



HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD
Draft Meeting Notes of February 19, 2025

Members present: Dan Saltee, Kirsten Solberg, Regina Fleming, and BreAnn Borgaard
Members Absent: Sheri Harbour De Vos, James Manning and John Steele
Staff present: Lynn Schroder, Management Analyst, Aaron Gudelj, Associate Planner, and Ashleigh Dougill, City Attorney

Staff Liaison: Lynn Schroder - lschroder@westlinnoregon.gov

The meeting [audio](#) is available.

- 1. Call To Order and Roll Call**
- 2. Public Comment Related To Items Not On The Agenda**
None.
- 3. Public Hearing:** [HDR-24-03, a Proposal for a Class 2 Historic Design Review to install rooftop solar panels at 1852 4th Avenue](#)

Chair Solberg introduced application HDR-24-03, a Class II Historic Design Review at 1852 4th Avenue to install nine rooftop solar panels facing the front-yard on a not-in-period compatible home within the Willamette Historic District. Solberg provided an overview of the hearing process and opened the public hearing.

City Attorney Dougill addressed legal standards and appeal rights. The substantive criteria for the application are Community Development Code (CDC) Chapter 25: Overlay Zones – Historic District and Chapter 99: Procedures for Decision Making: Quasi-Judicial. Don Dougill addressed the Historic Review Board members’ conflicts of interest, bias, ex-parte contacts, and site visits. Member Solberg noted that she attended a two-day seminar on historic preservation in August 2023, hosted by the State of Oregon. The seminar included a presentation on integrating solar panels into historic neighborhoods. She also stated that she would remain unbiased when evaluating this application. Dougill then invited audience members to raise any objections regarding the Historic Review Board's jurisdiction or any potential biases or ex-parte disclosures by the Members. There was none.

Associate Planner Aaron Gudelj delivered the staff report. The applicant is seeking approval to install nine (9) rooftop solar panels on the front-facing roof of an existing non-period compatible home located within the Willamette Historic District. No other modifications to the home are proposed. The property is Zoned R-5 Residential. The application requires a Class II Historic Design Review because the solar panels are not exempt under CDC Section 25.040(A)(13)(b), as they face the front and side yards rather than the rear yard. Additionally, CDC Section 25.060(A)(3) prohibits alterations that create a false sense of historical development, and CDC Section 25.060(A)(5) requires compatibility with historic materials, features, size, and scale. However, since the existing home is not an historic resource, compatibility could not be evaluated.

Members asked why this house required HRB approval for solar panels when others in the Willamette Historic District did not. Gudelj explained that other solar panel applications in the district had solar panels located on rear-facing roofs, which are exempt from this review process.

Elizabeth Smolens, the applicant, discussed her solar project. She noted that her house was built in 1984. She noted that solar panels are located on the front of the house to get enough sun exposure.

Chair Solberg asked for public testimony on the application. None was given.

There were no requests for continuances.

Chair Solberg closed the public hearing and open deliberations. Members deliberated.

Member Saltee moved to approve HDR-24-03 as presented and directed staff to prepare a Final Decision and Order based on the findings in the staff report and the record. Member Fleming seconded. **Ayes: Saltee, Solberg, Borgaard, and Fleming. Nays: None. Abstain: None. The motion passed 4-0-0.**

4. Approval of Draft Meeting Notes for 01.21.25

Member Saltee moved to approve the HRB meeting notes for 01.21.25. Member Fleming seconded. **Ayes: Saltee, Solberg, Borgaard, and Fleming. Nays: None. Abstain: None. The motion passed 4-0-0.**

5. Request for Comment: USACOE Willamette Falls Locks Historic Properties Management Manual and Willamette

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) is seeking input from interested parties on the Draft Willamette Falls Locks Historic Property Management Manual (HPMM) and the Draft Willamette Falls Locks StoryMap, with a deadline of February 21, 2025. Staff Liaison Schroder provided links to these documents earlier in the month. Members Fleming and Solberg submitted written comments. Member Fleming noted that the document should acknowledge the likely existence of archeologic artifacts in the area, clarify roles and responsibilities, and include a communication plan with local tribes. Member Borgaard also provided additional comments. Schroder will compile all comments and forward them to the USACOE.

6. Items Of Interest - Board Members

None.

7. Items Of Interest - Staff

Staff Liaison Schroder provided an update on the cost estimates she received for the proposed Robinwood Historic Home Inventory. Since the estimates were higher than originally anticipated, she asked for guidance on adjusting the approach for the CLG grant application. HRB members recommended narrowing the study area to focus on the Highway 43 corridor.

8. Adjourn

Chair Solberg adjourned the meeting at 6:50 pm.