

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

July 24, 2024

City Hall – Conference Room #6

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Walter Burns, Chair (On Teams)
Anneliese Miller, Vice Chair
Doug Harro
Shannon Sardell (On Teams)
Rick Shaffer
Dan McCracken
Sandy Emerson
Ann Anderson, Secretary

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hilary Patterson, Community Planning Director
Traci Clark, Admin. Assistant
Kiki Miller, Council Liaison (On Teams)

Commissioners Absent:

Tyler Douglas Lowe

12:01 p.m. CALL TO ORDER:

MINUTES: **ITEM BELOW IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN ACTION ITEM**

Motion by Commissioner Shaffer, seconded by Commissioner McCracken, to approve the minutes for June 26, 2024. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None. (*Kathryn Kincel from the public attended but didn't provide comments*).

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

None.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Ms. Patterson, Community Planning Director, provided the following comments:

- The Hamilton House is being awarded an Orchid Award from Preservation Idaho. The awards ceremony will be held in Pocatello Idaho on August 10. She reached out to Bill Buley with the Coeur d'Alene Press, but she has not seen an article yet regarding the award.
- She did hear back from Maria Rachal from SHPO about the agreement. They are still working on the agreements. We need the agreement before we can proceed with the request for the proposals for the Downtown reconnaissance survey work. They may also have additional funding to reimbursement from the historic preservation conference a couple of years ago So they are waiting to process our reimbursement.
- She would like to thank Commissioner Harro for assistance taking Garden District photos for Kirk Huffaker.

Garden District Nomination Update

Chairman Burns stated that Mr. Huffaker had requested photos of a dozen houses that he did not have and Commissioner Harro volunteered to take those photos. Mr. Huffaker is finalizing the nomination for submittal.

Downtown Reconnaissance Survey

Ms. Patterson stated that the subcommittee will discuss what we might want to include in the Request for Proposals (RFP) and try to start reaching out to certain consultants that would have the expertise to see if they would be inclined to submit a proposal. SHPO has indicated that they would like us to select someone that can keep the costs low to survey the largest area as possible. We may need to look at someone local or the Spokane area who has submitted before might be interested in assisting us. She said Diana Painter is in Spokane and has submitted proposals previously. Katie and Spencer are out of Seattle.

Commissioner Sardell stated there is a company, Historical Research Associates (HRA) out of Spokane, WA. They tend to take bigger projects; they have a lot of overhead because they are a large firm. She can reach out to Kathryn Burk-Hise with HRA. She could look over in Missoula, Montana as well.

Commissioner Anderson asked if there could be some kind of public request for the Request for Proposals.

Ms. Patterson clarified that we would need someone that is qualified and meets the criteria. Commissioner Sardell suggested posting the RFP online on websites such as the Professional Historic Preservation Facebook group listing that is hosted by Cornell University and we could post of the City's Facebook page and share the link with the State Historic Preservation Office and ask them to share to the RFP.

Chairman Burns suggested Sharon Boswell, she is out of Seattle WA.

Downtown & Infill Development Standards & Design Guideline Review

No updates.

Definition of Historic Building request by DC Infill Working Group

Commissioner Sardell stated that Ms. Patterson sent this out with the packet last month.

Ms. Patterson replied that the document includes an AI generated definition of Historic Building or Property and a definition from the City Code. In terms of the definition, there does not need to be in exact answer today, but the commission can start looking at some terminology and what would be appropriate to include in the definition for the Downtown Core and the and Downtown Infill design guidelines. The goal is to try to come up with a definition of what we are trying to protect and give a bonus if someone were to protect a historic building.

AI-Generated Definition:

Historic Property/Building: A building is generally considered historic if it has significant value due to its architecture, history, engineering, archeology, or culture. It's often listed or eligible to be listed as a historic structure or building in a designated historic district. The criteria can vary, but typically, a historic building is one that is at least 50 years old and has been deemed important for its historical associations, architectural style, or contribution to the historical understanding of a place.

Commissioner Sardell shared the following on the screen with the commission:

Character defining features of a historic resource include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, and decorative details, inclusive of those features identified on a Historic Resources Inventory (Like the one we are about to do for the DC and other areas).

Further info to consider: "In addition to defining the special significance of a building, the repetition of these features within a historic district creates a visual unity at the street level that contributes to the overall cohesiveness of the district."

Specific Character Defining features of commercial buildings include

- *Cornice: A decorative band at the top of the building*
- *Roof shape: gable or hipped roof*
- *Upper story windows- windows located above the street level and vertical or horizontal orientations*
- *Lintel or mid-belt cornice: A decorative band at the top of the first floor*
- *Sign band/lintel: a flat band running above the transoms to allow for the placement of signs*
- *Storefront: A composition of the following features"*
 - *Transom: The upper portion of the storefront system, separated by a frame.*
 - *Display windows: The main portion of glass, often located within the storefront system, where goods and services are displayed.*
 - *Entry: Usually set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess, also sometimes a part of a storefront system.*
 - *Kickplate: found beneath the display window within the storefront system*
- *Architectural details: Trim, moldings, etc.*

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES OF A COMMERCIAL FAÇADE

The following illustration represents some, but not all, of the typical character-defining elements of commercial building façades.



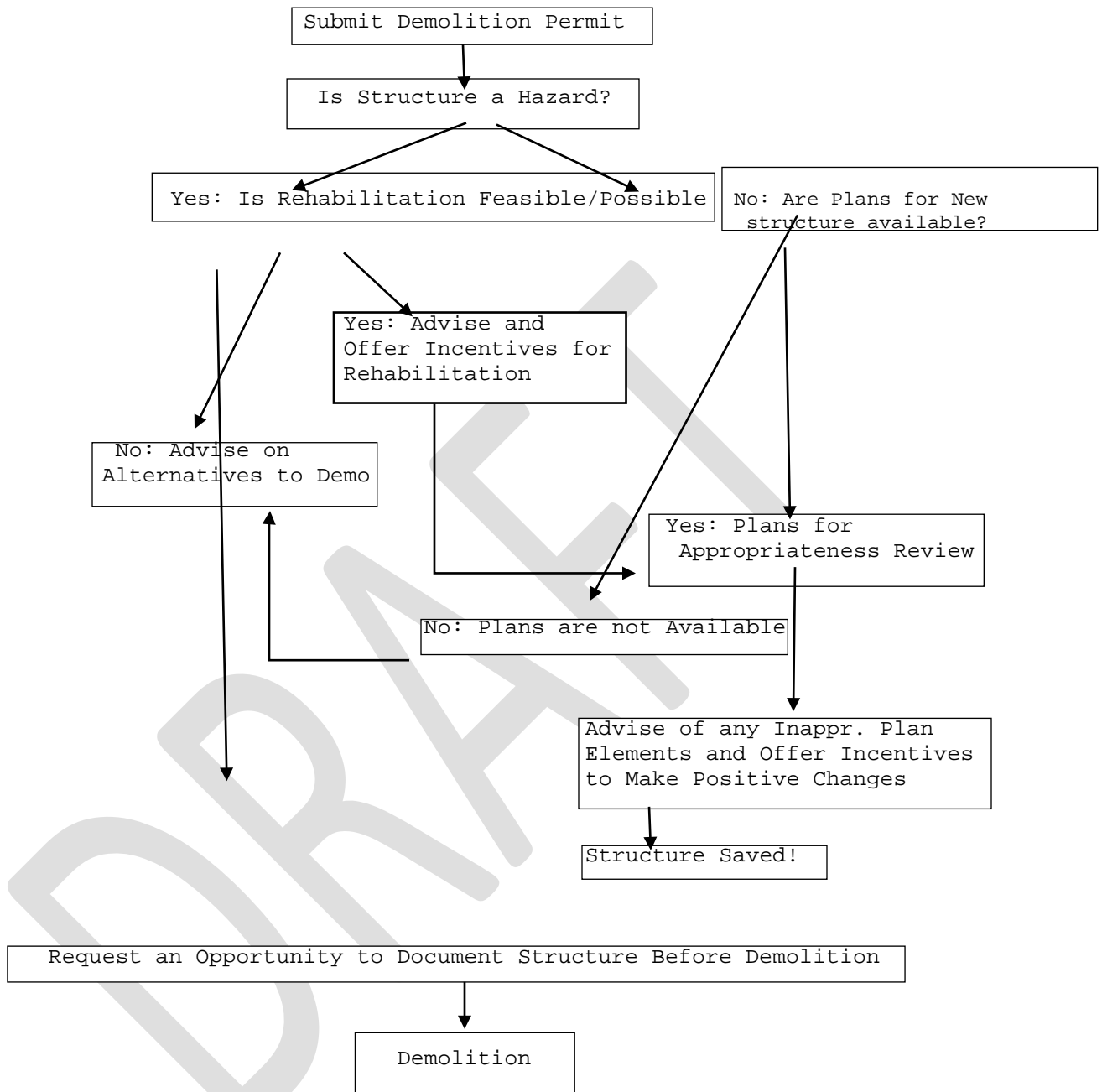
Commissioner Sardel said if we can use some of the historic inventory as a tool for some of the Downtown Core evaluation, this can be used to link the two pieces of the report as a referral might be helpful to be able to drill down and work with developers or work with property owners about what character defining features really are depending on the resource and the resources that are next to the property that are in question.

Chairman Burns stated he likes what Commissioner Sardell said, and he likes the illustration showing the character defining features. This is valuable. His concern sometimes is the lack of specificity that gets put into code. The developers will look for a loop hole. He would like to close as many of those going forward. This is very helpful. This language is very good.

Demolition Review Authority and Process:

Chairman Burns stated we are trying to get a handle on this. We need to make this specific and inclusive as possible.

Commissioner Harro stated he made a flow chart of what was discussed at the subcommittee level for the demolition review process. He tried to find a flow chart program, but couldn't find one. He looks at things like he is the developer and looking at getting around all of the regulations, which is what the commission wants to prevent. There are a few main points: whether a structure is hazardous (if that is determined by the owner or City) and if plans are available for what will replace the demolished structure. We can require them to submit plans, if they are available. It would help to be able to see what it is going to look like, but if they say there aren't any plans, then they can just side step around it, and demo the building. Maybe we need to give the commission a window to go in and look things over and take some photos, and salvage important items, such as pieces of cornice before it's all brought down.



Commissioner Anderson stated this is a great starting point.

Chairman Burns suggested focusing on this process at the next subcommittee meeting.

Commissioner Anderson asked would there be any concerns if people go for a demolition permit, would there be any other questions besides the building potential being a hazard that would be a concern.

Chairman Burns replied whether it has been determined to be a historical structure based on the definition and the input on this commission would be another consideration.

Commissioner Sardell suggested writing in on the top of the form a question that asks if the building is 50 years old or older, and does it have historic significance at the local, state or national levels. If the building does not meet these two criteria, we should not concern ourselves with the building. Regarding the hazardous nature of a building, we should tighten up the language on this. Maybe request that they submit photos of the structure. He asked when the city condemns a building, if the city produces a document.

Mr. Patterson replied that the Building Department flags it in the permit program. She will ask the Building Official for more clarification on if the City determines it is hazardous or how that is determined.

Commissioner Sardell stated there could just be rot in the floor under a refrigerator and that shouldn't rise to the level of it being flagged for demolition. There should be additional review and discussion on possible alternatives to demolition.

Chairman Burns replied this is a great start with the visual of the process for the commission.

Commissioner Sardell commented that she might have a piece of software that can pretty up Commissioner Harro's flow chart.

Chairman Burns asked who determines whether rehabilitation is possible.

Ms. Patterson replied probably the owner. Maybe the insurance company might say they will not ensure this building unless they make some significant improvements. The subcommittee spoke about cracks in the foundation, and maybe folks just say they want to demo the building.

Commissioner McCracken stated this does a good job with some of the end points and the points along the way. We are offering other options or just discussing what the other options are, and if we get an opportunity to at least document what it is there and save some of the history even if the structure is going away. There is nothing that leads to the commission to say sorry you can't do what you want to do with it.

Chairman Burns pointed out what if a developer comes in and says there is a crack in the foundation and the buildings needs to be torn down. We look at and determine it can be fixed. How do we resolve this issue?

Commissioner Sardell suggested asking the owner for a second opinion if their first evaluation says it is unsafe. She looks at buildings all of the time in her profession and sees buildings that can be restored that other people might have determined to be unsafe. The efforts of the Commission will be based on the documentation and maybe getting the information together so that it can go into a GIS map, maybe ICRIS (Idaho Cultural Resources Information System) so there is a tag somewhere of what was there prior to demolition. All we can do is to have a discussion. There might not be any way to deny something.

Commissioner Emerson commented that this is somewhat esoteric as far as whether things are in a condition that should be preserved or demolished. He gave the example of the Memorial Field grandstands, the railroad building now used for the Human Rights Education Institute and the Roosevelt School.

Chairman Burns stated his concern would also be what Commissioner Emerson stated. You can basically go into any building and find something to argue that it needs to go, e.g., knob and tube, old plumbing, cracks in the foundation, a brick structure, or that it is not earthquake proof. Someone will come up with anything for any old building.

Commissioner Harro commented it sometimes depends on the use of the building as well if it was a residence and you want to make it a commercial structure, there will be certain codes.

Commissioner McCracken stated is the person proposing to tear down the structure because they think there is no other option and this might give us an option to ask them to look into rehabilitating it or over time talk to contractors, or maybe they still decide they can't afford to do that, and still gets torn down. Sometimes homeowners do not get a second opinion and don't realize that it could be worth saving. This is giving us the opportunity to ask the question, give folks the option, and give them people to talk to in town to hear that might be worth saving.

Chairman Burns commented that the decision needs to trigger a discussion with the Historic Commission. If they come in and say that it is not able to be rehabilitated, that needs to be a discussion, and they need to show us and we can express our opinion and we can discuss the historical nature, etc.

Commissioner Anderson stated the other side of asking the homeowner to go and ask for a second option, there might more of cost to them and they will probably not do it.

Chairman Burns stated all we can do is have a discussion; we cannot shut anyone down. That brings us to replacement structure and reviewing the plans. He would like the opportunity to discuss how the new structure would fit into the neighborhood and the context around it.

Commissioner Sardell asked do we have to ask the question about the building being a structural hazard? Maybe that is the wrong question to put on the top of the flow chart. Maybe the question should be "could you provide information about the existing structure for us to review?" and that could be their home inspection report or a structural engineer's report, that would give us the information prior to any discussion with them. So rather than making it a yes or no question, making it "please provide the information" as a required step.

Ms. Patterson suggested having the subcommittee further evaluate which properties would be subject to this demolition review. For example, should it be all properties of a certain age, or within certain boundaries, etc.

Commissioner Harro suggested we talk about boundaries and age.

Commissioner McCracken also suggested the historical significance, buildings that are 50 years old or older, and maybe some combination of that.

Ms. Patterson replied that we should be clear what buildings are not subject to the review. Not every demolition permit that comes in needs this review. We should clearly note the exempted demolitions such as outbuildings, interior remodels, and buildings that are not 50 years old.

Chairman Burns stated he would like to have boundaries; this would give the commission something tangible that they can refer to. He also likes the 50-year mark and if it has historical value.

Commissioner Anderson suggested the addresses south of Harrison. Most of the historical districts are south of Harrison.

Commissioner Sardell states she likes that idea but there are a few historical buildings on Best Avenue between 4th and 15th that are fantastic older homestead houses. They would be unfortunate to lose. Those buildings, although they have subdivisions around them now, the structures related to the agriculture boundaries in Coeur d'Alene. It would be unfortunate to not have a discussion about reuse of those buildings as a commercial space or as restaurant, or office space. These buildings are at risk.

Commissioner Harro asked about the 50-year bench mark.

Commissioner Sardell stated that the 50 years of age was a bench mark from the National Park Service and the Historical Preservation Act at a National level. She stated the commission does not have to follow that if we think that there are too many resources that are falling within the 50-year rule. We could set it at

60 years or find a comfortable age. The commission also needs to be careful not to put their own personal opinion on the historic resources because each one of the members are going to have their own preference. Having something like an age of a structure might take that personal take out of it.

Liaison Miller suggested the officer's quarters that were moved from Farragut and are located north of Harrison Ave. Maybe the commission could track the historically significant structures and not exclude those buildings.

Commissioner Anderson stated she likes Commissioner Sardell's idea on age and maybe the boundaries should be all of Coeur d'Alene because there are random properties throughout the City.

Commissioner Sardell suggested looking at 65 years rather than 50 years. We can make the argument that there are too many resources for us to review with the band width of what we have. The Farragut buildings are very significant. There are also some farm houses that are also spread out in the city. Some of the Farragut buildings have been changed to outbuildings when moved. If we exclude outbuildings from the review process for the demo permit, we might lose some of the Farragut buildings.

Commissioner Emerson stated he knows who the individual is who moved some of the Farragut buildings when he was a teenager, and will try to contact him.

Chairman Burns stated the goal would be to put a specification of a year, maps and a trigger on a building so there can be a discussion.

Ms. Patterson replied there could be a smaller subcommittee that could review some small questionable ones, rather than take it forward to the full commission once the process is established.

Chairman Burns asked what does the subcommittee need to do to be able to bring something tangible forward to the next full meeting in August?

Ms. Patterson replied this is time sensitive, but this can be handled in the subcommittee.

Chairman Burns suggested having a vote at the next meeting, rather than continuing to have these discussions. We have good ideas and thoughts. We need to define what we need to do. We need to work in the next subcommittee meeting to bring something forward to the commission for a vote. Is this possible?

Commissioner Anderson replied yes. We did get closer with the discussion today. At the August 14 subcommittee meeting, there needs to be a draft for the next full meeting in August for a motion.

Ms. Patterson asked if she should invite the Building Official, Ted Lantzy, to attend the subcommittee meeting.

Chairman Burns replied yes.

Possible Historic Overly Districts

Commissioner Emerson stated that he did go to the County Court House and he requested the names of the owners on both sides of owners on Government Way. They referred him to a website to look those up.

Ms. Patterson replied she can help with that list using the City's GIS map and data.

Commissioner Emerson suggested getting the data for owners within the boundaries between Foster Avenue and Harrison Avenue.

Chairman Burns suggested Garden Avenue instead of Foster, and going up to Harrison Ave.

Commissioner Emerson replied maybe go to the Cemetery and up to Harrison Avenue. Mike Dodge is on his contact list. He owns one of the old homes in the neighborhood. He will contact Art Grant as well.

Chairman Burns asked what is the next step. Can we sit down with a group of property owners and have a discussion with them before we go wider in the neighborhood?

Commissioner Emerson replied he was eager to find out how it worked with the Garden District because it was the first model. It was a bigger deal with the National Historic Register. That was a starting point to figure out what kind of a survey, how they put it together, and who they talked to.

Chairman Burns replied they had a public meeting to explain to people what we were planning to do and get feed back that way. He thinks maybe to start with a small key group and get some input there and then we can take it to the larger community. We did talk about putting out a questionnaire. He would like to know what step to take next.

Commissioner Anderson suggested getting the list of the names and address. Commissioner Sardell suggested putting together a questionnaire and then we just send it out to the homeowners, and then follow up with a public meeting.

Ms. Patterson suggested putting the survey questions into Survey Monkey, so there would be no hard copies of the surveys to tally. Some questions might need to be reworded. The draft questionnaire needs to be reviewed and finalized.

Chairman Burns agreed that it needs to be reviewed and defined more clearly.

Ms. Patterson suggested having an informational meeting first, that can help people see the big picture. With the Garden District neighbors, there was an informational meeting first to have their input and then the survey was done. That way it can allay any fears.

Liaison Miller stated she gave about three names of people that live in the neighborhood for a number of years if you are including the alphabet streets later on. She will send a list of homeowners and phone numbers to Commissioner Emerson so he can contact them.

Chairman Burns asked do we want to expand further then the Government Way corridor for the list of homes for the mailing list.

Commissioner Emerson replied he would like to expand it. The Government Way corridor is very distinct from the ABC streets. There are homes in there that were built for the sawmill employees. When you go east from 1st and 2nd Streets, there is a real mix in there.

Ms. Patterson replied the commission has talked before about doing three separate survey options. We can tally them separately with the three separate links, and if the neighborhoods all agree that would be great. But if they have three different opinions, then it would be easy to divide them into three separate areas or not at all.

Chairman Burns suggested that way we can move forward based on the feedback.

Ms. Patterson suggested that the first meeting could be informational and there will be three different areas and someone could be identified as a captain. Then there could be separate meetings later and then that group could talk about their vision and what they would like to see.

Chairman Burns replied he likes the idea of coming up with a core group to start with. In regards to the Garden District process, it began with the board of directors. It came from the neighborhood, and expanded from there.

Commissioner Anderson suggested a date for a meeting to have a deadline.

Chairman Burns commented that there are a couple of projects already bound by a deadline. One is the moratorium in December.

Commissioner Sardell suggested the commission could have the neighbors meet after the holidays in January.

Chairman Burns commented he wants to have certain priorities. The demolition is a hot priority, and the Downtown corridor. Getting a kickoff in January would be great.

Commissioner Shaffer suggested that starting the process of communication and raising awareness in the neighborhood for six months before we have a neighborhood meeting would create the interest now and let them talk about it and stew on it for a period of time. That way they can come with some concrete thoughts. It will stir some interest. After the holidays would be ideal for the meeting.

Liaison Miller stated the subcommittee can continue to do the work and not take away from the moratorium work. January will be a great time to launch it. Maybe the commission could come up with a paragraph describing the effort and it could be posted on the City's website and Facebook page.

Chairman Burns suggested the commission start speaking to individuals that they know in the neighborhoods and float what they are thinking about and try to get any feedback before January.

Commissioner Emerson suggested having Don Pishner to come to one of the commission meetings.

Liaison Miller said that would be great to have Don attend a meeting.

TRACKING TIME:

Chairman Burns reminded the commission to track their time and send it to Commissioner Anderson.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Emerson, to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Submitted by Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant