



Meg Dunn, Chair  
Per Hogestad, Vice Chair  
Doug Ernest  
Bud Frick  
Kristin Gensmer  
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 August 16, 2017 Minutes

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Dunn called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

- **ROLL CALL**

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

- **AGENDA REVIEW**

No changes to 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 JULY 19, 2017 REGULAR MEETING.

The purpose of this item is to approve the minutes from the July 19, 2017 regular meeting of the Landmark Preservation Commission.

2. ADOPTION OF THE LPC 2018 WORK PLAN

The purpose of this item is to adopt the LPC 2018 work plan.

***Mr. Ernest moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission approve the Consent Agenda of the August 16, 2017 regular meeting as presented. Mr. Frick seconded. The motion passed 9-0.***

● **CONSENT CALENDAR FOLLOW-UP**

Chair Dunn said she was excited about the work plan, which was substantial, yet doable.

● **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

3. LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF MCCARTY/SHEELY/DREHER PROPERTY 1300 W MOUNTAIN AVENUE

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The purpose of this item is to consider the application for landmark designation for the McCarty/Sheely/Dreher Property, located at 1300 West Mountain Avenue

**APPLICANT:** Anthony and Heather McNeill, Owners

Mr. Ernest disclosed that he had researched this home as part of the Historic Homes Tour in 2015, and met with the owners, but he did not feel that presented any conflict.

Staff Report

Ms. McWilliams presented the staff report. She reviewed the significance and integrity of the property, displayed historic and current photos of the property, and outlined the staff findings.

Applicant Presentation

None

Public Input

None

Commission Questions and Discussion

Mr. Ernest commented on the significance under Standard B, stating that this property was unusual for having so many connections to our local history.

Mr. Lingle said the property had excellent exterior integrity, and he appreciated that all of the previous owners had maintained the architectural details. He asked whether the interior had been modified. The owner, Mr. McNeill, stated that the interior had been significantly modified, but noted that the wood floors and two-panel doors and trim were still intact.

Mr. Hogestad also complimented the architecture, masonry work and other details that had remained intact. He commented on the outdoor grill, and asked whether the stones on top of the two end pieces were original, and Mr. McNeil stated they were.

Mr. McNeil added that they were moving and wanted to protect this home before it sold.

Ms. Gensmer stated that the configuration of the outbuildings were representative of the way properties were used spatially at that time.

Commission Deliberation

***Mr. Ernest moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending to City Council the designation of the McCarty/Sheely/Dreher Property, located at 1300 West Mountain Avenue, as a Fort Collins Landmark based upon the provisions of Municipal Code Chapter 14, and the Findings of Fact contained in the staff report.***

***Ms. Gensmer seconded. The motion passed 9-0.***

#### 4. 227 WOOD STREET (THE HARDEN HOUSE) - CONCEPTUAL DESIGN REVIEW

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** This is a request for conceptual design review of The Harden House at 227 Wood Street, designated as a Fort Collins landmark in 1999. The proposed work includes removal of a double hung window on the north elevation, demolition of an existing rear porch (undated, historic), addition on the northwest corner of the residence that spans the rear elevation, addition of a skylight, and addition of a deck. The applicants have presented two design options for conceptual review.

**APPLICANT:** Gordon Winner, Owner  
Heidi Shuff, Architect

Mr. Lingle disclosed that the architect on this project is married to one of his business partners, but he doesn't feel that creates a conflict for him.

##### Staff Report

Ms. Bumgarner presented the staff report. She reviewed the process and role of the Commission, the relevant code sections, the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the background and history of the home. She displayed historic and current photos of the property. She addressed the questions the Commission raised at the work session.

##### Applicant Presentation

Mr. Winner began the presentation by explaining that their growing family needs more space. He stated that the back porch needed work, and they would like to make better use of the space for family. He added that they plan to grow in phases, first creating more connectivity between the kitchen and the backyard, and in a few years, adding a bedroom in the basement and a loft upstairs.

Ms. Shuff discussed the details of the plan. She said the existing basement is primarily crawl space, with only about 1/3 as a full basement that is currently in use as a mechanical room. She reviewed the drawings for the proposal and pointed out key features. She noted that the biggest design constraints are preservation of the tree, providing better connections between the indoor and outdoor space, providing a stairway for basement access and working around a neighbor's garage near the property line, and she detailed how the design addresses these constraints. She also explained how the design meets the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

##### Public Input

None

##### Commission Questions and Discussion

Mr. Frick noted that the window heights on the north elevation appear to match the existing window head height. Ms. Shuff confirmed that the intent is to match the height on both the north and south elevations. Mr. Frick commented that the horizontal sliding windows on the east and west elevations were out of keeping with a house of that era. He asked if they could be replaced with two square windows. The Applicants said they could do that.

Mr. Lingle commented that the head height of the window on east elevation seemed contradictory to the plan for cabinetry on that wall. Ms. Shuff said the intent is to have the windows up high with coat hooks and a shelf underneath.

Mr. Frick asked whether there would be stairs at the new door on the north elevation. Mr. Winner said there would probably be a small stoop on the north side. He added that the back deck would not come around and connect with that.

Mr. Frick asked about the style of the windows in the loft area on the west elevation, and suggested it would be more in keeping with the era if taller, narrower, double-hung windows were used. Ms. Shuff explained the functional need for an egress window. She said the intent was not to replicate the existing home but to tie in with the proportions, massing and scale.

Ms. Shuff asked Mr. Frick how his comments relate to the standards, to which he replied that it was about the cohesive look of the house. Ms. Shuff pointed out that was a subjective argument. She said they would be happy to make modifications that would make the design more in keeping with

existing historic home, and they want to address any issues that do not meet the standards. Mr. Frick agreed that his comments were subjective, and his comments on the windows were about the overall look of the addition and the existing house.

Mr. Frick asked if the Applicant had spoken to an arborist about the tree. Mr. Winner said he had. Ms. Shuff noted that they have tried to minimize the footprint of the addition to try to facilitate the life of the tree.

Ms. Simpson also expressed concern about allowing the tree to grow. Mr. Winner said they envisioned the deck encircling the tree with enough room to allow for growth. He was uncertain of the species of the tree, but said it was the only mature tree they have and they enjoy the shade it provides. Ms. Simpson and Mr. Lingle discussed the critical root zone of the tree.

Chair Dunn said she was struggling with decision not to use the basement space under the house. She pointed out that the rehabilitation guidelines emphasize that new exterior additions should only be considered if the new use cannot be accommodated by utilizing non-character defining interior spaces, such as the basement, in this case. She said she would like to better understand why they would not dig out a full basement under the existing house. Mr. Winner said the existing foundation is not 7' deep except in the back of the house. He also said that finding a location within the existing house to add a stairway seemed extremely challenging. He also expressed concern about altering the foundation.

Ms. Shuff said the square footage gained would likely not offset the loss of a bedroom on the first floor to accommodate the footprint of a stair. She also expressed concern about undermining the foundation, and questioned whether an egress window would be feasible. She said it had been discussed at initial meetings, but it would be a lot of effort for little return and minimal natural light. Chair Dunn said she knew others in Old Town who had done it, and asked to hear from the architects on the Commission. Mr. Hogestad mentioned a house on Whedbee with the same situation, where they excavated the entire basement, reinforced the foundation and created a walkout with a sunken garden that provided a lot of natural light without injuring the historic house. He said Staff knows about it, there is a concept design for it, and he suggested they talk to those owners.

Chair Dunn said at 800 W. Mountain a full basement had been dug out, and the larger egress windows brought in a lot of light. She also mentioned there was another one in the 100 block of North Grant where they had added a full basement, plus a small addition in the back. She suggested in this case, the stairs could be in a small addition in the back. Mr. Hogestad added they would be doubling the floor space with a basement, so there should be room for a stair without an addition. Ms. Shuff said the usable space and the quality of the space would be compromised more than it would be worth. Mr. Hogestad emphasized that this is a designated house, and even though the design is very good and sensitive, it would be important to look for solutions other than adding an addition. He said there are other ways to realize the space.

Chair Dunn pointed out that an addition on a designated home should be the last resort, only after it can be determined that the new needs cannot be met without altering the exterior.

Mr. Lingle said his home had the same configuration, but was wider, and before doing his addition, he had explored excavating the basement. He determined that it was cost prohibitive and would not have provided quality space. He said it poses a significant hardship to force someone into a solution that is clearly inferior. He added that the design is more important than whether or not to add an addition. He pointed out how the Option 2 addition does meet the standards. He doesn't see a practical way for the Applicant to meet their programmatic needs in a dug out basement.

Mr. Lingle and Mr. Hogestad discussed the size difference between the Whedbee house with the dug out basement and this one. Mr. Hogestad wants the Applicant to prove the basement isn't feasible.

Ms. Shuff said they considered the basement, but it would not be big enough to provide usable space and would not give the desired outcome.

Chair Dunn said the Commission needs to see that other alternatives had been explored, and understand why they were not feasible, before they can be comfortable with an addition.

Chair Dunn, Mr. Hogestad and Ms. Shuff discussed the impact of utilizing the attic space for storage and whether that added to the profile of the addition. Mr. Hogestad said pushing straight out to the

back is preferable. He added that he doesn't feel they've exhausted the basement option, and suggested they talk to people who have done it.

Mr. Lingle disagreed with Chair Dunn and Mr. Hogestad. He asked whether proceeding with this design would cause the house to lose its designation. Chair Dunn said that was a possibility.

Mr. Ernest said he was pleased to hear the Applicant's preferred option was the revised option. He thinks the revised option meets the standards better than the original version. He said the standards do allow for an addition on the rear of a historic structure. He thought the standards, taken as a whole, provide leeway for the addition to occur. He thought perhaps a few additional data points from the Applicant that would help rule out the basement option would be helpful.

