



**HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD  
Meeting Notes of August 20, 2024**

Members present: James Manning, Kirsten Solberg, Brad Stewart, and Sheri Harbour De Vos. John Steele arrived late.  
Members Absent: Dan Saltee, and Michael Fuller  
City Council Present: Rory Bialostosky  
Staff present: John Floyd, Senior Planner and Lynn Schroder, Management Analyst

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**Staff Liaison:** John Floyd - [jfloyd@westlinnoregon.gov](mailto:jfloyd@westlinnoregon.gov)

The meeting [video](#) is available.

**1. Call To Order and Roll Call**

Chair Manning called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. John Floyd called the roll.

**2. Public Comment Related To Items Not On The Agenda**

None.

**3. Approval of [Draft Meeting Notes for June 18, 2024](#)**

Member Solberg moved to approve the meeting notes for 06/18/24. Member Stewart seconded. **Ayes: Solberg, Saltee, Stewart, and Manning. Nays: None. Abstain: None. The motion passed 4-0-0.**

**4. Discussion - [McLean House NR Nomination - CLG Evaluation Form for State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation \(SACHP\)](#)**

Management Analyst Lynn Schroder updated the HRB on the McLean House National Register Nomination schedule and the need for a letter of support from the HRB as the CLG authority. Staff will draft a letter of support for the McLean House nomination for HRB consideration at its next meeting in September. The support letter needs to be submitted to the SACHP by October 17<sup>th</sup>.

**5. Discussion – Debrief of July 16 walking tour of Willamette Commercial Design District**

Chair Manning mentioned that an old video from the 1980s showcasing downtown Willamette is available on the Facebook page of a group called "Gone But Not Forgotten." He will request a video copy to share with the HRB members.

Member Solberg observed that some of the building facades in Willamette feature lumber that was milled over a century ago. She supported preserving these original facades and opposed using composite lumber, which applicants have proposed as a more affordable alternative.

Members also discussed organizing a walking tour of the Willamette Historic District to highlight the architectural differences between the homes and review approved projects.

Member Harbour De Vos expressed her appreciation for the tour, history, and context that Chair Manning provided.

Member Stewart echoed the appreciation. He questioned whether it was the Western false front architectural style that unified the District or if it was simply the quality and craftsmanship of the new construction.

Chair Manning agreed, pointing out that the District has two original false front buildings, along with several others that have been added over the years. His concern with Chapter 58 is that he doesn't want to grant exceptions for every land use approval in the District because of the inconsistent application of the Code.

## **6. Discussion – Draft Mission Statement**

At the June 18th meeting, the HRB discussed the creation of a mission or purpose statement to define the HRB's role, purpose, and authority more clearly. The aim is to help the HRB better understand and implement its responsibilities as both a quasi-judicial decision-making body and an advisory group on historical preservation and grant funding for preservation projects and public education. This clarification would also aid the City Council in assigning tasks and staff support to the HRB, and guide community members in engaging with the City on historical matters.

The HRB deliberated on adopting a clear mission statement to define their duties and responsibilities. The proposed mission statement covers purpose, membership, meetings, rules, and the HRB's role. The proposed role of the HRB includes the following functions:

- 1) Administer local, state, and federal law regarding alterations to designated historic resources, new construction or alterations within the Willamette Historic District, and alterations or new construction within the Willamette Falls Drive Commercial Design District for appropriateness and compatibility;
- 2) Review and make recommendations to the appropriate approval authority regarding the listing and de-listing of historic resources, the movement of historic resources, and the demolition of historic resources;
- 3) Maintain a role in governmental affairs, coordination and public information regarding matters relating to historic preservation in City of West Linn. In particular:
  - a. Advise the City Council, Planning Commission, and City Staff on matters of historic significance and interest.
  - b. Participate with other governmental agencies, Tribal Nations, and private organizations such as the State Historic Preservation Office, Oregon History Society, and West Linn Historical Society to preserve and promote the significance of West Linn's historic resources.
  - c. Recommend updates to the City of West Linn's development code to be consistent with state and federal law and to reflect the community's goals and interests.
- 4) Promote and interpret West Linn's history on public lands, in public spaces, and in City communications.
- 5) Increase local and regional awareness of West Linn's history and its contribution to the community's quality of life.
- 6) Support preservation of the character and design quality of West Linn's historic neighborhoods through public and private voluntary action. Public action may include the recognition of historic landmarks that have been voluntarily placed on the City's landmark designation list by placing a commemorative plaque or other form of appreciation on the property.

- 7) Promote West Linn's unique place in Oregon's history by developing a program to publicly highlight the natural, cultural, and economic significance of Willamette Falls.
- 8) To support the efforts identified above through the pursuit of government grants and private donations.

Manning pointed out that the West Linn Historical Society, the Willamette Neighborhood Association, Willamette Main Street, and the HRB have considerable overlap in functions. He thought it would be important to discuss the groups' purposes.

While formal work plans have yet to be established for the year, there may be a focus on code amendments and enhancing local and regional awareness. Members suggested collaborating with other organizations to keep efforts in community engagement. The work plan should align with the HRB's roles and responsibilities, set annual goals, and reinforce their commitment.

Solberg asked if the National Register designation required yearly surveys of designated buildings to ensure proper maintenance and preservation. Floyd will follow up.

#### **6. Discussion – Joint Meeting with Council**

Floyd will request a joint meeting with the City Council for October 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### **7. Items Of Interest - Board Members**

Chair Manning gave an update on the potential paper mill closure.

Member Solberg asked Members if they should consider appointing a liaison to the West Linn Historical Board and Historic Willamette.

Solberg also asked about the historic Sunset neighborhood stairs from Sunset Fire Hall down to the mill. Manning will print a map of the area and ask his father, who has historical knowledge of the area, for leads about the stairs. He also suggested posting a FaceBook post to gather information.

#### **8. Items Of Interest - Staff**

Floyd will come back with an idea for a tour of the Willamette Historic District. He also suggested a training session with Oregon SHPO for an upcoming meeting.

He announced that the next round of CLG grants will open in February 2025, with a 50% matching requirement. He proposed discussing potential grant opportunities at the next meeting. The HRB might consider applying for CLG grants to fund projects such as an oral history of the mill to preserve its history before the opportunity is lost or updating the background statement on the history of the falls to include pre-European history and other untold histories of the area. He noted that this information could inform the Waterfront Project, which is currently under development. Last, as a part of the community engagement on VISION43, the City received a comment suggesting an opportunity for a new historic district along Highway 43. The City could update the historical context statement for the area.

Schroder will send out a link to the [Willamette Historic District StoryMap Walking Tour](#).

#### **9. Adjourn**

Chair Manning adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.