



Meg Dunn, Chair
Alexandra Wallace, Co-Vice Chair
Michael Bello
Mollie Bredehoft
Kurt Knierim
Elizabeth Michell
Kevin Murray
Anne Nelsen
Jim Rose

Location:
This meeting was held
remotely via Zoom

Regular Meeting October 21, 2020 Minutes

- **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Dunn called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

*[**Secretary's Note: Due to the COVID-19 crisis and state and local orders to remain safer at home and not gather, all Commission members, staff, and citizens attended the meeting remotely, via video conference.]*

- **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Bello, Bredehoft, Dunn, Knierim, Michell, Murray, Nelsen, Wallace, Rose
ABSENT: None
STAFF: McWilliams, Bzdek, Bertolini, Yatabe, Schiager

- **AGENDA REVIEW**

No changes to the posted agenda.

- **CONSENT AGENDA REVIEW**

No items were pulled from consent.

- **STAFF REPORTS**

None.

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

None.

- **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

The purpose of this item is to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2020 regular meeting of the Landmark Preservation Commission.

Mr. Rose moved that the Landmark Preservation Commission approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Mr. Murray seconded. The motion passed 9-0.

- **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

2. STAFF DESIGN REVIEW DECISIONS ON DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

The Commission did not request a staff presentation, nor were there any questions or comments.

3. TENNEY COURT NORTH AND WEST OAK STREET ALLEYS CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

DESCRIPTION: The applicant is seeking conceptual review comments from the Landmark Preservation Commission for improvements to two alleys: Tenney Court North and West Oak Street.

APPLICANT: Downtown Development Authority
City of Fort Collins

Staff Report

Ms. Bzdek presented the staff report. She described the Downtown Development Authority's alley improvement project, summarized the design elements, and clarified the location. She stated construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2021 and noted these particular alleys are outside any designated landmark area, although they do have some proximity to some historic properties.

[Secretary's Note: Ms. Bredehoft lost connection at this time and the Commission took a short break until she could reconnect. Upon reconvening, a roll call was taken to confirm all were present.]

Ms. Bzdek reviewed the role of the Commission and the applicable Code sections.

Applicant Presentation

Todd Dangerfield, Downtown Development Authority, discussed the alley improvement program stating the remaining ten alleys will be complete by 2029. For these two alleys, the design is at 60% completion. He discussed dumpster consolidation and detailed the coordination efforts with the City Utilities for infrastructure projects that may need to be done simultaneously.

Kara Scohy, Norris Design, discussed the proposed design elements beginning with the Tenney Court North Alley. She discussed the proposed gateways, entrances, lighting, dumpster enclosures, seating, and plantings. She discussed the inclusion of the Poudre River and Canyon in the design.

Ms. Scohy discussed the highlights of the West Oak Street Alley design noting a great deal of the inspiration came from the history of the Armstrong Hotel and the theme is art deco. She discussed the lighting, planter pots, and seating.

Mr. Dangerfield discussed plans for protecting historic buildings stating festoon lighting will be the only items connected to historic buildings for these two projects. He noted a plan of protection for all buildings is in place. He stated the alleys will be under simultaneous construction with a start date of April 2021.

Public Input

None.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Mr. Murray commended on the design around the parking area. He expressed some concern about truck traffic in the Oak Street Alley. Ms. Scohy replied that has been taken into account with the design.

Mr. Bello asked about eliminating a lane at the alley entrance on Laporte. Ms. Scohy replied a lane is not being eliminated.

Mr. Knierim asked if there would be any signage regarding the research done for the projects. Ms. Scohy replied that is being considered. Mr. Dangerfield replied it could be valuable to have some type of interpretive signage, possibly near the garage stair tower.

Ms. Wallace commended efforts to activate the alleys and the research done to incorporate historical components. She asked if there will be any design elements that acknowledge the post office and its period of construction. Ms. Scohy replied the history of the Armstrong ended up being the draw in terms of inspiration. Mr. Dangerfield also noted the Armstrong is directly adjacent to the alley.

