



The City of Seattle

## Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 55/10

### MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting  
Seattle Municipal Tower  
700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 40<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Room 4060  
Wednesday, February 17, 2010 - 3:30 p.m.

#### Board Members Present

Vernon Abelsen, Chair  
Jerry Finrow  
Mark Hannum  
Christine Howard  
Patrick King  
Aaron Luoma  
Steve Savage  
Marie Strong  
Elaine Wine  
Meredith Wirsching  
Tom Veith, Vice Chair

#### Staff

Beth Chave  
Sarah Sodt  
Melinda Bloom

#### Absent

Alyce Conti

Chair Vern Abelsen called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

#### **021710.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Meeting of January 20, 2009

MM/SC/TV/CH 10:0:0 Minutes approved as amended.

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The Seattle Department of Neighborhoods**

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**021710.2 NOMINATIONS**

021710.21 Crawford Music Building at Seattle Pacific University  
15 West Bertona Street

Tom Veith stated that his sister works for Seattle Pacific University (SPU) and while he didn't think it was a concern he would recuse himself if anyone thought it was.

Tom Walsh, counsel for the owner, reported that Seattle Pacific University (SPU) nominated the building to determine its status. He said they did not believe it met the criteria and asked the Board not to nominate it.

Larry Johnson, architectural historian, presented the nomination report (full report available in DON file). He presented the context of the site and how the building is situated on the site in relation to the campus green and other buildings. He said the building was designed by Mallis and Dehart and only 1/3 of the original design was actually built; it was finished in 1960. He said the building is associated with SPU's post-war construction but not significantly. He said the building is constructed in the mid-century modern style and he went over elements associated with this style and provided photos of other examples of this style and noted there were better, more complex examples. He said Mallis was one of the most prolific school designers. Mr. Johnson provided examples of his work: the landmarked Nathan Hale School among others. Mallis died in 1954 and while he contributed to the design of Crawford Music Building, Dehart was likely the major contributor of the design. Mr. Johnson said he couldn't find much information on Dehart. He said the building doesn't stand out on the streetscape and is not an easily identifiable feature in the neighborhood. He said in his opinion the building did not meet any of the criteria for landmark status.

Board Questions:

Mr. Abelsen had a question about Mallis' contribution to the design activities of the architecture firm.

Responding to Board member questions Mr. Johnson said that at the time of Mallis's death schematic designs had probably been done but Dehart would have had to take over design development as the project progressed. With regard to materials he said the brick was carried from the exterior through to the interior and that the building was very high quality noting the plaster was of a high quality sheetrock. He noted one loss of integrity – the spandrel had been stuccoed over where originally there had been small tiles.

Mr. King asked if there had been any significant professors or students associated with the building.

Mr. Johnson said that SPU was humble about its graduating students and noted that the music program was oriented to missionary programs.

Mr. Veith said he believes that music teachers were trained there.

Mr. Abelsen asked how the building fits in with the overall campus.

Mr. Johnson pointed out that all the major buildings were oriented toward the green except for this one. He said it was originally designed as two buildings connected by a breezeway and oriented off 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. W. but because the commission wasn't realized, the building faces a parking lot.

#### Public Comment:

Char Eggleston, Queen Anne Historical Society, read from a letter she sent to the Board (full text available in DON file). She supported nomination of the building and said the Master Plan cited the importance of the loop – this building is at the beginning of the loop. She said it is a significant building in relation to the whole context of the campus.

Leanne Olson, Queen Anne Historical Society, spoke of how the mid-century modern style was interwoven with the development of Seattle at the time and noted the rapid growth, prosperity and optimism. She said she recalled the culture at the time where wealth, position and importance were not flaunted and this was reflected in the many of the buildings that were built at that time – solid, well-built and blending in. She said the building doesn't have the “wow factor” because that wasn't part of what was trying to be expressed at that time. She supported nomination.

Ms. Eggleston added that the building was intact and had integrity and further noted the sustainability of preservation.