Mr. Frick commented that the Commission has approved a lot of additions to historic homes. He thought this addition was fine and minimal, though it could use some tweaking in regards to the double-hung windows. He also thought a basement may be possible, and would like to see evidence to rule it out. But generally, he believes the addition meets the criteria.

Ms. Gensmer agreed with Mr. Ernest, Mr. Lingle and Mr. Frick.

Ms. Zink commented that the obstacles involved in digging deeper than the existing foundation are substantial. She expressed concerns that in order to accommodate window wells that would let in enjoyable light and allow for egress, the foundation would have to be substantially altered, which would have a serious impact on the original historic fabric. She said the altered foundation wouldn't have much of a footing which would be destabilizing, and on a masonry building, opens up the risk of vertical cracks that could impact entire structure.

Ms. Wallace said there have been a lot of valid points. She felt the proposed addition met the standards, but would like to see more information about the possibility of a basement. She would also like to see additional renderings for the second option. She also questioned whether the Commission would designate the home if it came to them with the current plan. Ms. Shuff asked what additional renderings she would like, and Ms. Wallace said she would like to see different angles and obliques with the other option removed.

Ms. Simpson said she would have to think about Ms. Wallace's question about designation. She then asked whether the mudroom and restroom could be moved to the back of house where it would be less visible. Mr. Winner said the stairs and the tree are driving that decision. Ms. Shuff said if they place the mudroom and restroom south of the tree, it cuts off the visual connection between the kitchen and the backyard, and went on to explain other considerations involved in that placement.

Chair Dunn said the possibility of the basement must be exhausted before looking at the addition.

Mr. Lingle pointed out that there are ten standards and the rest are guidelines. He said he wants to clarify what is required and what is desired, and make sure the standards are being applied in a consistent and fair way. Mr. Lingle agreed with Mr. Frick that the Commission has approved many additions on designated buildings in the past, and he doesn't recall ever mandating that others first fully explore putting all of a new program in the basement.

Chair Dunn agreed that it was important to be consistent and fair, but said it was also important to revisit the guidelines on occasion. Mr. Ernest pointed out that the guidelines talk about negatively impacting the home, and that can be a subjective interpretation.

Chair Dunn mentioned that the recent Loomis Addition Survey showed that the State doesn't agree with some of the additions that have been approved. Ms. McWilliams said the guidelines, which are intended to help interpret the standards, were also used by History Colorado in their review of the Loomis Addition Survey results, and they hadn't agreed that certain designated properties contributed to the proposed district. She also said she couldn't ever recall anything more than a one-story addition on a one-story designated house, but she could research that to be sure. However, the State has said the Loomis area may not qualify as a district, because past Commissions have allowed large additions.

Chair Dunn said she would like the Applicant to explore moving the proposed north addition to the west, where there would still be a connection with the outdoors, or provide details on why that couldn't work. Ms. Shuff asked for clarification on how that related to the standards, and Chair Dunn referred to page 157 of the standards. Mr. Frick suggested that the addition could stay on the north,

but could be moved back to be in line with the house, so that the full length of the north elevation of the existing house would be visible, and keep the roof form the same. Chair Dunn said that would avoid covering that part of the existing historic house, which more closely conforms to the guidelines.

Mr. Hogestad added that it is a simple house, and that the north elevation is a key elevation that helps to define the house. He suggested that the tree may be the biggest obstacle, and they may want to consider removing the tree and replacing it in a more desirable spot.

Ms. Shuff requested clear direction with regard to the various ideas discussed. Mr. Hogestad would like them to have conversations with others who have excavated a basement to establish what is feasible. Mr. Frick suggested talking to an engineer. Mr. Winner is interested in seeing the other basement examples that have been mentioned. Ms. Shuff brought up the issue of egress windows. Mr. Hogestad again suggested they look at the Whedbee home.

Ms. Wallace asked for additional photos of the foundation and north elevation.

Ms. Shuff asked for more feedback about the addition option, assuming they are able to make a case that the basement option was not feasible. Specifically, she asked whether the portion of the north elevation that would be covered by the addition was critical. Mr. Frick said maintaining that side is more critical than the back elevation. He said in addition to looking at the foundation issue with regard to using the basement space, they should also look at removing the tree.

Ms. Zink said it would be helpful to have more definitive information about the tree, which is driving the design.

Mr. Hogestad commented that they should take another look at the two-story loft space, which is a big addition and changes the roofline considerably. He also believes the north view is easy to see from the street, and would like to see more photos from the street. He said that is a significant elevation, where the rear probably isn't. He added that the program might be too big for a designated house.

Chair Dunn agreed with Ms. Zink that the tree is driving the design, and could possibly be removed.

Ms. Shuff said she will look at the tree and the basement to determine their constraints, and go from there.

- **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Dunn asked if Staff could provide more information about the Loomis addition at the next work session. Ms. McWilliams agreed.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Dunn adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Gretchen Schiager.*

Minutes approved by a vote of the Commission on 20 Sept 2017

  
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Meg Dunn, Chair