Chair Dunn asked what year the Post Office was built. Ms. Bzdek replied it was built in 1911.

Chair Dunn commended the planters that help to slow bike traffic behind Namaste. She noted that could be helpful for the rear entrance to Ace Hardware as well. Mr. Dangerfield replied Ace Hardware had expressed similar concerns and has been an enthusiastic partner. He stated he will return at the first of the year with more information on the detailed design.

Mr. Murray recused himself from the next item due to a conflict of interest.

4. 126 S. WHITCOMB ST: APPEAL OF STAFF DECISION ON DESIGN REVIEW

DESCRIPTION:	This item is to consider the appeal of a staff design review decision for 126 S. Whitcomb Street. The applicant is proposing demolition of the historic 1932 garage and replacement with a new 1.5 story garage on its location. Staff denied the request on August 25, 2020, and the owner filed an appeal on August 26, 2020. Staff decisions may be appealed to the Landmark Preservation Commission.
APPLICANT:	Tara Gaffney (Property Owner)

Chair Dunn reminded everyone that new evidence is allowed for this item as the Commission will be making a new determination.

Staff Report

Mr. Bertolini presented the staff report. He stated this is an appeal of a staff decision, however it is being heard in a de novo fashion. He stated the Commission will be determining whether the garage on this property is a historic feature. He provided photos of the property and discussed its location. He discussed the undergrounding of Arthur's Ditch and resulting change to the shape of this lot noting the only alley access to this property is the four-foot pedestrian right-of-way.

Mr. Bertolini reviewed the role of the Commission, relevant codes, and standards of rehabilitation. He stated the Commission needs to confirm whether the garage is a contributing feature, and based on the answer to that question, whether the proposed project meet standards for rehabilitation.

Mr. Bertolini reviewed the timeline of events with this property over the course of this year and stated this applicant requested to demolish the existing one-car garage and replace it with a new structure, which was denied by staff.

Mr. Bertolini provided background on the property, noting it is a contributing property to the Whitcomb Street Historic District. He stated the house was constructed in 1904 and the garage in 1932 and he reviewed changes made to the property over time.

Mr. Bertolini showed photos and discussed the existing conditions of the property and garage. He outlined the staff findings related to the ten rehabilitation standards and stated staff ultimately determined the 1932 garage is a contributing resource to the Whitcomb Street Historic District in that it represents the addition of the automobile to most middle-class households at that time. The design assistance report was used to conclude that repair is possible in this case and demolition of the contributing resource would not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation based on the analysis. Mr. Bertolini stated the owner filed an appeal of that decision and Council subsequently approved it for a remote hearing before the Commission.

Mr. Bertolini provided responses to questions raised at the work session specifically noting the garage doors are not historic and the location of Arthur's Ditch does present some constraints on the site and prohibits a more typical response to this sort of issue which would allow for the construction of a new additional building.

Applicant Presentation

Tara Gaffney, property owner, explained the circumstances around her need to replace the garage with a secure and safe structure that will house a car. She stated she was unaware of the design assistance dollars received by the previous owners and was unaware of the presence of the house in the Whitcomb Street Historic District when she purchased it. She stated she was provided plans for an addition to the home but opted to not pursue that route due to expense.

Ms. Gaffney discussed the historic characteristics of the home and stated the location of the existing garage is preventing them from building off the alley as there is no alley access. Additionally, the ditch and required setbacks provide further difficulties. She stated the garage contains no historically defining characteristics in her opinion, particularly when compared to the house. She stated the new garage design will mimic the design of the house as much as possible.

Public Input

None.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Ms. Nelsen asked how many garages like this exist in the historic district. Mr. Bertolini replied it is a fairly common modification to find in the area.

Ms. Nelsen asked if this garage is an especially good example particularly given the roof and doors have been modified. Mr. Bertolini replied it is fairly typical but in terms of integrity, the loss of the doors is significant. He stated the tin roof is likely original, or at least historic, as is the siding; however, there would normally be wood panel doors.

Ms. Nelsen asked about the width of door. Ms. Gaffney replied it is about ten feet wide by nine feet tall and will not fit a modern large car.

Ms. Nelsen asked about the setback measurements. Mr. Bertolini identified the buildable space on the lot.

Ms. Nelsen asked about a zoning decision in August. Mr. Bertolini replied plans were presented to the Zoning Department and there were some issues with the overall height of the building in relation to the zone district and accessory structures.

Ms. Nelsen asked if an addition could be made to the side of the structure. Mr. Bertolini replied the main limitation is the 600 square foot size for accessory structures.

Ms. Nelsen asked Ms. Gaffney if she has considered adding on to the existing garage. Ms. Gaffney replied that would present some design and access challenges and was not really considered. She also noted there is a patio between the house and garage.

Mr. Rose questioned how this garage is considered to be a contributing resource given it is only mentioned in one sentence in the historic district determination. He stated the garage does not represent the same level of care and construction as that of the house and is from a different era. Mr. Bertolini replied staff's decision was related to the context of the historic district and its development over time.

Ms. McWilliams noted she was the staff member who processed this historic district and stated staff looked at the significance of the district under more than just architecture. Staff also considered the broad patterns of development and people connected with it; therefore, a number of secondary buildings qualify under not just architecture but for broad patterns of development.

Chair Dunn explained the Commission is to examine this based on the Code, not the reasons for the proposal. She noted this is the only residential local historic district in Fort Collins and it is critically important to safeguard it. She stated garages often do not match houses in style for this area because cars did not come until after houses were built which is part of the pattern of development. She stated that feeds into the significance of the district. She stated the garage is simple in design and is an example of the upper middle-class neighborhood.

Mr. Bello agreed with Mr. Rose that the materials and character do not necessarily fit with the home. He questioned whether this garage is important to the neighborhood in terms of defining character and one could argue the proposal is for a structure that represents the need for the values of today and is contrary to the original architecture, but is consistent with the historical need to provide a garage.

Mr. Knierim noted the period of significance is through 1940 and the garage was built during that time; however, building a new garage still fits with the idea of adding a garage to the property.

Ms. Nelsen asked if the period of significance is for the house or the district as a whole. Mr. Bertolini replied the period of significance is in the district nomination and applies to the district.

Ms. Michell commented on the utilitarian nature of the garage that matches the time in which it was built. She stated adding on to the garage or replacing it would create a new pattern of development.

Ms. Wallace asked how many other homes in the district have garages. Mr. Bertolini replied most if not all the contributing properties have a garage. The Commission looked at the district on Google satellite view and discussed which properties have garages.

Chair Dunn commented on the subject garage being different than others in the district. She encouraged the Commission to consider the period of significance noting this garage was built during that period thereby making it historic if it is a contributing feature.

Ms. Nelsen asked about the protocol for purchasing homes in historic districts. Mr. Bertolini replied the landmark designation is recorded and should be part of the title. He stated both the owner and realtor should be bringing that to the attention of a buyer.

Ms. Nelsen stated it was unfortunate Ms. Gaffney was not aware of the designation. Ms. Gaffney replied the knowledge probably would not have changed their minds as they love the home and its location.

Chair Dunn noted the Commission must also consider whether the project meets the standards. She noted the use of the property would remain the same, the house would not be altered, the spatial relationship would be maintained, and the garage design maintains simplicity.

Ms. McWilliams noted City Council has determined the garage to be eligible as a contributing structure; therefore, the Commission must determine whether the district would be harmed by the loss of this element and whether the replacement plan meets standards.

Ms. Bredehoft mentioned the spatial relationship of the existing and proposed garage structures noting the view from the street will change with the proposal.

Ms. Wallace commented on the historic garage additions noting they are utilitarian and less significant than the home. She stated the design of the proposed garage may be too similar to that of the house and could water down the integrity of the property and the district.

Ms. Nelsen agreed the proposed garage mimics the house in a way that may provide a false sense of history.

Chair Dunn stated a different sense of history would exist if people were to mistake the new garage as having been built at the same time and in the same style as the home.

Mr. Bello noted there are other new garages in the district. Chair Dunn replied the home just to the north of this is a new house and garage and the property further north also has a new garage. She stated the historic district was made with a preponderance of historic buildings and those do not contribute.

Ms. Nelsen suggested the garage doors could be replaced with something more secure as the doors are not historic. She stated it seems the structural repairs are fairly straightforward.

Chair Dunn suggested changing the door could accommodate a larger vehicle and stated the Commission could recommend allowing a greater floor area addition to the rear of the garage.

Mr. Bello suggested the Commission consider a motion on significance.

Chair Dunn clarified a motion related to significance should consider whether the garage is a character-defining feature of the district.

[Secretary's Note: The Commission took a break from 8:14 to 8:37 for Staff to obtain procedural advice from Mr. Yatabe. Upon reconvening, a roll call was taken to confirm all were present.]

Mr. Yatabe explained some procedural considerations stating the Commission should make the determination as to whether this garage is contributing to the district.

Mr. Bello discussed the reasons the garage may not be a contributing structure.

Mr. Rose stated the entire district nomination goes into great length about the importance of the houses and their style and there is very little mention of other structures; therefore, he stated he has difficulty finding the garage to be contributing solely by the virtue of the implication it has some importance regarding evolution and development of the neighborhood.

Mr. Bello moved that the garage does not contribute to the significance of the property because of the materials and lack of craftsmanship associated with the structure, and therefore is not a contributing factor to the historic character that the main house itself brings to the district.

Mr. Rose seconded.

Ms. Nelsen stated she has difficulty supporting the motion due to its verbiage. She questioned whether Mr. Bello is implying the structure is not valuable because it is not an example of good craftsmanship or that it has lost enough integrity that it is not valuable. Mr. Bello replied the garage doors are not original and the roof may not be original; therefore, the structure as a whole may not contribute to the integrity of the neighborhood.

Mr. Rose stated his concerns are not necessarily with integrity but stated the garage does not rise to the level of being significant. However, he also stated the new proposal is not in accordance with the rehabilitation standards as it is not differentiated substantially from the historic home.

Mr. Bello agreed the proposed garage may not meet the criteria.

Ms. Bredehoft stated she does not have an issue with the integrity; however, she is struggling with significance. She stated these garages do add to the district; however, she questioned whether they are mentioned as being significant in the district nomination.

Ms. Wallace noted each of the garages are different which fits in with the vernacular design.

Ms. Bredehoft clarified it is not the relationship between the garage and the house that is important, but rather the relationship between the garages and the time period in the district.

Chair Dunn commented on the unity of the district and questioned whether the removal of the garage will maintain that unity or will result in the loss of something of value that is contributing to the district.

Mr. Yatabe questioned whether any additional information would aid in the decision and noted there would be an opportunity to continue the item to allow staff to provide that information.

Mr. Rose expressed support for continuing the item as he is not completely comfortable with the motion and has significant concerns about proceeding without more information. He stated he would like to have more background in terms of the context of the neighborhood and the configuration of the district nomination.

Ms. Bredehoff agreed.

Chair Dunn commented on the research that should be included in a good nomination form and stated this form was not quite to that level of specificity.

Mr. Bello withdrew his motion. Mr. Rose withdrew his second.

Mr. Bello stated he would like staff to return with information regarding how the garage was included in the makeup of the district and whether it was mentioned or included as being contributing to the historic nature of the district.

Ms. McWilliams stated staff could do a literature search around the creation of the district or hire an outside consultant to reevaluate the garages and accessory structures and their levels of contributing to the district.

Chair Dunn stated she would prefer an outside consultant. Ms. Michell, Mr. Rose, Ms. Nelsen, and Mr. Knierim agreed.

Mr. Bello moved to continue the consideration of this item to the December meeting. Ms. Nelsen seconded. Motion passed 8-0.

