



CITY OF

West Linn

**HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD
Draft Meeting Notes of April 16, 2025**

Members present: Kirsten Solberg, Sheri Harbour De Vos, James Manning, Regina Fleming, and BreAnn Borgaard

Members Absent: Dan Saltee and John Steele

Staff present: Lynn Schroder, Management Analyst

Staff Liaison: Lynn Schroder - lschroder@westlinnoregon.gov

The meeting [video](#) is available.

1. Call To Order and Roll Call

Chair Solberg called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

2. Public Comment Related To Items Not On The Agenda

None.

3. Approval of Draft Meeting Notes for 03.18.25

Member Borgaard moved to approve the HRB meeting notes for 03.18.25. Member Manning seconded.

Ayes: Harbour De Vos, Manning, Solberg, Fleming, and Borgaard. Nays: None. Abstain: None. The motion passed 5-0-0.

4. Certified Local Government Overview: Roles, Responsibilities, and Opportunities with Kuri Gill, CLG Coordinator, Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

Kuri Gill, CLG Coordinator provided an overview of the roles, responsibilities, and opportunities of the Certified Local Government Program (CLG). The CLG program is a federally funded initiative, established by the National Park Service and administered in Oregon by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Its purpose is to support and promote historic preservation efforts at the local level. There are 57 CLG programs in Oregon.

To qualify as a CLG, communities must maintain an inventory of historic properties, adopt a review code, and hold a minimum of four meetings annually. In return, CLGs benefit from training opportunities, expert guidance, and access to non-competitive grant funding for preservation efforts every other year. In the past, properties that were nationally designated could receive property tax benefits.

Historic properties can be either designated as historic properties through the National Register of Historic Properties process or locally through the City of West Linn Development Code Chapter 25 – Overlays Zones- Historic District, or both.

The local designation as a historic property is what activates the City's local historic preservation regulations (CDC Chapter 25). If a property is listed only on the National Register and not designated locally, it only prompts a review for demolition or relocation. To apply broader protections—or if a

property owner wants more comprehensive protection for their historic property—the local designation process is what enables that. That’s the key distinction between the two. So, it is West Linn’s design review code requirements that carries the protection for historic resources. Historic properties may have been listed in the Comprehensive Plan or subsequently through an ordinance.

Many communities leverage Historic Preservation Month in May to engage residents and raise awareness about the value of historic places.

Public involvement is essential when establishing new historic districts. This includes conducting surveys, hosting community meetings, and thoughtfully considering district boundaries.

Local government participation is also vital in the nomination process for the National Register of Historic Places, helping ensure that properties are thoroughly evaluated and compared for historical significance. Preserving original materials and architectural features in historic buildings allows communities to retain a tangible connection to their past. When new construction is introduced, it should be compatible in scale, materials, and rhythm with the surrounding historic context.

Repairs or restorations to designated buildings should use historically appropriate materials and reflect the era in which the structures were built, maintaining their authenticity and visual harmony.

Gill recommended the City of Salem’s Historic Preservation Code as a good starting point for examples of how to address historic preservation subjects like solar panels.

In response to a question about integrating new construction into the Willamette Falls Commercial Design District, Gill explained that while people often try to recreate a history that no longer exists, doing so can overshadow what’s truly historic. Buildings that retain their original materials and character are what tell the real story of the area. Introducing new structures that attempt to mimic the past—especially with styles that never belonged there—only diminishes that authenticity.

Instead, Gill suggested that new development should complement historic buildings by reflecting their rhythm, scale, and materials without directly copying them. This approach allows the authentic historic elements to remain prominent and continue telling the community’s story. For repairs to historic structures, she recommends going back to materials that are reflective of materials that were historically there. Façade replacements should be compatible with the rhythm, size, height, scale of the openings of the historic materials to the extent it can be determine for the specific structure.

5. Items Of Interest - Board Members

Chair Solberg requested setting up a table at the farmers market this summer to outreach to the community.

Solberg also requested a historic walking tour in Oregon City or Aurora. She wanted more information on similar historic districts to the Willamette Hisotric District.

6. Items Of Interest - Staff

Schroder provided an update on the Robinwood Historic Inventory, noting that bids for a Reconnaissance Level Survey (RLS) of the neighborhood came in between \$50,000 and \$60,000—significantly higher than initial estimates.

RLSs are part of the federal process for identifying properties that may qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They serve as a preliminary, exterior-only survey that records basic information

such as a building's address, height, materials, and architectural style. RLS evaluations are based solely on visible characteristics and lack contextual research. Any findings of potential eligibility are considered preliminary until further research, such as an Intensive Level Survey (ILS), is completed.

An ILS provides a more in-depth analysis, including both physical documentation and historical research. It offers a stronger foundation for determining National Register eligibility and includes valuable context such as research methods, obstacles encountered, and suggestions for future study.

Due to the unexpectedly high cost, the project scope has been revised. The city will instead conduct a high-level survey to assess whether historic resources exist in the Robinwood area. If any are identified, the city can pursue additional grant funding to complete a full RLS on identified properties. The scope includes some initial research on the historic context in Robinwood.

Once grant funds are awarded and a consultant is under contract, the project is expected to begin and be completed by December 2025.

Following up on interest to tour the Historic City Hall. Schroder will contact the Willamette Falls & Landings Heritage Area Coalition to arrange a tour in May in lieu of the May HRB meeting.

McLean House celebration is scheduled for Saturday, June 28, 2025 at 11:00 – 12:00pm.

7. Adjourn

Chair Solberg adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:20pm.