



Doug Ernest, Acting Chair  
Meg Dunn  
Bud Frick  
Kristin Gensmer  
Per Hogestad  
Dave Lingle  
Mollie Simpson  
Alexandra Wallace  
Belinda Zink

City Council Chambers  
City Hall West  
300 Laporte Avenue  
Fort Collins, Colorado

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## Regular Meeting January 18, 2017 Minutes

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Acting Chair Ernest called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

- **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Dunn, Zink, Hogestad, Wallace, Gensmer, Lingle, Ernest, Simpson, Frick  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: McWilliams, Bzdek, Bumgarner, Yatabe, Schiager, Gloss, Wray, Overton

- **AGENDA REVIEW**

No changes to the most recent posted agenda.

- **STAFF REPORTS**

None.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

● **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 14, 2016 REGULAR MEETING.

The purpose of this item is to approve the minutes from the December 14, 2016 regular meeting of the Landmark Preservation Commission.

2. 601 EAST ELIZABETH STREET - FINAL DEMOLITION/ALTERATION REVIEW

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** This is a proposal to alter the house located at 601 East Elizabeth Street with a front porch and front, shed dormer addition. The property was determined to be individually eligible as a Fort Collins Landmark.

**APPLICANT:** J. J. and Kathryn Hannah, 601 East Elizabeth Street

***Mr. Hogestad moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission approve the Consent Agenda of the regular meeting of January 18, 2017 regular meeting as presented. Ms. Dunn seconded. The motion passed 8-0. [Secretary's Note: Mr. Frick had not yet arrived.]***

● **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

3. DOWNTOWN PLAN

The purpose of this item is to provide feedback and a recommendation to City Council regarding the potential adoption of the Fort Collins Downtown Plan.

Staff Report

Cameron Gloss, Planning Manager, gave a presentation to review the major recommendations in the plan. He discussed the process for developing the plan, crediting six working groups for their support and guidance throughout the process.

Mr. Gloss talked about the Character Sub-Districts. He mentioned that the Innovation sub-district has been combined with the Lincoln Corridor sub-district.

Mr. Gloss discussed how urban design principles, particularly pedestrian scale, have been integrated into the plan. He talked about how streetscape design and private outdoor spaces contribute to the feel of downtown.

He talked about the role of clear and inviting gateways into downtown, and laid out the framework of the streets in the area.

Mr. Gloss touched on the topics of transportation and parking, market and economy, arts and culture, energy and environment, and management and maintenance, sharing how they were considered in the plan.

He also shared some of the priorities for implementing various aspects of the plan.

*[Secretary's Note: Mr. Frick joined the meeting midway through Mr. Gloss' presentation.]*

Commission Questions and Discussion

Ms. Dunn asked for a summary about the transition buffer areas. Mr. Gloss explained that with the Old Town Neighborhoods Plan, they have looked at transition zones, and there is a budget for a consultant to work on transition issues, primarily with multi-family housing and offices. A CU Denver graduate student will also be working on baseline data for the transition areas, which will be available prior to the consultant coming on board. The draft recommendations will be coming back to the Commission for consideration next year.

Ms. Dunn asked whether the lack of a buffer between Mountain and Oak on Meldrum is still open for discussion. Mr. Gloss described where the NCB (Neighborhood Conservation Buffer District) is currently, and explained that the vision for the transitions code is to govern land in the Old Town Neighborhoods, but also inform and impact code changes for Downtown to truly provide a transition. There is no set strategy for transitions at this time. Over the next three months or so, an analysis will be performed to better understand the current floor-area-ratios, heights, setbacks, and to identify the

conflicts. The change in zoning is currently very abrupt. He said they plan to have workshops with the public and Commission and others throughout this process.

Mr. Hogestad asked about economic impact on building design. Mr. Gloss explained that a pro forma analysis and 3D model would be used to assist in examining the economic impacts of the design standards. Mr. Hogestad asked whether overall design and compatibility will be considered, rather than just economic interests. Mr. Gloss explained that design and compatibility will be important parts of the conversation, but that they must be careful that regulations are not overly restrictive. Mr. Hogestad said there is an opportunity for innovative design that may not show up in the pro forma. Mr. Gloss agreed that there are a range of design options, but it is important to also understand the economic implications of each.