Mr. Murray returned to the meeting.

5. 237 & 243 JEFFERSON STREET – CONCEPTUAL DESIGN REVIEW

DESCRIPTION: The applicant is seeking conceptual review comments from the Landmark Preservation Commission for proposed additions to the two buildings at 237 & 243 Jefferson Street in the Old Town Historic District.

APPLICANT: Sunil Cherian (owner); Matt Rankin (architect)

Staff Report

Ms. McWilliams presented the staff report stating this is a conceptual review and the applicant is seeking comments from the Commission regarding proposed additions to two buildings at 237 and 243 Jefferson Street. She discussed the property location and discussed the role of the Commission in a conceptual review. She stated the two sets of standards that guide this project are the Old Town District Design Standards and the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. She discussed the history of the property and detailed its historic architectural features.

Applicant Presentation

Mr. Cherian addressed the Commission and discussed his plans for a possible addition to the property stating he is seeking input as to the feasibility of the plans from an historic preservation perspective. He stated he would like to balance the historic nature of the property with its functional use.

Public Input

None.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Chair Dunn thanked Mr. Cherian for coming to the Commission.

Mr. Murray stated most of the plans seem to fit the design standards. He commented on the view from Union and the need to ensure the addition is subordinate to the historic building. He stated retractable shading is a good idea and commended the initial plans.

Chair Dunn commended the moveable shade feature and suggested it be as airy as possible. She also commended the idea of including glass as it creates a good way to have modernity fit into the history. She discussed the importance of maintaining differentiation while still showing a relationship.

Ms. Nelsen asked whether the pergola is for function or ambiance. Mr. Cherian replied he is open to ideas and stated the ambiance is what is important in terms of bringing the outdoors inside.

Ms. Nelsen commented on the importance of a simpler design and stated the juxtaposition of materials is worth studying.

Ms. Nelsen asked if an elevator will be required. Mr. Rankin, the architect, replied in the affirmative.

Chair Dunn asked if there are plans to leave the historic back and side walls. Mr. Cherian replied the corner is tricky. Mr. Rankin replied the area is difficult to address and stated he likes the idea of pulling the vertical circulation away from the building. He stated he thinks the existing structure should stay intact and be visible. He commented on potential design solutions and other City requirements.

Chair Dunn stated the initial plans are on the right track and suggested Commission members comment on materiality guidelines. Mr. Rankin discussed materials used for contemporary additions in other projects.

Ms. Nelsen stated high-quality materials are important.

Chair Dunn stated using brick could be confusing. She noted restoration work on the historic buildings could be eligible for tax credits and she recommended the applicants talk to staff about those benefits.

Mr. Cherian asked about the Commission's approach to the inclusion of rooftop solar panels. Mr. Murray stated the less visible they are, the better. Chair Dunn replied the Commission likes to see sustainable options done well.

6. ADOPTION OF THE LANDMARK PRESERVATION COMMISSION 2021 WORK PLAN

The purpose of this item is to discuss and adopt the Landmark Preservation Commission's Work Plan for 2021.

Staff Report

Ms. McWilliams explained that the only change since the work session discussion was to add information about equity and inclusion.

Commission Questions and Discussion

None.

Commission Deliberation

Ms. Nelsen moved to adopt the 2021 work plan as presented.

Mr. Bello seconded. The motion passed 9-0.

● **OTHER BUSINESS**

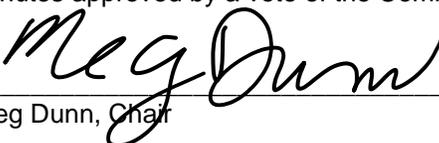
Chair Dunn mentioned the upcoming Historic Larimer County Zoom presentation on how northern Colorado has faced past pandemics.

● **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Dunn adjourned the meeting at 10:38 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Tripoint Data, LLC and respectfully submitted by Gretchen Schiager.

Minutes approved by a vote of the Commission on 18 Nov 2020.



Meg Dunn, Chair