

MINUTES

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

September 27, 2023

4:00 p.m.

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

PRESIDING: Robert McNary, Chair

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bev Eagy, Forust Ercole, Eric Gleason, J. Scott Stephenson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: City Councilor Scott Randall, Museum Commission Representative Julie Reynolds (arrived at 4:05 p.m.)

OTHERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Senior Planner Kaitlyn Cook, Secretary Paula Webb

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair McNary at 4:02 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Ercole led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Ercole and seconded by Gleason to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 5/0; Eagy, Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Stephenson voting in favor, none opposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Eagy and seconded by Gleason to approve the minutes of May 24, 2023 as written. The motion carried 5/0; Eagy, Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Stephenson voting in favor, none opposed.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Sherry Munro, 2500 E. 12th Street, The Dalles

Ms. Munro was representing Mrs. Elaine Rife in her request to place a memorial bench honoring Mr. Richard “Dick” Rife. Mr. Rife was an ardent supporter of Pioneer Cemetery.

Ms. Munro summarized her efforts to secure a bench or plaque, Attachment 1. She then asked if the Commission would consider placement of a memorial bench in Pioneer Cemetery.

Chair McNary replied he was unsure if approval was within the Commission’s authority.

Senior Planner Cook stated she invited Ms. Munro to attend this meeting to introduce the idea. The Code states the Director, without elevation to the Commission, may approve minor alterations such as fencing or landscaping. She added the Pioneer Cemetery does not contain a structure. It is the land itself, along with its use as a cemetery, which is historic. Senior Planner Cook felt it appropriate for Ms. Munro to return to the Commission with an application.

Abbey Phelps, The Dalles Wasco County Library, 722 Court Street, The Dalles

Ms. Phelps thanked the Commission for allowing the Library to use the Pioneer Cemetery for Book Group. The Library is promoting “Community Reads,” and will feature *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman. Free copies of the book will be available at the Library beginning October 2, 2023. Copies were also available at the HLC meeting. Ms. Phelps provided a flyer of upcoming events, Attachment 2.

The Book Club will gather at Pioneer Cemetery on October 28, 2023 for discussion of the book and the history of Pioneer Cemetery. Ms. Phelps noted both she and the Library are respectful of the property and its’ history. She will ask the participants to be respectful as well.

Steve Lawrence, 2017 View Court, The Dalles

Mr. Lawrence moved to The Dalles to write historical novels. He wrote *Amotan Field*, and noted “Amotan” rather than “Amaton” is the correct spelling. Mr. Lawrence is concerned about the fate of Amotan Field if The Dalles High School is demolished. The historic inventory does not separate Amotan Field from the high school.

Mr. Lawrence read an excerpt from his novel. A student discovered a skeleton, reconstructed the skeleton, and then took it to school. His teacher said for thousands of years Amotan Field was a favorite gathering place for Indians. A spring ran through the middle of a great meadow. It was called “Amotan” by the Indians, meaning “wild hemp” which grew everywhere.

When the Methodists established the mission in 1853, they decided to plant a large vegetable garden here and forced the Indians to go elsewhere. After that, the soldiers claimed the field to grow crops. Now, it’s a football field venerated by most folks in The Dalles as the place where the 1932, ‘41, and ‘47 state championship teams placed and won the championships.

Amotan Field was iconic, known by many throughout the community. The first game was played in 1909. Old-timers still talked of the game of 1911, against archrival Hood River, when the greatest score occurred – 116 to zero.

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The class of 1950 named the field for the wild hemp. A covered grandstand was constructed in 1926. In 1934, Amotan Field became the first high school field in Oregon to provide illumination for night games. The cost was \$2,300.00. The last game was played in 1976. Attachment 3 is a copy of the handout provided to all at the last game.

Mr. Lawrence asked if there is a way to ensure the preservation of Amotan Field as a historical site. It should forever be preserved as a place of history.

Chair McNary asked where the spring connected to Mill Creek. It is Mr. Lawrence's understanding a diversion was installed which ended near the old hospital (near E. 7th and Washington Streets). It was then diverted to the water system.

Senior Planner Cook noted the entire property is listed on our local inventory. Any proposed action will go before the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) prior to approval.

Commissioner Gleason added Louis Scholl rented a property in that area when he returned to The Dalles in 1867. The property was owned by the Army at that time. He corresponded with Fort Vancouver regarding property disputes with neighbors, and included good maps.

Carolyn Wood, 1709 Liberty Way, The Dalles

Ms. Wood stated when the new wing was built at the high school, there was discussion that Amotan Spring was the source now of non-city water. She was unsure the statement was accurate.

PUBLIC HEARING

Vice Chair Ercole read the rules of a public hearing. The public hearing opened at 4:43 p.m.

Senior Planner Cook presented the staff report.

HLC Application 214-23, Meadow Outdoor Advertising / Muralfest Committee, 103 E. 3rd Street

Request: Approval for Walldogs to paint one mural on the northeast facing wall of the Bohn Wood Building, commonly known as Bohn's Printing.

Senior Planner Cook provided the staff report and presentation, Attachment 4.

John Lehman, 92464 Biggs-Rufus Highway, Biggs, Oregon

Mr. Lehman stated this is the second half of an existing mural painted in 2020 as a "teaser" mural. The first mural honored cherry farming in The Dalles. The second will honor historic wheat production in The Dalles.

Carolyn Wood, 1709 Liberty Way, The Dalles

Ms. Wood is one of the historians that selected the murals. She is also a co-owner of the subject building. Ms. Wood clarified the inclusion of the Hi Ho cracker box to the mural. Sunshine Mill (currently a winery) used to be a flour mill. For many years, a large billboard in front of the mill said Sunshine Mill and included a big box of Hi Ho crackers.

The public hearing closed at 4:55 p.m.

Commissioners Ercole, Gleason and Eagy were in favor of the mural.

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It was moved by Eagy and seconded by Ercole to approve HLC 214-23, to allow the Walldogs to paint one mural on the northeast side of the Bohn Wood building with Conditions of Approval 1 and 2. The motion carried 5/0; Eagy, Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Stephenson voting in favor, none opposed.

RESOLUTION

Resolution HLC 200-23: Approval of HLC 214-23, Meadow Outdoor Advertising / Muralfest Committee

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Eagy to adopt Resolution HLC 200-23, approving Application HLC 214-23 with two conditions of approval. The motion carried 5/0; Eagy, Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Stephenson voting in favor, none opposed.

STAFF COMMENTS

Senior Planner Cook introduced new Associate Planner, Frank Glover. He is originally from North Carolina, and recently worked for Marion County.

Staff is considering replacement of signage at Rock Fort on the Columbia River. The new sign will be like-for-like, constructed with improved materials.

Carolyn Wood thought the first signs installed at Rock Fort came from the National Park Service. There were more signs added later as the Oregon Centennial approached. Ms. Wood suggested contacting State Parks to ask for a contact responsible for the Park trails.

Senior Planner Cook stated one of the signs for the Lewis and Clark Expedition notes the National Park Service in the upper, right-hand corner. She added staff will ensure all the correct approvals are obtained.

Ms. Wood stated the site had been filled in by Wasco County to raise the level for safety purposes. Museum Representative Reynolds thought the original site was now underneath I-84. Ms. Wood responded, saying the Lewis and Clark Expedition used the site twice, once in the fall and once in the spring. They could have camped in other areas due to water levels and safety considerations.

Chair McNary asked if the site was locally landmarked, or part of Northern Wasco County Parks and Recreation. Senior Planner Cook replied Rock Fort is maintained by the City. The site is included in the State of Oregon Inventory of Historic Places.

Commissioner Gleason thought Wasco County owned the site at one point. The City of The Dalles later took possession of the site, and it became the HLC's jurisdiction. There is a Rock Fork Management Plan, funded by the State Historic Preservation Office through a grant.

Commissioner Eagy stated the site stayed the same, and matched the journal by Lewis and Clark. Senior Planner Cook will follow up with the National Park Service.

Ms. Wood agreed with Commissioner Gleason's statement.

Commissioner Gleason requested staff get clarification on the responsible parties. Senior Planner Cook will follow up.

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COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gleason noted the HLC had not approved a local landmark within the last decade. He suggested submitting a Local Landmarks Application for Amaton Field with some of the information gathered by Steve Lawrence.

Commissioner Gleason added an application should be submitted for the brass plaque in the middle of the road in front of St. Peter's Landmark. The plaque states the paving material used, the company that did the work, and the date the original historic highway was paved.

Commissioner Gleason asked if the vinyl windows installed in the alley of 116 W. 2nd Street had been replaced. Senior Planner Cook stated the vinyl windows were replaced with wood windows painted black. She will follow up with pictures.

Commissioner Eagy asked if the new mural on E. 3rd Street had approval. Senior Planner Cook replied a permit was issued, but the painting was delayed.

City Councilor Randall referred to an earlier mention of rock near The Dalles High School used to plat out properties. (Chair McNary refers to it as Strawberry Rock.) Councilor Randall noted it is currently covered by ivy.

Chair McNary referred to Commissioner Gleason's comment about a water tank that was located in what is now the Methodist Church parking lot. Commissioner Gleason thought there was a windmill and water tank located there. Chair McNary noted it would be interesting for the community to realize there was an attempt at modernization. There was a backflow of water there, but it was all at ground level. If raised, the water would be available to homes. It would be interesting to know how they did it. Commissioner Gleason thought it was the windmill.

Museum Representative Reynolds noted there was community furor resulting from the end of the "Hop On, Hop Off" bus tours from the ships. The lack has diminished attendance at the museum.

Representative Reynolds received a grant from the Wasco County Cultural Trust to transcribe handwritten minutes from the old Fort Dalles Historical Society. Once complete, the information will be available.

In May, Commissioner Stephenson introduced the History Viewer, a project by The Dalles Art Center and Columbia Gorge Community College, and funded by a Wasco County Cultural grant. The viewer can be moved to focus on a location; the transparency will show what was there in the past. This is a way to activate a space and provide history. Mr. Stephenson is applying for a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office. He had conversations with City staff and the community, looking for support of the project. If successful, five Viewers will be installed around the City. The Viewers can be included in the Historic Walking Tour as well.

Commissioner Stephenson requested a letter of support from the Commission for the application. Senior Planner Cook stated staff could write a support letter for authorization by the Commission once the application is complete.

Museum Representative Reynolds said the project has a lot of potential.

Commissioner Stephenson stated the Viewers will be moved to different locations around the City to feature different sites.


ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

Submitted by/
Paula Webb, Secretary
Community Development Department

SIGNED: 
Robert McNary, Chair

ATTEST: 
Paula Webb, Secretary
Community Development Department