

**MINUTES**

**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING**

June 25, 2025  
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:** Forust Ercole, Eric Gleason, Victor Johnson, one position vacant

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Museum Commission Representative Julie Reynolds

**OTHERS ABSENT:** City Councilor Scott Randall

**STAFF PRESENT:** Senior Planner Sandy Freund, Planning Technician Paula Webb, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair McNary at 4:04 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair McNary led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair McNary proposed amending the agenda to include a moment of silence in memory of Karl Vercouteren, a former Commissioner.

It was moved by Ercole and seconded by Johnson to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, one position vacant.

A moment of silence was held in memory of Commissioner Vercouteren. Chair McNary then asked if any commissioners would like to speak on behalf of Commissioner Vercouteren. Representative Reynolds noted being in the Cascade Singers with him, and stated that he had a nice voice. Senior Planner Freund presented Commissioner Vercouteren's obituary, Attachment 1.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Representative Reynolds noted that the draft minutes incorrectly listed her as voting multiple times despite not being a voting member, and recommended that the minutes be corrected.

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Ercole to approve the minutes of January 22, 2025 as corrected. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, one position vacant.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Representative Reynolds read the rules of a public hearing. Chair McNary then asked if any Commissioner had ex parte contact, conflict of interest or bias, which would prevent an impartial decision. Commissioner Johnson noted familial ties, but would offer an unbiased decision. Chair McNary opened the public hearing at 4:18 p.m.

#### **HLC Application 219-24, Ellen Potter, 102 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street**

Request: Approval to paint a mural on the south-facing alley wall of the subject property.

Senior Planner Freund provided the staff report and presentation (Attachment 2). The proposal is for a mural featuring "Winnie the Pooh and Friends" painted by The Dalles Art Center summer camp students under the guidance of local artist Denae' Manion. The mural would measure approximately 8 feet by 16 feet and be located on the south-facing alley wall of a non-contributing building within the Downtown Historic District. Staff recommended approval based on consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and The Dalles Municipal Code Chapter 11.12.

#### **Ellen Potter, Executive Director, The Dalles Art Center, 220 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, The Dalles**

Applicant Ellen Potter, Executive Director of The Dalles Art Center, described the project as a way to introduce children to public art and historic appreciation. The design references a historic mural formerly located in The Dalles Art Center, formerly Carnegie Library.

Commissioner Johnson supported the project, noting the value of youth engagement in historic preservation and the mural's whimsical nature.

Commissioner Gleason highlighted its consistency with the Wall Dogs murals and emphasized its discoverable alley location.

Representative Reynolds asked whether the mural would be included in the City's mural guide, which the applicant confirmed was likely.

Commissioner Ercole expressed personal excitement, noting the mural would be visible from his mother-in-law's workplace.

Chair McNary closed the public hearing at 4:30 p.m.

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Johnson to approve HLC 219-24. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, one position vacant.

## MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

June 25, 2025

Page 3 of 9

### **RESOLUTION**

HLC Resolution 205-25, Ellen Potter, 102 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street: Approval of HLC Application 219-24, Ellen Potter, to paint a mural on the south-side wall of 102 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

It was moved by Ercole and seconded by Johnson to approve HLC Resolution 205-25 with the recommended conditions of approval. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole, Gleason, McNary and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, one position vacant.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Senior Planner Freund indicated there were several upcoming projects and anticipated a meeting in July or August. She also asked whether the Commission wanted to continue reviewing mural applications on non-contributing buildings in the Historic District. Consensus from Commissioners supported continuing this practice.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Johnson praised the youth involvement and whimsical nature of the proposed mural project. He encouraged the Commission to continue reviewing murals on non-contributing buildings within the Historic District.

Commissioner Gleason raised concerns about the First Street Streetscape project, noting the proposed removal of historic walls on the Chinatown block. He questioned why this matter had not come before the Commission, given the significance of the structures and the Commission's jurisdiction. He emphasized the need for consistency and local review.

Commissioner Ercole had no further items but reiterated enthusiasm for the mural.

Representative Reynolds updated the Commission on restoration work at the Fort Dalles Museum and increased visitation due to regional events.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

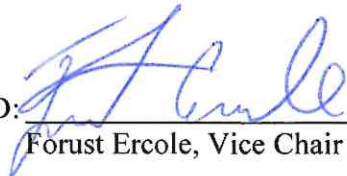
Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

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*Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.*

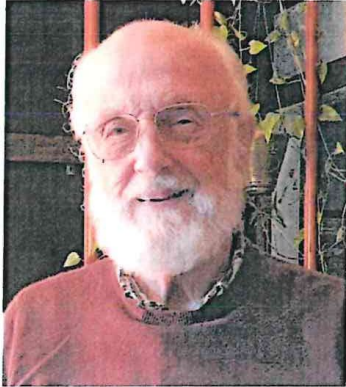
Submitted by/  
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department

SIGNED:

  
Forust Ercole, Vice Chair

ATTEST:

  
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant  
Community Development Department



Karl Vercouteren was born and grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where he worked summers at Boy Scout camps and attained the rank of Eagle Scout.

He attended Lakeland College (now Lakeland University) in Wisconsin, United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, did a student internship in Rhode Island, served Grace United Church of Christ in Covington, Kentucky for 12 years, and was pastor of United Church of Christ Congregational of The Dalles, Oregon, from 1977 until his retirement in September 2008.

Karl was active in the Cascade Singers since the second year of the community choir's existence. The choir's European tours were musical highlights and afforded opportunities to reunite with family members and friends in Germany, Belgium, Spain, and the Netherlands. He especially enjoyed locating and arranging music for the group's annual "St. Pat's at St. Pete's" concerts. He participated in church choirs and helped organize the Men's Chorus at Zion Lutheran Church.

Karl joined the Board of the Original Wasco County Courthouse shortly after moving to The Dalles. He was a past president and organized the annual Regional History Forum. He joined The Dalles Kiwanis Club in 1977 and was a past president of the club. He worked on many Kiwanis service projects and led the organizing committee for Christmas and Cherry Festival parades since the early 1990s, and Fourth of July and Veterans Day parades in more recent years. He was part of the group that sponsors the biennial Organ Crawl featuring The Dalles' five pipe organs.

In the past he served on the Wasco County Commission on Children and Families, the statewide board of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, and regional and national boards of his church. He has also been active in Mid-Columbia Fellowship of Churches, Habitat for Humanity, and Wasco County Citizens for Human Dignity.

For a number of years Karl was part of church-sponsored teams that went to Biloxi, Mississippi, to work on housing—a critical need long after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast.

Karl's interest in local and regional history resulted in several projects during his post-retirement years: concert selections and narratives for several "Historic The Dalles Days" programs; a concert and PowerPoint presentation that eventually resulted in publication of his 2017 book, *Now Playing at the Vogt: The Dalles'*



*Forgotten Opera House*; the writing of Mid-Columbia area entries for the 2020 interactive map, *The National Vote for Women Trail*, writing of blogs about buildings on The Dalles Art Center's *All Together The Dalles* photo-montage print and mural, published in book form in 2022; and he published an additional book on the architecture and history of local buildings, *All Together The Dalles Too*, in 2023. Karl also served as one of the historians who researched and wrote proposals for the murals that were produced when the Walldogs came to town in August 2022, and he continued the project as a member of the mural committee.

Karl was preceded in death by his parents, Govert and Esther (Ochs) Vercouteren, and Aunt Elsie Fasse. Karl is survived by his wife Jean (Anderson) Vercouteren. Karl and Jean were together for 61 years! Other survivors include brothers Peter and Robert Vercouteren, daughter Kristine (Vercouteren) Dombroski and husband John Dombroski, son Jacob Vercouteren, grandson Jodecy Vercouteren, AFS exchange student son, David Timmers from Belgium, and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, consider a donation in Karl's memory to the Cascade Singers, the Wasco County Original Courthouse, The Dalles Kiwanis Club, The Dalles UCCC Church, Zion Lutheran ELCA, The Dalles, or a charity of your choice.



Zion Lutheran Church ELCA  
Mission Statement

The purpose of Zion Lutheran Church is to be a sacred space where people of any faith or no faith hear the Gospel of Christ and are spiritually fed to do God's work in our world.