Mr. Lingle asked about the landscape design and utility easement considerations. Mr. Gloss explained they have an agreement with engineering and utility providers, who have approved adopting a map to define the easement expectations. Mr. Gloss noted that the starting point for utilities is 9 feet, but in some instances, zero should be acceptable. Mr. Lingle asked whether external providers, such as Comcast and Xcel, were involved in the discussion, and Mr. Gloss confirmed that they were.

Acting Chair Ernest complimented staff on the layout of the plan with the graphics, maps, text, models, etc., adding that they were excellent documents.

#### Commission Deliberation

***Ms. Dunn moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission recommend to City Council adoption of the Downtown Plan, finding that it supports a vision for a dynamic urban setting in Fort Collins that recognizes and protects the value and character of the existing historic built environment. Ms. Gensmer seconded.***

Ms. Dunn also complimented staff on the plan and its layout and graphics. She also appreciated that language about “distinctive historic character” was used throughout the document. She quoted one sentence from page 11 of the plan that especially stood out to her: “One glimpses each of these periods today, where they are inscribed into the architecture of Downtown”. She also liked the more holistic approach to compatibility and building heights. She noted the importance of the section on the impact of parking requirements on building form and streetscapes.

***The motion passed 9:0.***

#### 4. OLD TOWN NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN

The purpose of this item is to provide feedback and a recommendation to City Council regarding the potential adoption of the Old Town Neighborhoods Plan.

#### Staff Report

Pete Wray, Senior City Planner, gave a presentation starting with an overview of the plan. He discussed the plan process, the organizing topics of the plan, the vision and framework of the plan. He talked about the policies and strategies of the plan, and the implementation of it.

Mr. Wray outlined some planned draft edits which will incorporate Landmark Preservation Commission and Historic Preservation comments and ideas, as well as general feedback.

He reviewed the draft plan timeline, and requested feedback from the Commission.

#### Commission Questions and Discussion

Ms. Dunn asked about the zoning changes. Mr. Wray said the plan includes specific strategy recommendations for potential zoning changes in the last chapter. He said those warrant additional work before being brought forward to the public and boards and commissions.

Acting Chair Ernest emphasized the importance of archiving the plan, noting that it captures a great deal of information about the City, including historical information, maps and illustrations about how the City looks now, in an easily accessible way.

Ms. Dunn inquired about the planned draft edits, particularly the iteration of the mixed-nature of stakeholder opinions on certain policies/strategies, as noted in the presentation. Mr. Wray said they are continuing to edit the document, will be integrating stakeholder opinions into the plan and could provide a memo outlining the integration of those comments. Ms. Dunn expressed concern about the issue of standards versus guidelines, and wondered how that would be captured in the plan. Mr. Wray responded that would be part of the ongoing overall assessment and consolidation of input from boards and commissions.

#### Commission Deliberation

***Ms. Gensmer moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission recommend to City Council adoption of the Old Town Neighborhoods Plan, finding that it promotes the retention and enhancement of the defining neighborhood character. Mr. Lingle seconded. The motion passed 9-0.***

### 5. OLD TOWN NEIGHBORHOODS DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of this item is to provide feedback and a recommendation to City Council regarding the potential adoption of new Old Town Neighborhoods Design Guidelines.

#### Staff Report

Meaghan Overton, City Planner, gave a presentation. She walked through the key elements of the plan, including how the document is organized, architectural styles, neighborhood character areas, and historic preservation aspects, as well as building and site design information relating to articulation and additions.

She discussed various ways the guidelines could be used, including voluntary, advisory and mandatory. She talked about plans for promoting the design guidelines within the community.

#### Commission Questions and Discussion

Mr. Frick suggested making everything mandatory instead of voluntary.

Ms. Wallace recalled a previous discussion about whether including examples of what not to do was the best approach, and wondered why those negative examples were ultimately included. Ms. Overton explained that while she was not part of those earlier discussions or the decision to include the examples, she believed there was value in clarifying what was compatible and what was not.

Acting Chair Ernest talked about the value of the character maps from a historic perspective.

Mr. Frick said the document as a whole was well done.

Ms. Dunn liked the drawings that clearly illustrated various design elements, noting that those would help people understand what they were and what they were called. She also appreciated the ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of Ordinance 33 on the Eastside/Westside study.

Ms. Dunn expressed frustration with homeowners who had built homes or additions in the area that were out of context and did not fit with the surrounding character, and shared her unease that these are only voluntary guidelines. Ms. Dunn also voiced her concern about solar access for the neighbors of such altered properties. She added that she has observed a high level of turnover in these properties, and commented that this is disruptive to the neighborhoods. She wondered how adherence to the guidelines could be more strongly encouraged, or whether they could be made standards rather than guidelines.

Acting Chair Ernest noted that the guidelines are a moving target, pointing out that in a discussion in 2012 neighbors had emphasized a value preference for modest homes and socio-economic diversity. He added that even once these guidelines are in place, the controversy and discussion will continue. He expressed his hope that concerned neighbors will put forward a plan for a historic district to better protect their neighborhood.

Mr. Lingle stated that he prefers these remain as guidelines, as he would not be able to support them if they were more stringent or mandatory. He cited flat roofs as an example, noting that the document nearly condemns them, yet there are many historic homes with flat roofs in the area. He suggested that guidelines should be taken into consideration along with looking at the styles of other homes in the neighborhood.

Mr. Hogestad suggested that if the Design Assistance program were utilized more often, it may help alleviate some of the concerns about compatibility.

Mr. Wray shared that in 2013 staff was directed by Council to move forward with updating the design guidelines as a voluntary document. At the same time, Council also supported the new design standards. Staff is continuing to monitor construction since that time in relation to those standards, and have recognized them in the Old Town Neighborhoods Plan. Staff did not feel it was necessary to revisit the standards at this time, but depending on development in the next few years, they are prepared to do so. Ms. Dunn said she is eager to see the results after the current round of construction is completed.

Ms. Dunn responded to Mr. Lingle's comments, saying that his point about flat roofs was a valid one, and that context is the most important point. Ideally, people would take the time to look at the surrounding neighborhood, use the guidelines, and build something that fits. Making these mandatory can thwart creativity, and following the guidelines exactly would not produce the desired outcome.

Ms. Dunn would like to encourage people to use design assistance. The size of some homes and additions that tower over smaller homes is of most concern to her, both in terms of property values, and the feel of their homes and neighborhood. She mentioned the changes to North Whitcomb as an example where people being "moved out of their neighborhoods without ever packing". She doesn't feel like the guidelines address that concern, but is not sure what the answer is. She wished people would take the time to look at the design of the neighboring homes and really consider what fits, which Mr. Frick referred to as an "architectural time out".

Acting Chair Ernest talked about the tremendous growth Fort Collins is experiencing, as well as changing ideas about home sizes, and the challenges those present.

#### Commission Deliberation

***Ms. Wallace moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission recommend to City Council adoption of the Old Town Neighborhoods Design Guidelines, finding that the guidelines support the goals of the Old Town Neighborhoods Plan and promote retention and enhancement of the defining neighborhood character. Ms. Gensmer seconded.***

Ms. Dunn will vote yes, but hopes good things will happen as we continue to monitor and evaluate. Once the guidelines are adopted and promoted, she is hopeful for positive outcomes.

Mr. Lingle said with regard to the Design Assistance Program, there are those who purchase a house simply for its Old Town or Downtown location, and have no interest in the home itself or the character of the neighborhood. We can't control who purchases the properties, or what their motives are, even with guidelines. Ms. Dunn said we need to find a way to mitigate the damage done to the neighborhood in those situations.

***The motion passed 9:0.***

## 6. REVISIONS TO LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION BYLAWS

### Staff Report

Ms. McWilliams explained that the proposed change to the bylaws is to change the meeting dates.

### Public Input

None

### Commission Deliberation

***Ms. Dunn moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission accept the proposed changes to the bylaws. Mr. Frick seconded. The motion passed 9:0.***

## ● OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Dunn mentioned the discussion at "Re: Denver" that encouraged reuse as opposed to demolition as a sustainable option that makes the City greener and helps to reach our carbon emissions goals. She suggested that advocating for reuse would go a long way toward resolving the guidelines versus standards concern.