Mr. Walsh reiterated Mr. Johnson's point that only one third of the original building design was built. He said that there are many better local examples of mid-century modern style. He thanked Ms. Eggleston and Ms. Olson for all the good work they have done in Queen Anne but disagreed with them on this building. He said the building doesn't measure up to the criteria for landmark status.

#### Board Discussion:

Ms. Strong said she appreciated the scale of the buildings on the loop especially on 3<sup>rd</sup> West and Bertona and this building fits the scale. She said it

is unfortunate it was not built as originally designed. She said the utilitarian and simple construction doesn't convey the elements of the architectural style. She did not support nomination.

Mr. Hannum said while a proponent of Mid-Century Modern architecture he didn't think this building did not qualify. He noted that the other buildings on campus harmonize more with each other. He said this building turns its back on the green. He did not support nomination.

Ms. Howard said she liked the way it interacted with the site although it does turn its back on the green there are interesting ways it interacts with the topography. She liked that it has a horizontality although it is a square building. She said the relevant standard is D and the building doesn't bring all the elements together to express the style. She did not support nomination.

Ms. Wirsching said it had no prototypical historic elements to it and said that D was the most important Criterion here. She said the building was a competent and representative example but was not a significant example of its style. She did not support nomination.

Mr. Luoma said the building reminded him of his educational experiences recalling buildings of similar styles with horizontal planes and large glass walls. He said the scale was brought down to a more pedestrian viewpoint so the student interaction with the building was more intimate. He said with regard to Criterion D the key term is "embodies" and the building as a whole does not express a visible distinct style. He noted the amazing vision of the rendering which shows the southern expansion that didn't come to fruition and the let down of seeing what was built. He did not support nomination because the building did not embody that distinctive visible characteristic of mid-century modern.

Mr. Finrow agreed and said there were nice vignettes on the building – the north façade and entry were elegant. He said it embodies some aspects of the style and while a nice building was not a landmark.

Ms. Wine noted the original plan for it was beautiful but the building has to be evaluated on how it stands today. She said it does embody a sense of modern architecture; she said it was simple and honest and talks about a time period. She said part of the interior has strength and brings the exterior materials inside and that the wood doors and the hardware of the building all speak to the modern building. She supported nomination based on Criterion D.

Mr. Veith said a lot of buildings of this ilk – quiet, Northern European brand of modernism - no longer exist. He said it is a good example of the style. He said he was not concerned that it was not completed as originally imagined and said the original schematic shown in the report was not as attractive as

what is there now. He said both the scheme and building suffer that neither the full scheme nor executed scheme is integrated well into the campus which weakens the building quite a bit but otherwise he said the building is a good example for a relaxed, modest, quiet Northern European brand of Modernism. He noted the weather wall was separated from the structural system at the entry and the way interior spaces integrate themselves through the building and through the levels. He said the building deserves a nomination but that he probably couldn't support it in the end. He said the original scheme appears to have had a cloister. He supported nomination and said he would do a site visit.

Mr. King said the building had incredible integrity and has stood the test of time. He said that any building would go through multiple revisions and changes in drawings. He said it meets Criterion D noting the strong feel for the architectural style and modern period. He supported nomination based on its characteristics to the modern style.

Mr. Abelsen asked Mr. Veith for an explanation of his reference to “a romantic version of Modernism” noting that romance is typically absent Modernist architecture..

Mr. Veith stated that classic Modernist architecture usually involves a lot of rectilinearity and axis of symmetry. He cited Thiry's Library or Mies' building as representing a classical approach. He said that Finnish Modernist architect Alvar Aalto would be a romantic and said that there is a freedom in his design; Aalto is less concerned about the rigidity of the visual aspect of the building and more accommodating to a less visually structured composition. He said that Aalto would be the ultimate Romantic Modernist and Mies would be the ultimate Classicizing Modernist. He said that Frank Lloyd Wright would probably be put in the Romantic category and Corbusier (sp) maybe in the Classicizing Modernist.

Mr. Johnson said there are lots of Scandinavians in the northwest which influenced northwest architecture.

Mr. Veith said the building does better job may be as a by-product of the way it was cut down. He said that some of the modern libraries done in the 1950's are very rigid and very unromantic and there is no sense of enjoying the space it is just sort of appreciating the rigidity of the Classicism.

Mr. Abelsen said he had a similar point of view. He said that Mies' Barcelona Pavilions is the purist version one can get to Modernism and this building is not in a purist form. He said that this building is clearly a mid-century building. He said that something was lost in its siting. He said the building entry was a good fit to the building design but he said he looked at the building from a three-dimensional point of view as well as its interior features.

He said that there are very nice aspects of the interior design but tends more to the Romantic side that Mr. Veith referred to. He said there are other representations within the City of Seattle that rise to a higher level of Modernist architecture. He said that SPU had done a good job of holding on to this building and had a really wonderful collection of buildings. He said that overall the SPU campus has a great significance to the City but this building did not. He did not support nomination.

Action: I move approval of the Crawford Music Building at 15 West Bertona Street for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description in the Nomination Form; that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include the site, the exterior of the building, and the following elements of the interior of the building: the main floor entrance foyer, the main floor corridors, the lower floor entrance foyer, the lower floor corridors, and the central stairway between the main floor and the lower floor; that the public meeting for Board consideration of designation be scheduled for April 7, 2010; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/TV/PK            3:7:0 Motion failed. Messrs. Abelsen, Hannum, Finrow, and Luoma and Mmes. Strong, Howard, Wirsching opposed.

021710.22            Former Vaas Residence  
536 – 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Jack McCullough, counsel for the owner, asked the Board not to nominate.

Larry Johnson presented the nomination report (full report in DON file). He provided context of the site and went over the development of the Squire Park neighborhood and the impact of the hospital on the single family neighborhood. The house was built in 1899 and he went over the details of the Queen Anne style and noted that hundred of houses were built in this style in the area likely from plan books. He pointed out the loss of integrity and the loss of character-defining elements such as the replacement of the original windows and doors, the removal of much of its factory made ornament: the saw tooth, the flower box, front entry wood stair and railings, and the addition of aluminum siding which obscures the original contrasting siding types among other. He noted an almost identical house at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Yesler that was designated.

He said Providence Hospital was open in the area in 1910 with several expansions and it merged with Swedish in 2000. The campus is now known as Swedish Cherry Hill.

Mr. Johnson stated that the house did not meet any of the criteria for landmark status.

Board Questions:

Ms. Wirsching asked if the original wood siding was under the aluminum siding.

Mr. Johnson said it was but that it was hard to tell how much of the saw tooth and the barge boards are still there. He said that usually when siding was put on care was not taken to protect original decorative elements.

Public Comment:

Charlie Heffernan, a member of the Swedish Cherry Hill CAC, did not support nomination. He said the institution was an economic generator and that the building would be an impediment to development.

Mr. McCullough explained the process of expansion for the hospital. He said the house doesn't have integrity noting the replacement of all the windows and doors, and the addition of the siding. He asked the Board not to nominate.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Finrow said it was sad to see the lack of integrity and it was unfortunate that it had been destroyed. He noted that a house referenced by Mr. Johnson was in almost as bad shape before it was renovated but it did not have the aluminum siding and windows. He did not support nomination.

Mr. Luoma said the house was charming and that the structure and massing reflect the Queen Anne style. He said its lacks of ornamentation and integrity was a big issue as was its inability to convey its significance. He did not support nomination.

Ms. Wirsching agreed and said as an example of the Queen Anne style it was typical and not outstanding; she said there were better examples in Seattle. She noted the lack of integrity and said that seven or eight important elements are gone or damaged. She did not support nomination.

Ms. Howard agreed and said the loss of windows and applied ornamentation was significant. She did not support nomination.

Mr. Hannum agreed and said it tips over the point of being able to be brought back and he questioned if it were brought back if it would rise to the level of landmark status. He did not support nomination.

Ms. Strong agreed and said its distinct character had been compromised or removed from the structure and it had integrity issues. She did not support nomination.

Ms. Wine agreed and said the house has no integrity. She did not support nomination.

Mr. Veith noted survey work he had just completed and that this building would not have made the cut noting the replaced windows along with the addition of the aluminum siding. He said it embodies the character of the style but was typical rather than exemplary and reiterated the loss of integrity. He did not support nomination.

Mr. King agreed and said it was a shame the house had come to this condition; he said it had no integrity and he would not support nomination.

Action: I move that the Board not approve the nomination of 536 – 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a Seattle Landmark, as it does not meet any of the designation Standards of SMC 25.12. 350.

MM/SC/AL/MW 10:0:0 Motion carried.

Mr. Finrow asked for clarification on nomination – if the Board were voting on current or potential condition and cited the similar hour at 23<sup>rd</sup> and Yesler.

Ms. Sodt reported that the Board’s decision is based on current condition.

### **021710.3 CONTROLS & INCENTIVES**

#### **021710.31 Terry Avenue Building 320 Terry Avenue North**

Ms. Sodt explained that the signed agreement was a typical agreement and explained that security lighting, cameras, security system equipment and signage would be under administrative review.

Owner’s representative Rachel Ben Schmuell was present to respond to any questions.

*Mr. Finrow left at 5:28 p.m.*

Action: I move to approve Controls and Incentives for the Terry Avenue Building, 320 Terry Avenue North.

MM/SC/TV/CH Motion carried.

021710.32 Harborview Medical Center—Center Wing of East Hospital  
325 Ninth Avenue

Ms. Sodt explained the agreement was not yet signed but probably would be and said that the owner has asked for an extension to March 17.

Owner’s representative, Tom Walsh, was present to respond to any questions.

Action: I move to extend consideration of Controls and Incentives for the Harborview Medical Center – Center Wing of East Hospital, 325 Ninth Avenue, to March 17, 2010.

MM/SC/TV/MS 9:0:0 Motion carried.

**021710.4 BOARD BUSINESS**

021710.41 Fire Station #13  
3601 Beacon Ave. S.  
Clarification on legal description

Ms. Chave explained the need to correct the legal description for the record. She said when the Board designated Fire Station 13 in 2005 the legal description in the nomination application was for the entire park – three acres – but the site plan described just the site around the Fire Station. She said that Fleets and Facilities did a survey of the property and the legal description was written to match the survey. She said it was prudent to have the Board act on the legal description. She provided the drawings to the board so they could see what they had looked at when the site was designated as well as the new surveyor’s drawing. She said the new description would be incorporated into the designation Ordinance and will then go on to City Council and will then be recorded.

Mr. Veith asked if the survey would not be recorded until the City Council acted and said that when people want to establish a survey they record it at the Recording Office.

Ms. Sodt explained recording the survey was not part of our process.

Mr. Abelsen said it isn’t required but it is there if the Seattle Fire Department may need or want to make future changes on site.

Ms. Chave said it can be recorded but because the entire 30-some acres are owned by the City it is just jurisdictional - which department at the City was responsible for it. She noted that one portion is managed by Fleets and

Facilities but the larger parcel is owned by the City of Seattle. She doubted it would be recorded independently of the designation Ordinance.

Mr. Abelsen said it looked to be similar to what the Board had seen before.

Ms. Chave said it was just a few feet difference and that the Board will soon be seeing a proposal for an addition to this Fire Station coming up at ARC in about a month. This will be used as a baseline to know exactly what is within the boundaries. Ms. Chave noted that staff had reviewed the text as had the Law Department.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Action: I move that the Board approve the attached legal description for designated site of Fire Station #13 at 3601 Beacon Ave. S. This legal description is for a portion of the parcel number 1624049270; the parcel noted in the designation report.

MM/SC/MH/MS 9:0:0 Motion carried.

**021710.5 BOARD BUSINESS**

Ms. Chave reported that Fire Station 41 would be having an Open House on February 27, 2010 and the board was invited. She said that the interior would be open noting that the original doors were reused inside and this will be an opportunity to see that.

**021710.6 STAFF REPORT**

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Chave, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator