

MINUTES

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION MEETING

December 17, 2025

4:00 p.m.

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

PRESIDING: Forust Ercole, Chair

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Forust Ercole, Victor Johnson, Tom Giamei, Eric Gleason

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bob McNary

OTHERS PRESENT: Museum Commission Representative Julie Reynolds, City Councilor Scott Randall (joined via Zoom at 4:21 p.m.)

STAFF PRESENT: Director Joshua Chandler, Senior Planner Sandy Freund, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre, City Attorney Jonathan Kara

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ercole at 4:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ercole led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Giamei and seconded by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 4/0, Ercole, Gleason, Giamei and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, McNary absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Johnson to approve the minutes of November 19, 2025, as written. The motion carried 4/0, Ercole, Gleason, Giamei and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, McNary absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

William Lennox, 1005 Federal St, The Dalles

Mr. Lennox expressed concern about deteriorated historic interpretive signs throughout the City, noting their importance to tourism and historic education, and encouraged continued efforts to replace or restore them.

Richard Wolfe, The Dalles

Mr. Wolfe spoke regarding Historic Landmarks Commission qualifications, preservation standards, and the importance of maintaining historic resources in The Dalles, citing personal experience in building and historic construction.

Michael Wacker, 4588 Orchard Rd, The Dalles

Mr. Wacker requested recognition and interpretive information explaining the origin and history of Sorosis Park, noting that many residents are unaware of its significance.

PUBLIC HEARING

HLC Application 222-25, Katie Montag, 420 East 8th Street

Continued from November ,19, 2025

Request: Applicant is requesting approval for the demolition of the existing non-contributing detached garage located at the southwest corner of the property, accessed from the alley, and for the construction of a new detached garage in the same location.

Chair Ercole read the rules of a public hearing. He then asked if any Commissioner had ex-parte contact, conflict of interest or bias which would prevent an impartial decision.

Chair Ercole opened the public hearing at 4:16 p.m.

Senior Planner Sandy Freund presented the staff report, Attachment 1, explaining that the application was a continuation of the November 19, 2025 meeting. The existing garage is identified as a non-contributing detached structure associated with a National Register-listed residence. Staff summarized the applicant's request, property context, garage condition, proposed replacement design, and correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). SHPO indicated no action was required at the state level and advised reliance on local Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) regulations.

Staff recommended approval of the application with conditions or, alternatively, a temporary demolition delay/suspension under the Municipal Code if the HLC determined further exploration of alternative preservation options was warranted.

Commissioner Gleason asked specifically about the maximum allowable length of a demolition delay, including how long the HLC may suspend issuance of a demolition permit and whether extensions beyond the initial delay period are permitted under the Municipal Code.

Commissioner Johnson raised questions related to historic classification and treatment of the garage, including whether the structure's age or historic context affected how it should be

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

December 17, 2025

Page 3 of 19

reviewed and whether preservation or salvage options could be considered without imposing undue burden on the property owner.

Commissioner Giamei asked clarifying questions regarding applicable review authority and procedural limitations, including what actions are within the HLC's discretion during demolition review versus those requiring separate processes.

Chair Ercole requested clarification on procedural and code requirements, including how the Commission should apply adopted criteria when a structure is identified as non-contributing and what limitations exist on HLC authority.

Staff explained that demolition delays are limited by statutory timeframes established in the Municipal Code and may not exceed those limits. Staff further clarified that reclassification or designation of a non-contributing structure would require a separate, formal designation process, including property owner consent, and could not be accomplished through the current demolition application.

Public Testimony: In Favor

Kathryn Montag, applicant, 420 East 8th Street, The Dalles

Ms. Montag testified that the garage is unsafe, unusable, and does not contribute to the historic value of her home. She described ongoing maintenance of the residence, safety concerns, vehicle damage caused by nearby trees, and the need for a functional garage compatible with modern vehicles. She expressed willingness to cooperate on documentation or interpretation but opposed being required to retain the structure.

Ms. Montag also read a letter from neighbors Bob and Joanna Stanik supporting demolition and replacement of the garage.

Angela Wright, 913 Laughlin Street, The Dalles

Ms. Wright, a neighboring property owner, supported the application, citing safety concerns and the deteriorated condition of the garage.

William Lennox, 1005 Federal St, The Dalles

Mr. Lennox reiterated support, noting the applicant's demonstrated care for historic preservation and the risks posed by the existing structure.

Michael Wacker, 4588 Orchard Rd, The Dalles

Mr. Wacker questioned what would occur if the structure collapsed and expressed support for a proactive, safe removal.

Public testimony: In Opposition

Richard Wolfe, The Dalles

Mr. Wolfe spoke in opposition, emphasizing the architectural and historical significance of early automobile garages, preservation standards, and the craftsmanship of the structure. He urged preservation, documentation, or reuse and expressed concern about loss of historic fabric.

The public hearing was closed at 4:51 p.m.

Commissioner Deliberation

Commissioner Gleason discussed the historic context and rarity of early automobile garages in The Dalles, noting the garage's age, craftsmanship, and association with the early adoption of automobiles. He expressed interest in finding a balanced approach that would allow the applicant to proceed while also encouraging documentation, salvage, or potential reuse of historic materials where feasible.

Commissioner Johnson emphasized property owner rights, safety concerns, and practicality, noting the deteriorated condition of the garage and the applicant's demonstrated good faith in pursuing a respectful replacement. He supported minimizing delay and avoiding conditions that would create undue burden or liability for the applicant, while remaining open to voluntary preservation efforts.

Commissioner Giamei indicated support for approval of the application and focused on forward movement, expressing readiness to make a motion once conditions were clarified and noting the importance of resolving the matter without unnecessary delay.

Chair Ercole guided the deliberation, focusing on procedural clarity and consensus, and facilitated discussion regarding whether an additional condition encouraging documentation or salvage would be appropriate without imposing mandatory requirements.

City Attorney Jonathan Kara advised the HLC on permissible conditions of approval, explaining that any conditions must be proportional to the impact of the demolition and supported by the Municipal Code. He clarified that documentation, salvage, and interpretive measures are appropriate mitigation tools when feasible, but emphasized that conditions should avoid mandatory preservation or unreasonable cost burdens, recommending non-mandatory or encouraging language where appropriate.

The Commissioners reached consensus to include a non-mandatory condition encouraging the applicant to work with the HLC to document and salvage historically significant materials from the garage where feasible, while allowing the demolition and replacement to proceed.

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Giamei to approve HLC Application No. 222-25 with an additional condition encouraging the applicant, in recognition of the historic nature of the auto house, to work the Historic Landmarks Commission to document, salvage, and reuse historic materials to the extent feasible. The motion carried 4/0, Ercole, Gleason, Giamei and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, McNary absent.

RESOLUTION

HLC Resolution 207-25, Katie Montag, 420 East 8th Street

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Johnson to approve Resolution HLC 207-25 as amended. The motion carried 4/0, Ercole, Gleason, Giamei and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, McNary absent.

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

December 17, 2025

Page 5 of 19

2026 GOAL SETTING

Senior Planner Freund presented draft 2026 Historic Landmarks Commission goals, Attachment 2, explaining that the materials included revisions to prior-year goals intended to reduce duplicative language, consolidate certain ongoing items, and clarify distinctions between short-term and continuous goals. Staff explained that the revisions were intended to improve clarity and support more effective implementation.

Chair Ercole asked questions regarding the structure of the proposed goals and whether consolidation differed from prior years' goal-setting practices. He noted that several topics, including fees, appeared closely related to goal setting and suggested that those items could be discussed in the same forum.

Commissioner Gleason stated that site-specific goals had previously been kept separate to support grant applications and provide clearer focus for individual historic properties. He said that a more detailed discussion would be beneficial before making any decisions and indicated that a focused work session would allow the HLC to better evaluate the proposed changes.

Museum Representative Reynolds agreed that separating goals by property or project can be important due to differing ownership, stewardship responsibilities, and historical context, and expressed concern that over-consolidation could reduce clarity.

Commissioner Johnson emphasized the importance of keeping goals realistic and achievable, noting staff capacity and HLC resources. He expressed support for continued discussion in a work session setting rather than acting at this meeting.

Commissioner Giamei expressed interest in allowing additional time for review and supported postponing decisions until the Commissioners could meet in a more focused setting.

It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Johnson to table the discussion and schedule a focused work session on 2026 goal setting to be held in January 2026. The motion carried 4/0, Ercole, Gleason, Giamei and Johnson voting in favor, none opposed, McNary absent.

DISCUSSION

HLC Application Fees

Senior Planner Freund explained that the City is currently engaged in a citywide effort to adjust fee schedules to better reflect cost recovery. She stated that HLC application fees do not cover the actual cost of processing applications, particularly due to required newspaper noticing. She noted that Chapter 11 of the Municipal Code requires separate newspaper noticing for HLC applications and demolition proposals, causing some applications to have double noticing. She explained that staff had identified alternatives that could reduce costs:

- Alternative One – Retain Current Noticing Requirements: Continue to require newspaper notice for all Historic Landmarks Commission applications, including both demolition and non-demolition items, as currently required under Chapter 11 of the Municipal Code. Under this alternative, application fees would likely need to increase to better reflect the cost of staff time, legal review, and required newspaper publication.

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

December 17, 2025

Page 6 of 19

- **Alternative Two – Limit Newspaper Notice to Demolition Applications Only:** Amend the Municipal Code to require newspaper notice only for demolition-related HLC applications. Non-demolition HLC applications would continue to receive mailed notices to affected property owners and electronic distribution to local media outlets but would no longer require newspaper publication. This alternative would reduce noticing costs and help minimize application fee increases, which would otherwise be adjusted only as needed to reflect CPI and cost recovery.

Community Development Director Chandler provided additional context, explaining that fee adjustments are reviewed annually and that department heads must submit proposed fee changes by mid-January. He stated that staff are considering modest increases, generally around three percent, to keep pace with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and increasing costs, particularly noticing expenses. Director Chandler emphasized that the intent is cost recovery rather than revenue generation and noted that the City of The Dalles' application fees are significantly lower than those of comparable jurisdictions. He explained that staff time, legal review, and noticing costs substantially exceed the current \$85 HLC application fee. Director Chandler also stated that if the Commissioners did not support continued newspaper noticing for all HLC applications, staff could pursue a code amendment to revise noticing requirements.

Chair Ercole asked whether action was required at this meeting to address noticing requirements or fee adjustments and requested clarification regarding the alternatives outlined in the staff memo.

Commissioner Johnson expressed concern about the effectiveness of newspaper notices, noting that many residents no longer rely on print newspapers. He suggested exploring alternative notification methods, including digital notice, to reduce costs while maintaining public awareness.

Senior Planner Freund responded that state law requires notice in a newspaper of local circulation for certain public hearings and noted equity considerations, including access to the internet. She clarified that mailed notice to nearby property owners would continue regardless of newspaper notice changes and that the proposed alternative would remove newspaper notice for non-demolition HLC applications only.

Museum Representative Reynolds suggested website posting as a supplemental notification method, noting that notices are already posted online as part of the process.

Commissioner Gleason stated that he supported limiting newspaper notice requirements and expressed concern about charging fees for HLC applications, noting that fees could discourage historic preservation efforts. He indicated support for "Alternative Two," which would retain newspaper noticing only for demolition applications.

Commissioner Johnson echoed concerns about increased fees discouraging participation and stated that reducing noticing costs could help keep application fees lower.

Commissioner Giamei asked how much application fees might increase under the proposed adjustments.

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

December 17, 2025

Page 7 of 19

Senior Planner Freund and Director Chandler clarified that staff are still evaluating specific fee amounts, but that increase would likely be modest and tied to CPI if newspaper notice requirements were reduced.

Director Chandler further explained that demolition applications would continue to require newspaper notice due to their broader community impact, and that staff also distributes notices electronically to local media outlets for all applications.

Chair Ercole asked whether the Commission wished to pursue changes to the Municipal Code to eliminate newspaper notice requirements for non-demolition Historic Landmarks Commission applications.

Following discussion, the Commission expressed general agreement with Alternative Two, which would retain newspaper notice for demolition applications only and eliminate newspaper notice for other Historic Landmarks Commission applications, relying instead on mailed property owner notice and existing electronic media distribution.

By consensus, the Commission supported further staff evaluation of Alternative Two, including potential code amendments to modify noticing requirements and related fee considerations.

STAFF COMMENTS

Senior Planner Freund stated that she had no formal comments but expressed appreciation for the Commission's passion for historic preservation and its commitment to protecting the historic sites and history of The Dalles. She noted that she values working with the Commission and thanked the members for their thoughtful discussion and engagement, particularly regarding goal setting.

Chair Ercole thanked Staff for their work and stated appreciation for the assistance and support provided throughout the meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gleason commented in response to earlier public testimony regarding Commission qualifications, explaining that as a Certified Local Government (CLG), the HLC is required by SHPO to meet specific professional qualification standards. He noted that Commissioner appointments are not arbitrary and must comply with CLG requirements.

Chair Ercole added that Commissioner appointments are subject to reappointment processes and are not permanent.

Commissioner Johnson expressed appreciation for Staff's work and thanked Director Chandler and City Attorney Kara for their assistance during the meeting. He noted that the application discussed during the hearing was challenging due to prior classification issues but stated that Staff and the applicant had worked in good faith throughout the process. He also noted the importance of updating historic inventories to avoid similar issues in the future.

Museum Representative Reynolds stated that the museum is currently closed but is anticipated to reopen in early 2026.

Commissioner Giamei expressed concern regarding the length of time required to process the application, noting that it had been under review since September and that delays can be difficult for applicants, particularly when weather becomes a factor. He suggested that improving processing timelines should be considered as a future goal.

Senior Planner Freund responded by explaining that application timelines are affected by completeness requirements, noting that incomplete applications require additional information before review can proceed. She outlined statutory timelines for land use applications and noted that historic review timelines can vary. She acknowledged the concern and stated that the Department is working on internal process improvements to streamline reviews.

Community Development Director Chandler stated that incomplete applications can significantly extend review timelines and noted that the Department has received a DLCD grant to assist with streamlining development review processes. He emphasized Staff's commitment to continuous improvement while balancing thorough review requirements.

Commissioner Johnson stated that, based on his personal experience, the Planning Department's processes appear to be improving and expressed appreciation for recent efforts to refine and streamline reviews.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

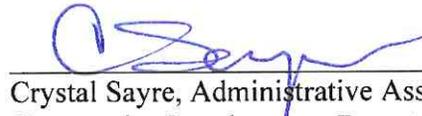
Submitted by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

SIGNED:



Forust Ercole, Chair

ATTEST:



Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department



City of The Dalles Historic Landmarks Commission

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025 | 4:00 PM

CONTINUED FROM NOVEMBER 19, 2025

HLC Application #222-25

Applicant: Kathryn Montag

Site Address: 420 East 8th Street

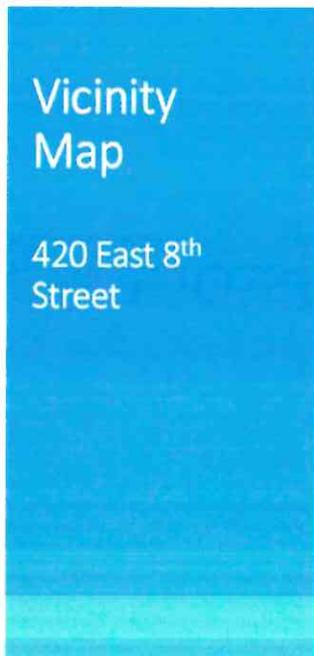
Historic Status: Garage – “non-contributing Structure”

- Residence: National Register, Dr. J.A. Reuter Residence – “contributing”

Historic District: None

Existing Use: Detached structure (non-contributing) / Residence (contributing resource)

Request: Approval for the demolition of the existing non-contributing detached garage located at the southwest corner of the property, accessed from the alley, and for the construction of a new detached garage to be constructed in the same location.



Applicant Proposal

Demo & New Construction:

- Request demolition of existing non-contributing garage structure (14'6" x 19'7")
- Replace with new garage (20 x 26')
- To match paint and materials of existing historic residence
 - Site of historic Dr. J.A. Reuter residence c. 1890 / 1909



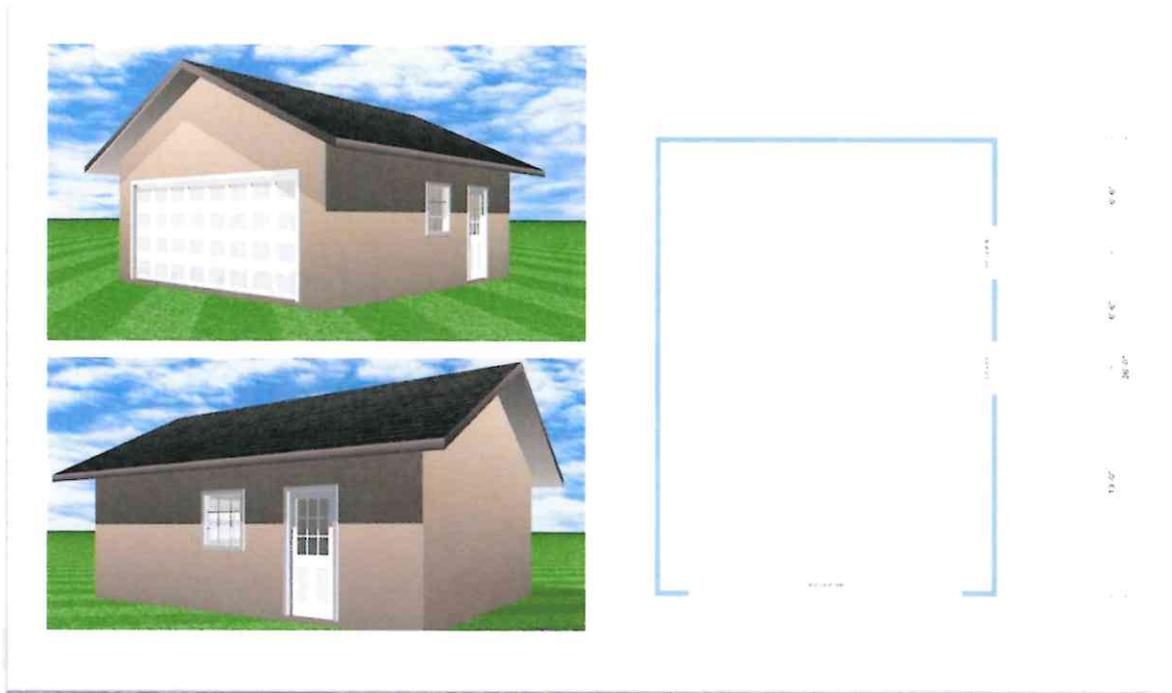


25' x 25' GARAGE
MIDLAND, TX

NOTES:
Foundation: 6" x 12" footing, 5" x 12" stemwall
Slab: 4" concrete, slopped to drain to the front
Framing: 2x4 studs, 16" oc with PF plates, header for door and window 6x8", 1/2 PLY CDX (OSB if cheaper) sheathing walls and roof, Hardi Plank horizontal siding, with 5/1"x1"
Trim, 2x6 garage surround.
Window: 3'x5 slider. Mandor: 3'x 6'-0" with dead bolt and knob
Electrical to remain from existing structure
Roof to be similar to house

FLOOR PLAN

CROSS SECTION



Recommendation

- All applicable criteria met:
 - Secretary of the Interior Standards
 - The Dalles Municipal Code, Title 11 criteria
- Staff recommends the HLC either adopt Resolution No. 207-25, granting approval with conditions, to demolish the existing detached non-contributing garage structure and build a new garage in its place; **or**, delay demolition for a defined period of time (TDMC [11.12.080, \(B\)\(1-5\)](#)) while alternatives are explored.



City of The Dalles Historic Landmarks Commission

QUESTIONS?



Historic Landmarks Commission 2026 Goals

City of The Dalles
Goal-Setting Meeting

Short-Term Goals (1–2 Years)

- Update Historic Ordinance and Design Standards to be clear and objective
- Encourage the addition of a student representative on the Historic Landmarks Commission
- Apply for a grant to create a Preservation Plan for The Dalles
- Develop a concept design for new historic building plaques and promote fabrication and installation

Short-Term Goals (continued)

- Support the creation of tours of historic properties, including Pioneer Cemetery
- Encourage restoration and preservation of Pioneer Cemetery and establish an online inventory
- Encourage restoration of upstairs windows of the Waldron-Gitchell Building
- Update historic inventories and encourage new local and national nominations, including Amotan Field

Short-Term Goals (continued)

- Research the historical significance of the Rock House
- Research former railroad structures along East Second Street near Brewery Grade Overpass

Continuous Goals

- Provide a historic restoration workshop for local homeowners and contractors
 - Provide landscaping, informational signage, and maintenance of Pioneer Cemetery
 - Encourage preservation and reuse of the Waldron-Gitchell Building
 - Collaborate with Main Street and The Dalles Art Center on downtown restoration projects
-

Continuous Goals (continued)

- Make historic preservation educational and funding resources available online
 - Provide annual recognition of historic restorations at goal-setting meetings
 - Provide onsite acknowledgements for notable restorations
 - Encourage historic restoration downtown through historic background research
-

Continuous Goals (continued)

- Encourage collection and preservation of local oral and written histories
- Support Historic Preservation Month and educational workshops
- Assist with historic plaque costs and availability
- Keep the Historic Walking Tour current in all formats

Continuous Goals (continued)

- Increase communication on Urban Renewal and Main Street projects, vision, and goals
- Provide optional historic and procedural commissioner trainings
- Support Fort Dalles / Anderson Homestead Museum and Vehicle Storage Display Building
- Support preservation and continued use of The Dalles High School and Colonel Wright Elementary School

Continuous Goals (continued)

- Encourage preservation and compatible infill of Historic Chinatown
- Encourage preservation and continued use of Rock Fort following the adopted plan
- Continue to support, advocate for, and preserve historic properties community-wide