## Page 6 of 9

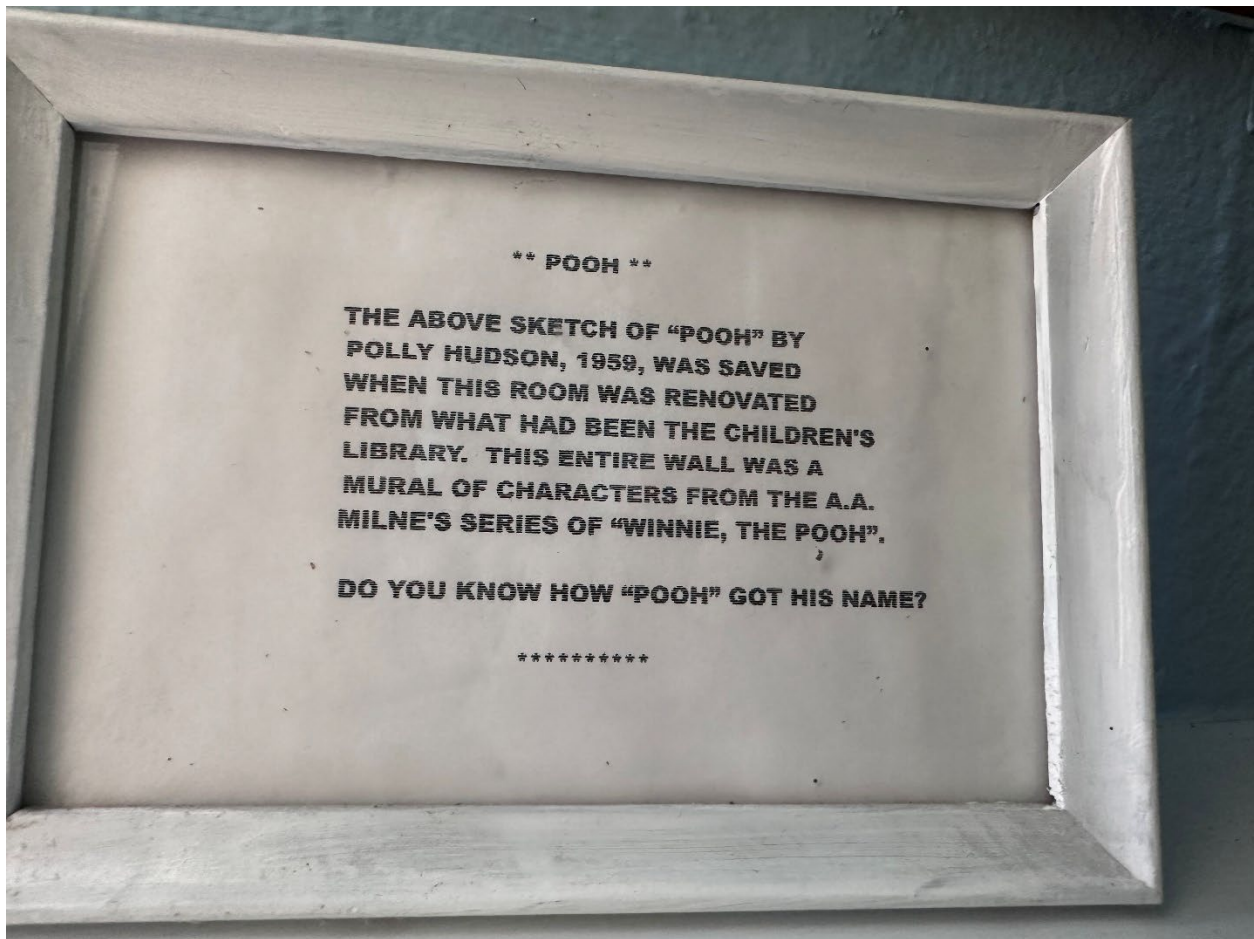
## Mural Design







Original Winnie the Pooh Sketch



Description of Winnie the Pooh Sketch



## Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME			
address:	102 E 2nd St	historic name:	Union Oil
addresses:	The Dalles, Wasco County	current/other names:	Union Service Station
location desc:		block/lot/tax lot:	
		township/sect/atr-sect:	1N-13E-3
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS			
resource type:	Building →	height (stories):	1.0
elig-evaluation:	not eligible/non-contributing	total-elig-resources:	
prim-constr-date:	1880 →	NR-Status:	Listed in Historic District
		date-indiv-listed:	
primary-orig-use:	COMMERCIAL-General	orig-use-comments:	
second-orig-use:			
primary-style:	Other/Undefined	prim-style-comments:	
secondary-style:		sec-style-comments:	
primary-siding:	Concrete Block	siding-comments:	
secondary-siding:	Brick/Other/Undefined		
plan type:		architect:	
		builder:	
comments/notes:			
GROUPINGS/ASSOCIATIONS			
Survey/Grouping Included In:	→	Type of Grouping	→
The Dalles Commercial Historic District	→	Listed Historic District	→
		Date Listed	→
		11/04/1986	→
		Date Compiled	
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY			
NR date listed:	→ N/A	106 Project(s):	→ None
ILS survey date:		Special Assess Project(s):	None
RLS survey date:		Federal Tax Project(s):	None
ARCHITECTURAL/PROPERTY DESCRIPTION			
(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)			
Refer to scanned documents links			
HISTORY			
(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)			
Refer to scanned documents links			
RESEARCH INFORMATION			
Title Records	→	Census Records	→
Sanborn Maps	→	Biographical Sources	→
Obituaries	→	Newspapers	→
City Directories	→	Building Permits	→
		Property Tax Records	→
		SHPO Files	→
		State Archives	→
		State Library	
		Local Histories	
		Interviews	
		Historic Photographs	
Local Library:		University Library:	
Historical Society:		Other Repository:	
Bibliography:			