Mr. Yatabe addressed the Commission regarding work session procedures. He noted that he intends to attend future work sessions, particularly for those items that are quasi-judicial or legislative in nature. He went on to explain that the purpose of the work session, as regards quasi-judicial matters, is strictly informational for the Commission. He noted that neither applicants nor the public would have an opportunity to present information or comment at work sessions, but information would only be presented by staff. The Commission can ask procedural questions or request additional information, but should reserve any discussion, opinions or interaction about the information for the regular meetings where the public is more likely to attend. For legislative matters, the work session can be a more open forum, but generally work sessions should be viewed as informational for the Commission.

Mr. Yatabe stated that if Members miss work sessions, the recording and information presented at the work session should be reviewed as part of normal meeting preparation. Mr. Yatabe also clarified that conflicts of interest should be handled in the same way for work sessions as they are for regular meetings, and should be disclosed at both meetings. The same is true for general disclosures that are not considered conflicts and do not require recusal.

Acting Chair Ernest asked for clarification on what items are considered legislative matters. Mr. Yatabe explained that generally these are items such as adoption of plans and policies, code changes, etc. that can be more broadly applied, rather than requests related to a particular property or development.

Mr. Yatabe stated that this new meeting structure is intended to model the Planning and Zoning Board, to preview what is to come at the meeting, and ensure the information provided is complete.

Ms. Dunn asked about interacting with the Applicant for a Conceptual Review at a work session. Mr. Yatabe explained that those would be conducted as preliminary reviews at regular meetings. Ms. Bzdek added that the work session provides an opportunity for the Applicant to fill any gaps in information prior to the meeting, which would potentially allow the Commission to arrive at its decision more quickly at the meeting, rather than the Applicant having to appear at a subsequent meeting. Ms. McWilliams pointed out that Applicants are not required to attend the work session, and often do not, as staff can pass along to them any requests arising from the work session. Ms. Bzdek also noted that if the Commission finds at the meeting that the project is not ready for a final decision, the Applicants can come to a subsequent meeting.

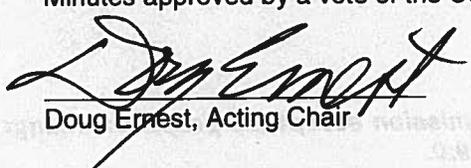
#### ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Ernest adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Gretchen Schiager.*

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Minutes approved by a vote of the Commission on Feb 15, 2017

  
Doug Ernest, Acting Chair



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ABSENT: None  
STAFF: McWilliams, Bzdek, Bumgarner, Yatabe, Schiager, Gloss, Wray, Overton

- **AGENDA REVIEW**

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- **STAFF REPORTS**

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Ms. McWilliams explained that the proposed change to the bylaws is to change the meeting dates.

### Public Input

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### Commission Deliberation

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Mr. Yatabe stated that this new meeting structure is intended to model the Planning and Zoning Board, to preview what is to come at the meeting, and ensure the information provided is complete.

Ms. Dunn asked about interacting with the Applicant for a Conceptual Review at a work session. Mr. Yatabe explained that those would be conducted as preliminary reviews at regular meetings. Ms. Bzdek added that the work session provides an opportunity for the Applicant to fill any gaps in information prior to the meeting, which would potentially allow the Commission to arrive at its decision more quickly at the meeting, rather than the Applicant having to appear at a subsequent meeting. Ms. McWilliams pointed out that Applicants are not required to attend the work session, and often do not, as staff can pass along to them any requests arising from the work session. Ms. Bzdek also noted that if the Commission finds at the meeting that the project is not ready for a final decision, the Applicants can come to a subsequent meeting.

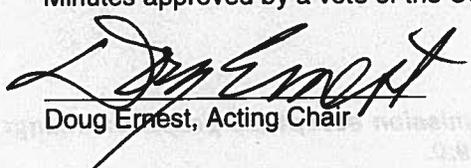
#### ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair Ernest adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Gretchen Schiager.*

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Minutes approved by a vote of the Commission on Feb 15, 2017

  
Doug Ernest, Acting Chair