



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 333/07

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

Seattle Municipal Tower

700 5th Avenue, 40th Floor

Room 4060

Wednesday, September 19, 2007– 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Vernon Abelsen

Molly Tremaine

Ron Martinson

Tom Veith

Christine Howard

John Schwartz

Staff

Beth Chave

Sarah Sodt

Karen Gordon

Joanne Walby

Absent

Mark Hannum

Henry Matthews

Stephen Lee

Tehut Getahun

Alyce Conti

Vernon Abelsen, vice chair, called the meeting to order at 3:47 pm.

091907.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting minutes of September 5, 2007 deferred until the next meeting.

091907.2 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

091907.21 Colman School

2300 S. Massachusetts St.

Application for proposed signage.

Applicant Comment: Quirindongo presented the seven sign types they propose for the African American Museum which will be housed in the Colman School. He said they propose three freestanding signs, a 7'6" pedestal sign with two recessed projecting lights in the same format as the AFAM Museum sign for the Urban League Village, and a sign at the parking entrance at 2300 Massachusetts and a 5' x 8' sign at the intersection. He said there will be a 4' x 20' vinyl on steel frame building and a V-shaped sign visible from 23rd Avenue and I-90. He said there will also be a sign on the gymnasium, but it is not included because it hasn't been designed yet. He said the light above the door would have a translucent box, lit from behind. He said the sign at the ADA compliance entrance will be placed above the main door which will be lowered when the concrete steps are removed. He said the ARC had originally thought the design was too obtrusive so they made two smaller light boxes for the logo and text and the background will be 40% gray. He presented different alternative designs for this sign.

Board Questions:

Mr. Abelsen reviewed the sign package: three pedestal signs, one for Urban League; a dual-faced banner, a V-shaped sign, parking signs, building entrance sign and seven banners along the site perimeter, five of which would be in the public right-of-way and four on-site.

Mr. Martinson asked if the sign visible from I-90 would be visually overwhelming. Mr. Quirindongo said it wouldn't be as prominent as it seems from the elevation drawing.

Mr. Martinson asked if this sign would be lit at night. Mr. Quirindongo said it may be, but that would depend on their agreement with the Urban League.

Ms. Howard said the sign colors seemed balanced.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Veith noted that the center bar isn't as strong as an element, but he said he is comfortable with the proposed package.

The Board agreed and asked Mr. Quirindongo specify which alternative sign design for the main door he proposed.

Mr. Quirindongo indicated design #2.

Action:

I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed signage including alternative #2, based on the following:

1. The proposed work does not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in the Designation Report because the proposed alterations do not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and are compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the property, as per Standard #9 of the *Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.
MM/SC/TV/RM 5:0:1 Motion carried. John Schwartz abstained.

091907.22 812 23rd Avenue
23rd Avenue Group

Application: Proposed new residence on vacant lot

Applicant Comment: Mark Haizlip, project architect, said this site has been vacant for many years and their new house design reflects a modern version of what previously existed on this property. He said they have requested variances from DPD for a 15' setback on the front elevation and 3' setback on the side, instead of the usually required 5'. He said the massing complements the existing houses in this group, but he said the design is not intended to mimic them.

Board Questions: Mr. Veith asked if the driveway could access from the back.

Mr. Haizlip said there is no alley access because there is an easement. He said DPD requires that cars be able to exit head-first.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Veith said he felt the applicant has done a good job of getting this project to work while still respect the existing elements. He said he believes the new modern design complements the historic buildings.

Ms. Tremaine said she was not comfortable with the modern design and didn't believe it fits the historic context of the other houses, but acknowledged that the applicant worked hard on this.

The other Board members said they felt this was an appropriate design and would support the application.

Action:

I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application for the proposed new construction on the vacant lot. This action is based on the following:

1. The proposed changes do not adversely affect the features or characteristics specified in Ordinance # 108732 as the proposed new construction does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and
2. The design is compatible with the massing, size and scale and architectural features of the 23rd Avenue Houses Group, as per Standard #9 of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:
The other factors in SMC 25.12.750 are not applicable to this application.
MM/SC/JS/TV 5:1:0 Motion carried. Ms. Tremaine opposed.

091907.3 NOMINATIONS

091907.31 Fitch/Nutt House
4401 Phinney Avenue North

Staff Report: Staff recommends the nomination of the Fitch/Nutt House at 4401 Phinney Avenue North based on the following designation standards:

D) It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction

F) Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrast of siting, age, or scale, it is an easily identifiable visual feature of the neighborhood or the city and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or city.

Staff recommends that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include the exterior of the building and the site.

Applicant Comment: Carol Tobin, one of the nominators, said this house is one of the last 100-year old intact houses in Fremont and is a good example of working class housing. She said she believes it meet D and F.

Paul Fellows said he has lived in Fremont since 1977. He said the ridge this house sits on was logged in 1891 in order to rebuild after the downtown fire. He said Jackson Fitch, a carpenter from Illinois, bought the property in 1900 and built first part of the house, a salt box shape. He presented a line drawing of the original design. He said the house was sold to Mr. Nutt of Tennessee who moved it over six feet, added the three-gabled front structure and raised the railing in front of the gables. He said the bargeboards are unique and were made in four pieces that continue the architecture of the roof. He presented a

slide show of other nearby homes in Seattle built between 1890 and 1930 and noted that the only the Nels House (built 1890) and Dr.'s House (1891) are still existing

Mr. Fellows said he believes this house conveys its significance from the street and has retained its integrity. He said he believes it meets criterion F because it is at on a prominent corner location along the current bus route, and the former street car line. Further, he said he believes it meets criterion D because it is an early example of a working class home with personalized Victorian detailing and its unusual wood trim. He said its unique design is a contrast in the neighborhood of single family homes, apartments and townhomes.

Mr. Fellows said this house was one of the twenty-two Fremont buildings that were included in the 1976 Steinbrueck survey. He said it was also included in the City's Historic Resources survey prepared by historian Greg Lange of pre -1906 properties and the 1979 city-wide survey of buildings with notable architecture or age. Mr. Fellows said the other City landmarks in Fremont are all public buildings and this would be the first residence to be landmarked.

Ms. Tobin said that Fremont is a working class neighborhood and the vernacular style houses throughout the city that are in danger of being demolished. She said this home imparts a sense of time and place.

Board Questions:

Mr. Schwartz asked what sets this house apart from the one across the street.

Ms. Tobin said it is twenty years solder and has not been altered much, while the other one has.

Mr. Fellows added that the Fitch/Nutt house has personalized carpentry work.

Mr. Veith asked when the railing was replaced.

Ms. Tobin said sometime between 1976 and 1979.

Mr. Veith asked if the pair of windows on the south elevation are new.

Ms. Tobin said yes and that there are other windows that have been changed or closed off. She said the dormer is original.

Mr. Veith asked if there had been any alterations to the north side.

Ms. Tobin said she did not know because they don't have any original photographs for comparison.

Mr. Veith asked if the chimney still exists.

Ms. Tobin said no and the porch railing had been altered as well.

Owner Comment: Sam Jacobs, attorney for the owner, Kirk Gronvold of Gronvold Construction of Kirkland, presented the rebuttal. He said there are big picture issues to consider. He said he moved to Seattle in 1977 and has lived in historic structures. He said historic preservation is important to communities but the Board needs to be selective in designating landmarks and not designation something that came from a pattern book from the mid-west. He added that this house had been altered many times. He said if this building was landmarked it would cheapen the City's landmark status.

Mr. Jacobs said there are other important policies that need to be considered, including the rezoning of this area City Council's as Low Rise 1 in order to encourage more density. He said he intends to build three housing units. Also, he said he finds it odd that there had never been a push to landmark this house before the owner made plans to redevelop the site. He also said that he has concerns about the prior surveys that mention it as historic since there is no due process associated with the results of these surveys. He said the City has not written nominations for any of the other buildings in these surveys, some of which he said he believed could have higher architectural value than the Fitch/Nutt House. He said he believes it is fundamentally unfair that one would try and landmark this building just because the owner plans to redevelop on this site.

Mr. Gronvold, owner, said he has lived in Fremont for 46 years and his parents have lived here since 1923. He said it is easy to tell that this has been a rental house for 90% of its life because it has no owners' love. He said he bought this house in 1970. He said there has been a lot of building and tearing down in Fremont and he wondered why none of these buildings had been nominated as a landmark. He said the Fitch/Nutt house had been altered: the south side windows had been changed out, as have the windows on the west side, which are now vinyl. He said the mansard roof was changed out 25 years ago. He said the cedar siding is great but not waterproof and there is dryrot throughout the house. He said he believes that any houses presented for landmark nomination should have the support of the owners. He said as a developer he considers himself to be part of Fremont's working class.

Board Questions:

Mr. Veith asked the building owner and his representative to respond to the notion that the house meets criterion F.

Mr. Jacobs said the house is not on an arterial and there are many houses in Seattle that are on highly trafficked streets, but that does not make them

landmarks. He said the Fitch/Nutt house is not prominent compared to the landmarked Colman School, which he believes is prominent.

Mr. Veith asked if new openings had been cut for the new windows.

Mr. Gronvold said yes. He said he also added new windows on the west side.

Mr. Abelsen asked which windows were still original.

Mr. Gronvold said the east side windows facing the street are all original, but that the rest had been altered.

Mr. Veith asked if 44th Street goes through this area.

The applicant said it forms a “T” intersection at Greenwood Avenue North.

Public Comment:

Toby Thaler said he supports the nomination of this house because of its prominence in the neighborhood. He said the house sits on the ridge and is a popular spot for people to watch the sunset. He said the visual integrity of the house is intact, although the chimney is gone.

Christine Palmer of Historic Seattle submitted a letter in support of the nomination. She disagreed with the owner’s contention that only the “biggest, best and last” structures should be landmarked. She said it is important to retain vernacular structures as well. She said this house is a good candidate for redevelopment using sustainable building standards, perhaps into multi-family houses. She said that this building’s embodied energy should also be considered. She said the owner’s comment about the timing of the neighborhood’s effort to nominate this house is without merit. She said it is the oldest house in Fremont. She said the house has suffered from the owners’ practice of deferred maintenance.

Neal Traven said he is a member of the PCO or the precinct and he supported the nomination. He said he is from New Hampshire where many buildings are historic. He said the Fitch/Nutt house is a well-preserved piece of old Fremont and very prominent. He said there are few old buildings remaining in this part of upper Fremont.

Cathy Wickwire, of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, presented a letter of support for the nomination based on criteria D and F. She said it was built in the same year as the Stimson Green Mansion. She said this is a good example of a vernacular residence and she doesn’t believe there are others like it in Seattle

Don Horn said he sent a letter in support of the nomination. He said the house's integrity is good and it was built with good craftsmanship. He said the wood trim and windows on the front façade are original. He said the house's location is prominent and was on the streetcar line in the past and the present-day bus line. Further, he said it sits on an extreme slope to the west and he wondered if this slope may be a critical slope that should not be developed.

Greg Lange said he conducted a survey of Seattle structures built before 1906 as part of the City's Historic Resources Survey and the Fitch/Nutt House was included. He explained that there was a building boom in Seattle between 1887 and 1891, mostly in the commercial core. He said the second boom occurred between 1899 and 1909 when 160,000 people moved to Seattle. He said that approximately 1-2% of the buildings in the survey are "high-style" and the rest are vernacular. He said most of the vernacular structures were altered beyond recognition. He said the alterations to the house by Mr. Nutt, including moving it 6 feet, is part of the story it tells about the changes occurring in the neighborhood as a result of the population increase. He said he supports the nomination because of its age, its Victorian detailing, and his belief that the alterations were significant to its style.

Erik Pihl said he supports the nomination of this house because it is distinctive and retains its integrity while most other houses of this age have been significantly altered. He said they should preserve this building because it tells a story and there are no other residential landmarks in Fremont, nor any other I-frame houses in the state. He said it is mentioned in three surveys. He said it is a well made with style and distinctive ornamentation. Also its location on the former Interurban streetcar line and the current bus line make it recognizable. He said he is active in the Fremont Community Council and the Fremont Historical Society, both of which he says support the nomination. He submitted a letter of support from the Fremont Community Council written by an architect.

Amy Klosterman said she is a renter in Fremont and said she has long been attracted by this house, which she described as a jewel in its setting on the ridge with territorial views. She said although the owner denigrated rentership in his comments, she said working people have lived in the house and the owner is responsible for its neglected state.

An unidentified man said he has lived in Fremont since 1936 and has watched the increased development over the years between 43rd and 50th streets turn this area into an anthill and he believes it is dense enough. He said they should save this little house because there is nothing as unique in Seattle. He said it someone thinks this house is overgrown and rundown that is not the fault of the renters, but the owners.

Bruce Parker, architect, said this house is unique and located on a prominent site. He said its Victorian design speaks to the builder's aspiration to add style to a simple structure.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Schwartz said if this house is nominated it would set the bar for all future residential landmarks in Fremont. He noted that this house is mentioned in three surveys and is a unique house. He said he would support the nomination but he believes if it were to be designated one would need to make a stronger case for it.

Mr. Martinson said he also questions the validity of nominating this as a landmark but noted that it is quote old, retains its integrity and has neighborhood significance.

Mr. Veith said he had concerns about the house's integrity but also believes it can convey its significance. He said in his opinion, its age and distinctive characteristics meet the threshold criteria. He said he would like more information about the building's potential city-wide significance and find out if there are other houses in this area that also have city-wide significance. He said he believes this building tells the story of Fremont's development.

