

EBEY’S LANDING HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS’ HEARING ROOM
August 22, 2019

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT/ROLL CALL

Chair Stig Carlson, Commissioners Katherine Baxter, Bob Clay, Marshall Bronson, Kristi Lovelady, and Darrell Nance.

STAFF PRESENT

Coupeville Planning Director Owen Dennison, Island County Senior Planner Michelle Pezley, Island County Planner Tansy Schroeder, Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Manager Kristen Griffin, Ebey’s Reserve Preservation Coordinator Jason Benson, Recording Secretary Claudia Golden.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Carlson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Staff requested changes to the agenda with the withdrawal of COA 096-19 and a requested deferral of COA 098-19. The agenda for the regular Historic Preservation Commission meeting of August 22, 2019, was approved with revisions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the regular Historic Preservation Commission meeting of July 25, 2019, were approved as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Chair Carlson provided a description of the role of the Commission, its legal basis and process, and the standards and guidelines on which its decisions are based. He asked commissioners to declare any conflicts of interest or bias regarding the applications on the agenda and to disclose any ex parte communications or site visits. Commissioner Bronson visited all sites.

Chair Carlson opened the hearing for *COA 103-19: Barbara and Von Summers; 12 NW Front St, Coupeville, alterations to a historic building (Coupeville Cash Store)* and asked for the staff report.

Planning Director Dennison noted that the proposal had been revised subsequent to distribution of agenda packets. He described the revised proposal, its context, and surrounding development, and provided staff’s analysis of compliance with the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines. Historic photos of the Coupeville Cash Store were presented. Staff found the proposal consistent with applicable guidelines with two conditions.

Chair Carlson opened the floor for Commissions questions to staff.

Commissioner Lovelady asked for clarification of staff’s analysis of the leaded glass with diamond-shaped panes on the east façade. Staff noted that, while the Design Guidelines state

that leaded glass is generally not an appropriate window material within the Reserve, the window is existing in another location on the building and the proposed location will have limited public visibility. Commissioner Lovelady noted that distinctions between the submitted elevations and the existing windows and doors on the front façade. Staff referred the questions to the applicant.

Commissioner Baxter voiced her appreciation of the efforts put into the design of the project. She asked whether the wood or canvas awning was original. Staff stated that the record was unclear on which version was original and noted that some historic photos show no awning. Responding to Commissioner Baxter, Planner Dennison noted that the embellishments originally proposed for the deck railing had been removed from the proposal.

Chair Carlson asked for and received clarification of the gate between 10 and 12 NW Front Street with regard to future public beach access.

Reserve Manager Griffin provided a review of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, noting that, of the four treatment options, the regulations and Reserve Design Guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Rehabilitation Standards. The Rehabilitation Standards are intended to return a historic property to a state of utility that allows an efficient, contemporary use through repair and restoration while preserving those portions and features of the property that are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values. She stated that this definition assumes some level of compromise in review of applications. While making new openings in external walls of historic buildings can be detrimental to historic character, she stated that the choices made in the proposed design were good ones. Reserve Manager Griffin noted that some of the proposed changes will correct prior inconsistencies with the Rehabilitation Standards. One of the basic principles in putting new openings in a historic building was avoiding placing them on the primary character-defining facades, which, on this building, were the front and the back. She believed that the new design that resulted from compromise between staff and the applicant represented an overall benefit. Improved aspects of the proposal included moving the second story door and landing on the east façade back from the front façade, replacement of inappropriate windows, and removal of the Juliet balconies. With regard to the new balcony on the rear of the building, she believed that the material choice was appropriate. The new balcony was a compromise that would not harm the building and would support economic use of the property. She concluded, stating that the continued survival of the historic downtown required ongoing infusions of investment in the buildings. Expensive investments that are important to the streetscape and the waterfront were relocation of the electrical meters and bringing the sewer system up to modern standards.

Preservation Coordinator Jason Benson stated he was eager to work with the new owners on any siding issues.

Chair Carlson opened the floor for public comment.

Owner Barbara Summers addressed the Commission. Ms. Summers stated she had no issue with staff's recommended conditions. She would be looking for true divided light windows. She agreed the awning is a character defining element and clarified that they will not be changing the doors on the front façade as part of the current proposal.

Responding to Commissioner Lovelady, Ms. Summers stated that the initial phase will include all improvements shown in the application except the west addition. The current phase will include replacing the lower rear windows if not disruptive to the current tenant. Improvements to the front façade will occur as part of a later phase.

Commissioners Clay, Nance, and Bronson praised the preservation project.

Chair Carlson closed public comment and asked for a motion.

Motion

Commissioner Bronson moved to recommend granting a Certificate of Appropriateness with the conditions recommended by staff.

- Prior to removal of any siding, the applicant shall obtain concurrence from the Historic Preservation Coordinator on the need for replacement of individual boards. Alternatively, the applicant can provide an evaluation of the condition of existing siding from a qualified contractor with expertise in historic preservation and follow the contractor's recommendations for restoration and replacement.
- Muntins shall have relief elements external to the window (above rather than between the panes).

Seconded by Commissioner Clay. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Clay suggested that, prior to any future movie permits, the Town document the condition of the historic buildings involved, for reference.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Senior Planner Pezley presented a staff-proposed package of amendments to the Town and County codes regarding the categorization of Certificate of Appropriateness review levels [exempt, Level A, Level B, and Level C] for various development types

Reserve Manager Griffin commented on design review of projects in non-historical neighborhoods with no historic buildings where the current level of review is appears excessive for the potential level of impact to the neighborhood and the Reserve. She noted that no changes are proposed to exemptions for active agricultural projects. She also commented on the inclusion of projects on contributing roadways that are character-defining features of the Reserve.

Commissioner Bronson asked for clarification of the historic period by which historic resources are designated. Reservation Manager Griffin noted that the Reserve connects to the historic preservation world through a national register historic district. She stated that the context is up to 1945. However, the Reserve has a forward-rolling period of significance as the Reserve is intended to represent a continuum of development. In determining historic significance, the time period of development is not necessarily important but whether a building, site, or structure is listed as a contributing structure in the Reserve's inventory of historic places.

Commissioner Lovelady asked for and received clarification of exemptions.

Commissioner Baxter asked how property owners are made aware of the guidelines and how the requirements can be made more transparent. Reserve Manager Griffin stated that the Reserve is working to improve outreach, including handouts and better online resources.

Commissioner Baxter suggested a mentoring program to connect those who have been through the process with novices who may be intimidated by a seemingly monolithic process. Reserve Manager Griffin added that appropriate training of counter personnel was particularly effective in improving communication with the public.

Chair Carlson asked if there will be an opportunity for the Commission to discuss the specific details of the guidelines. Senior Planner Pezley responded that discussion of guideline amendments is pending as a future phase. The current code amendments are intended to streamline the design review process but are only a part of a larger work program

Commissioner Nance asked for and received clarification of the next step in the process.

Commissioner Clay suggested a joint meeting with the County Commissioners, Town Council and Reserve to discuss the proposed code amendments.

Chair Carlson asked if staff needed action by the Commission at this point or just direction. Planning Director Dennison stated that informal feedback was sought.

Commissioner Lovelady stated that it would be helpful for staff to provide examples for levels of review that are proposed to be reduced.

ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was adjourned by Chair Carlson at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted



Claudia Golden, Recording Secretary



Owen Dennison, Planning Director