair and/or replacement of roof materials with the same kind of roof materials existing, or with materials which are in character with those of the original roof.
- Replacement of wood sashes with new wood sashes, or the addition of wood sashes, when such is consistent with the original historic appearance.
- Additions of solar equipment which, when removed, do not destroy essential elements of the building's character defining features may be allowed if such equipment is not visible from the public right-of-way. Solar panels may be located on roofs, provided they meet particular size and placement standards.