Ms. Tremaine said this house has characteristics that could make it a landmark. She said it is an example of vernacular architecture, which means "of the land". She said it was built by a carpenter, which is rare in the city. She said it almost has a folk-art feel.

Ms. Howard said she would support the nomination because she said she believes it does convey its significance. She said she believes it meets criterion F but she would like more information about how it may meet criterion D.

Mr. Veith said he would like to know how it compares with other designated Victorian houses in the city.

Mr. Schwartz agreed because as of today he felt there was not enough information presented to a warrant designation.

Mr. Abelsen said he believes this house meets the threshold for age, prominence in the neighborhood and possibly for its architectural style.

Action:

I move approval of the Fitch/Nutt House at 4401 Phinney Avenue North for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description in the Nomination Form; that the features and characteristics proposed for preservation include the exterior of the building and the site; that the public

meeting for Board consideration of designation is scheduled for November 7, 2007; that this action conforms to the known comprehensive and development plans of the City of Seattle.

MM/SC/RM/TV 6:0:0 Motion carried.

091907.4 CONTROLS AND INCENTIVES

091907.41 Dearborn House
1117 Minor Avenue

Ms. Chave said the owner, Historic Seattle, has requested that the consideration of the Controls and Incentives agreement be postponed until the second Board meeting in October.

Action:

Moved to approve the request to defer consideration of the Controls and Incentives Agreement until the October 17, 2007 Board meeting.

MM/SC/MT/JS 6:0:0 Motion carried.

091907.5 BOARD BUSINESS

Colman School

Mr. Quirindongo explained that as part of their mechanical system review DPD is asking that they replace the single glaze windows with double glazed ones to improve energy efficiency. He requested a letter of support from the Board to keep the original single glazed windows. He said they could explore other alternatives to prevent heat loss, such as sealing the windows and adding insulation, or storm windows for the transom inside. Mr. Quirindongo said the storm window probably wouldn't be visible but he would discuss with Ms. Chave whether this should be reviewed by ARC in the future. The Board stated that they support the applicant's request to retain the original single-glazed windows.

091907.51 Schooner Wawona
Briefing on status of the vessel

Karen Gordon, City Historic Preservation Office, said the Schooner Wawona was placed on the National Register in 1970, designated as a City Landmark in 1977 and Navy Historic vessel in 1989. She introduced Wayne Paulson, Board member of Northwest Seaport, to review the plans for disassembling and displaying this landmark.

Mr. Paulson said the Wawona was built to haul lumber to California, and was also used in the fishing industry in the Bering Sea and as a military barge during WWII. She said vessels cost a lot of money to maintain and this one

has deteriorated. In 2005 a summit of experts examined the vessel and reported that it has dry rot. They recommended that the masts be removed and the vessel placed on dry land. The report said the vessel could be either be restored at significant costs or broken apart and presented as an interpretive exhibit for the public. He said the owners have made an agreement with the City to dismantle it and display the inner structure at south Lake Union and the cabin structure at the Armory. He said other maritime heritage experts think this would be a precedent-setting plan to display and interpret the historic vessel.

Ms. Gordon said the Board will hear the entire plan at the October 17, 2007 Board meeting when the Board will hear the Certificate of Approval application. She presented a copy of the agreement to the Board. She said the Board would have jurisdiction over this vessel as long as it remains in the City. She said no Certificate of Approval is required to move it to dry dock, but one would be required for disassembling and rebuilding it.

Board Questions:

Mr. Abelsen asked if they would follow the precedent set in the display of the vessel, *Mystic Seaport*.

Mr. Paulson said they would follow the SOI standards.

Mr. Veith asked what kind of public access there would be for the public.

Ms. Gordon said she will include this information in the Certificate of Approval application and post it on the website.

Ms. Gordon said at the next meeting the Board will review the application for Certificate of Approval for the disassembly of the vessel. She said the Corp of Engineers approved the concept during the Section 106 review. She said the Board will review another Certificate of Approval for the reassembly of the vessel at a later Board meeting.

Mr. Abelsen suggested the owners may want to include information on the landmark process related to the vessel's disassembly and re-assembly in the exhibition at south Lake Union.

Kathleen Conner of the Seattle Parks Department said there is \$400,000 earmarked for this project and the development site at South Lake Union. She said they will initiate the process by December.

Public Comment:

Dick Wagner said preservation of this vessel is very important because maritime history is “hanging by its fingernails”. He said vessels are unique because they travel places, in this case, China, India and Antarctica.

Alice Winship said many people love this ship and it is a symbol of Seattle and is linked to its industries historically and its future with its potential to attract tourists.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Chave, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

Sarah Sodt, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator