

## Members

Kevin Bartoy, Chair  
Jennifer Mortensen, Vice Chair  
Jonathan Hart  
Sarah Hilsendeger  
Roger Johnson  
Alex Morganroth  
Lysa Schloesser  
Holly Stewart  
Carol Sundstrom  
Jeff Williams

Deborah Cade, North Slope Ex-Officio  
Leah Jaggars, Wedge Ex-Officio

## Staff

Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer  
Lauren Hoogkamer, Assistant Historic Preservation Officer  
BT Doan, Administrative Assistant  
Zoe Scuderi, Historic Preservation Intern



# MINUTES

## Landmarks Preservation Commission Planning and Development Services Department

**Date:** March 24, 2021

**Location:** *Virtual Zoom Webinar*

### Commission Members in Attendance:

Kevin Bartoy, Chair  
Jennifer Mortensen, Vice-Chair  
Jonathan Hart  
Sarah Hilsendeger  
Roger Johnson  
Lysa Schloesser  
Holly Stewart  
Carol Sundstrom  
Jeff Williams  
Deborah Cade  
Leah Jaggars

### Staff Present:

Reuben McKnight  
Lauren Hoogkamer  
BT Doan  
Zoe Scuderi

### Others Present:

Erin Anderson, *KPG*  
Mark D'Andrea, *Public Works*  
Sean McBroom  
Amy McBride, *Arts Administrator*  
Asia Tail, *Cultural Consultant*  
Elliott Barnett, *Senior Planner*

### Commissioner Members Excused:

N/A

### Commission Members Absent:

Alex Morganroth

Chair Kevin Bartoy called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS LANDS**
2. **ROLL CALL**
3. **INTERN WELCOME**
4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as submitted.

#### a. **Approval of Minutes: February 10, 2021**

Commissioner Hilsendeger submitted an amendment to the meeting minutes for section 5.a. 310 S. 9th St., Rialto Theatre as follows:

- *Commissioner Hilsendeger Vice-Chair Mortensen had questions regarding the entry points, fencing, and reversible options.*

The minutes of the meeting on February 10, 2021 were approved as amended.

#### b. **Excusal of Absences:**

- Alex Morganroth

## 5. BOARD BRIEFINGS

### a. 310 S. 9<sup>th</sup> St., Rialto Theatre (Individual Landmark) *Security Enhancements*

Mr. McKnight read the staff report as provided in the packet.

Erin Anderson, KPG, provided a project summary and updates since the last briefing the Commission had with Mark D'Andrea, Public Works. Information on code requirement was also presented. There were four options for consideration – roll down gates, accordion gates, swinging gates, and custom swinging gates. The pros and cons of each option were explained.

Commissioner Hilsendeger had clarifying questions about adding gates to the three side doors. Ms. Anderson explained that code requirement made the original proposal to modify the doors infeasible; therefore, the gates were considered. Mr. D'Andrea added that, per the Commission's input from the previous briefing, more temporary solutions had been explored to avoid permanent changes to the building structure. Commissioner Williams preferred the sliding gates and wanted them to match at all three doors and the arcade, as well as minimally visible from outside the building. Furthermore, the Commission provided comments on the attachment points (columns vs. floor) and attachment mechanism of the gates. Several Commissioners commented on the sturdiness level of sliding gates.

Mr. D'Andrea informed the Commission that they would return to the Commission with an updated and more detailed plan towards the end of April.

### b. Totem Pole (Individual Landmark) *Deaccessioning*

Mr. McKnight read the staff report as provided in the packet.

Amy McBride, Tacoma Arts Administrator, provided an overview of the deaccession review request and its reasoning. Asia Tail, Cultural Consultant, further explained the unknown and inauthentic origin of the totem pole, along with response from the Tlingit and Haida Tribe. The carving style and different painted looks of the totem pole over time also contributed to misinformation about the art forms of the Coast Salish peoples of this region. Ms. McBride continued with removal options and invited questions from the Commission.

The Commission was in agreement with the presentation and supportive of the deaccessioning request.

Commissioner Williams made a motion: *"I move that we move this forward to deaccession, and remove from the Tacoma Historic Register with a public hearing."*

Commissioner Hart seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Chair Bartoy encouraged the Commission to put this review into a larger context of equity and anti-racism work, and think about efforts that could be done to address that such as reviewing landmarks on the Tacoma Historic Register.

## 6. PRESERVATION PLANNING/BOARD BUSINESS

### a. Home in Tacoma Update

Mr. McKnight briefed the Commission on the timeline for submitting comments to the Planning Commission.

Elliott Barnett, Senior Planner, stated the objectives of his presentation. He covered the overall goals of the project, housing patterns reinforced by past systemic racism, housing and historic preservation goals, community engagement efforts to date, and current proposals in details along with specific scenarios. Additionally, ways to prevent loss of historic assets, the content of the project package, and public comment timeline were presented.

Commissioner had questions regarding re-designation of commercial buildings to house residential units. Commissioner Sundstrom commented on disability accommodation in single-family units, and code requirement update in relation to zoning changes to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). In terms of mindful demolitions,

Vice-Chair Mortensen inquired about review process for demolitions of properties that were not within historic districts. Commissioner Cade had questions about engagement efforts to inform the public in the midst of challenges such as virtual meetings and gathering restrictions. Commissioner Hilsendeger asked about potential changes of land use requirements and wanted to encourage reuse/conversion of structures over demolition. Commissioner Stewart's questions involved changes proposed around transit routes and the criteria for such changes as transit routes had varying quality levels in different neighborhoods. Chair Bartoy emphasized that historic districts were not exempt from the project and actually could be compatible for redevelopment patterns proposed. He strongly advocated for density and more creative solutions to address the housing crisis issues. He also commented on the lack of diversity of properties on the Tacoma Historic Register.

The main points that the Commission wanted to incorporate in their letter to the Planning Commission featured:

- Preservation being part of the solution, not a barrier to the solution
- Demolition protection for properties beyond historic buildings and districts
- Salvage requirements
- Incentives for adaptive reuse outside of historic districts
- Preservation of quality and characters of neighborhoods
- Transit infrastructures

Mr. McKnight would work with Chair Bartoy to draft the letter.

#### **b. Historic District Discussion**

Mr. McKnight provided context information for the discussion.

Commissioner Sundstrom indicated that there had been email exchanges in a group called Congress of Residential Architecture in Seattle, stemmed from the recent upzoning legislation in Seattle and the attempt to be exempt by the Wallingford Historic District. She was concerned that neighborhoods in Tacoma would attempt similar scenarios to be excluded from housing and zoning changes in the City. The emails discussed historic preservation being rooted in racism, redlining, and wealth disparity.

Mr. McKnight explained the establishment of historic districts at the local jurisdiction level and provided analysis on the possibility of similar attempts in Tacoma.

Commissioners discussed and expressed that residents of historic neighborhoods varied in age, background, and perspective. The overgeneralized notion of historic districts being opposed to changes was not necessarily accurate. Historic preservation was also multi-faceted and involved more than simply preserving buildings.

#### **c. Events & Activities Update**

- Virtual tour "Tacoma's West End – the History that Formed a Hidden Neighborhood," scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on March 26, 2021, could be viewed on Facebook or YouTube.

### **7. CHAIR COMMENTS**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*\*These minutes are not a direct transcription of the meeting, but rather a brief capture. For full-length audio recording of the meeting, please visit: <http://www.cityoftacoma.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=169&pageId=67980>*