

**CITY OF ALBANY  
LANDMARKS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
City Council chambers, 333 Broadalbin Street  
Wednesday, August 7, 2013  
6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

Landmarks Commissioners Present: Oscar Hult, Larry Preston, Camron Settlemier, Jolene Thomson  
Staff present: Anne Catlin, Lead Long Range Planner; Mary Gaeta, Senior Code Compliance Inspector  
Others present: 2

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Oscar Hult called the meeting of the Landmarks Advisory Commission (LAC) to order at 6:03 PM.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

May 1, 2013 Minutes: Commissioner Settlemier moved to approve the May 1, 2013 minutes as written. Commissioner Preston seconded the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING: HI-06-13, 519 Fifth Avenue SW**

Hult called the quasi-judicial public hearing on HI-06-13 to order at 6:04 p.m.

This request is to use substitute materials for front porch flooring on the house at 519 Fifth Ave. SW as described in the application and staff report for planning file HI-06-13.

Declarations: Commissioners Settlemier and Hult have both driven or walked by the house but have had no contact related to this application. Commissioner Preston has inspected this structure and has bid on the house twice for parties other than the current applicants during the last 20 years, so he is quite familiar with the property.

Staff Report

Planner Anne Catlin summarized the written staff report and shared the review criteria applicable for this request.

Catlin stated that the current owners and applicants of a historic contributing resource in the Monteith District (known as the Burmester house) located at 519 Fifth Avenue SW made a request in 2006 to replace a cover over the front door with a full-length front porch because the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps showed a full-length front porch (see file HI-08-06). With that application, one of the conditions of approval was that the front porch flooring be of tongue-in-groove wood material.

Since that time period, the applicants have continued working on the project. Now that they have lived there several years, they find that the temporary OSB porch flooring gets extremely wet during the winter despite its slope, possibly because the porch is so low to the ground. They have replaced the OSB currently on the porch a couple of times. Their current request is to use a substitute porch flooring material on the front porch to provide greater durability than wood. The material would be used on the floor only – the porch posts will be wrapped and will meet the conditions of approval related to the past application.

The requested substitute material is a PVC product manufactured by Azek. It is deeply grained to resemble wood, but the graining does not cause the product to look like fake rather than like wood.

In looking at substitute materials review criteria, the Azek is not a compatible substitute for wood porch flooring. There is PVC porch flooring that is a compatible substitute called Aeratis that is not grained to look like wood.

Staff recommends approval of a substitute porch flooring material with the following condition: the substitute material flooring product is the Aeratis Classic or Traditions porch flooring line that is tongue and groove; or if not the Aeratis product lines listed herein, the product must be approved by the Preservation Planner prior to installation by seeing a sample of the product.

#### Applicant Testimony

Larry Christophersen, 519 Fifth Avenue SW, Albany reported that he chose the Azek product because of its texture. He was looking for non-slip flooring, and the Azek coloring better matched the trim color of his house than the Aeratis product. The Aeratis product was not available locally when he researched materials.

Audience Testimony: None.

Hult closed the public hearing at 6:16 p.m.

#### Commission Discussion

The Aeratis product is now available through Parr Lumber in town.

Because of this porch's low elevation and small setback, it is highly visible. Preston wanted to know how this product would be installed and finished so that it would look like real wood – especially since most wood porches have straight-cut, unfinished ends. Catlin discussed finishing options such as using a bullnose-style trim, which is available from the manufacturer.

Commissioners and staff discussed installation methods, other houses with substitute materials on their porches, pros and cons of different substitute materials and products, as well as the criteria for allowable materials presented in the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

#### Commission Action

Preston moved to approve the request to use substitute porch flooring material with the condition that care be taken with the nailing of the material and how the ends are finished. There was no second so the motion failed.

**Motion.** Thomson made a motion for approval as described in the staff report, with the condition that the substitute material used be the Aeratis Classic or Traditions porch flooring line that is tongue-in-groove; or if not the Aeratis product line listed herein, the product must be approved by the preservation planner prior to installation; and if not wood, an end-wrap must be utilized. Preston seconded. **The motion passed 3-1 with Settlemier voting against.**

#### **QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING: HI-07-13, 410 Washington Street SW**

Hult called the quasi-judicial public hearing on HI-07-13 to order at 6:48 p.m.

This request is for exterior alterations to add a door, to extend the roof over the doorway area, and to replace a window in an accessory apartment addition on the south side on the commercial building at 410 Washington Street SW as described in the application and staff report for planning file HI-07-13.

Declarations: Hult said he reported the exterior alteration some time ago but has not spoken to the applicant.

#### Staff Report

Planner Anne Catlin summarized the written staff report and shared the review criteria applicable for this request. Catlin began by noting that this is a historic non-contributing building in the Monteith District. The request is to modify a post-1949 addition on the south side of the former Heath's Laundry building (now known as Four Star Laundry). The work is already done. Facing Washington, a new wood door with small windows at the top has been installed, and the gabled roof has been extended over the doorway. On the south side (not facing the street), they have replaced a fixed window with three windows including one double-hung operable window in the center.

One of the first tests for substitute materials is that it's a historic non-contributing building, which it is; and that the window match, as much as possible, the original window.

Since it is a post-1949 addition, staff recommends approval, but the vinyl window should be painted to match the paint of the other windows remaining on the building.

Testimony: None.

Hult closed the public hearing at 6:53 p.m.

#### Commission Discussion

Settlemier asked if there was a better picture available of the door as it was difficult to see in the photos included in the staff report (there were shower curtains blocking the view of the door when those shots were taken). Catlin replied that another photo could be taken to show the detail of the door, but that it was a wood door with glass windows at the top. It appeared to be a salvage door from the 1960s-70s.

Catlin continued that the building is non-conforming because it has had so many changes including another addition put on the north side in the 1960s. The alterations are to a post-1949 addition and the proposed door is not a public entrance so it would not look right to have the proposed door match the type of door that would have been seen historically on the original part of the building. The door in question and the proposed overhang and replacement window will not affect the character of the building.

#### Commission Action

Preston moved to approve the request to make exterior alterations and to use substitute materials on the south side of the addition without conditions. No commissioners responded with the second.

Thomson made a motion for approval with the condition that the vinyl windows be painted to match the other windows on the same side of the building. Preston seconded. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING: HI-09-13, 617 Fifth Avenue SW**

Hult called the quasi-judicial public hearing on HI-09-13 to order at 7:01 p.m.

This request is to use cement board siding on the front façade on the house at 519 Fifth Ave SW as described in the application and staff report for planning file HI-09-13.

Declarations: Settlemier and Hult pass by house regularly. Hult notified staff that work was being done but has not spoken with the owners of the house.

### Staff Report

Catlin summarized the written staff report and shared the review criteria applicable for this request.

She began by directing commissioners' attention to a letter written by neighbors in support of the application because there was a similar request several years ago for the use of HardiePlank cement board siding on a house where the siding was so deteriorated that it wasn't taking paint.

The house is a c.1890 Western Farmhouse with common lap siding and simple porch columns. It is a historic-contributing resource in the Monteith District. The siding was covered with cedar shakes c.1925; however, the applicant removed the shakes and restored the original siding many years ago. Alterations include the front concrete steps, cedar shingle siding skirt at the base and an enclosed porch on the west side dated to c.1925. The one-over-one light windows were replaced with vinyl without review at an unknown date many years ago.

Regarding the request to replace siding on the front façade where it has deteriorated, staff conclusions are that:

1. The siding that was replaced would no longer hold paint, and replacement siding in the same material is substantially more expensive;
2. The replacement siding matches the original siding in reveal, dimensions, and profile, and was installed and finished in the same manner as the original siding;
3. The use of cement board siding in select locations will not alter the character defining features of the Western Farmhouse and will not cover any original materials; and
4. The application for the use of substitute materials satisfies the review criteria.

There have been other alterations including a column on the porch railing that had been changed. The railing itself is not original to the house and is very basic. The new column can be addressed separately from this application.

Staff recommended approval as submitted.

Applicant or Audience Testimony: None.

Hult closed the public hearing at 7:09 p.m.

### Commission Discussion

Hult believes that more than a few rows were replaced. To him it appears that all of the siding on the front of the house was replaced except for about 4 rows at the top. Settlemier and Preston agreed that it appeared that way to them as well, and discussed the history of changes to this structure (though all were pleased the roof was replaced).

Wood grain patterning vs. plain cement board appearance was discussed, and it was noted that the standards call for use of non-textured siding. There appears to be a subtle grain texture to the siding on the subject house. Because the applicants installed the siding before going to staff for approval, they were not made aware of the requirement for plain siding to meet the standard.

Preston discussed costs and said that cement board siding was far less expensive than the custom-milled wood siding that would be needed to match what is existing on this house. However, in the case of this house where only not much is needed, the cost would not be prohibitive.

Catlin replied that applicant told her wood siding would have been 3 to 4 times the cost of the cement board siding in this project and that that standards do take into account situations where original materials are prohibitively expensive. She asked the applicant if there were other section of the house where the original wood siding could be moved, but the applicant stated that there were no good stretches on other parts of the house that would be usable for this.

Preston said he was glad they did the entire front instead of doing part of it in mismatched patches; however, the statement by the applicant that the replacement “is the same in all respects” is not true because HardiePlank is not the same thickness.

Catlin said commissioners present could either use the evidence before them to make a decision to approve or deny the request, or the discussion could be tabled until a future meeting. If tabled, more information could be gathered from the property owner (who is currently out of town) and more photos could be taken now that the roofers’ materials are no longer blocking part of the siding project.

Preston asked Catlin if conditions had been given to the owners. She replied that she didn’t have any – other than the siding should be painted.

Preston moved to approve the request to use substitute siding without conditions. No commissioners responded with a second.

Thomson said she regretted that more commissioners were not present, that the owners were not present, and that the work had already been started. She said while the finished project looks nice, it was difficult to make a decision simply because the house looks better than it did before. Settlemier expressed concerns regarding how bad the wood was – did all of it need to be replaced? Hult responded that the house has been without paint for many years and has always looked rough. He couldn’t imagine that any of that siding was in good condition. Catlin said the side in question faces south so it gets the most sun. The siding was reported to be brittle and cracking. Preston related his experience that old wood siding that is not maintained quickly breaks down. No commissioner brought forward a motion to approve or deny the request as described in the application.

#### Commission Action

Hult reopened the quasi-judicial public hearing for HI-09-13 at 7:27 p.m. and announced that the hearing would be continued to the next scheduled meeting.

### **PRESERVATION PLANNING UPDATES**

Catlin just received a copy of the work the consultant, Tama, has done on the Lehigh Acres neighborhood. The draft text for the nomination form was included in the commissioners’ envelopes. She requested that commissioners review the draft and provide any comments to her. She said she promised the neighborhood that the research would be shared with them in the fall. The State has reviewed the work and has suggested some minor edits that have been incorporated into the work. If commissioners are interested, she can forward surveys of the selected properties.

Catlin reported all of the grant applications are moving forward. Half are complete. One from last year was dropped – a \$500 grant to provide siding and paint on a house on Eighth Avenue. The applicants moved and sold the house so the funds, as directed by commissioners, will be divided between the top 3 projects.

One of the grant recipients, Mr. Larsell who is in need of a roof repair, is having a hard time scheduling roofers to meet the deadline. He is hoping to pay the materials by the grant deadline. There has been discussion about getting a work party together to assist him with painting. He could use window repairs before winter if anyone was willing to volunteer.

Catlin discussed an email sent by Restore Oregon, formerly known as Historic Preservation League of Oregon (HPLO), regarding an award being given in honor of the late Art DeMuro. The email describes eligibility and the kinds of projects they are looking for, and it appears there may be several eligible projects in the local area (such as Central School). If anyone can think of other worthy projects, Catlin will approach owners to see if they are interested in being nominated. Applications are due by the end of August.

Preston asked about the status of the old Church on Main and Santiam. Catlin replied that the project has been delayed, and they don't need to relocate the church. The City is not interested in owning the church but a consultant was hired to do an assessment. Issues such as access and parking will be looked at to determine possible uses and how best to market the property. An open house may be scheduled to present the known constraints and research done by the City as well as opportunities for development of the site.

Settlemier is concerned about the dilapidation of the building and asked if there were plans to at least paint it before it becomes further damaged. Catlin replied that she didn't know of any plans of this type. The previous tenants were to have done maintenance in exchange for use of the building, but maintenance wasn't done. She didn't know if the department that currently owns the property has the staff time to do this kind of project before it changes to new ownership, but she will ask about this. Once the property comes under new ownership, there may be CARA funds available to help with needed repairs.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the LAC is scheduled for September 4, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hult adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:42 p.m.

Submitted by

Reviewed by

*Signature on File*

*Signature on File*

Mary Gaeta  
Senior Code Compliance Inspector

Anne Catlin  
Planner III