

**APPROVED OCTOBER 8, 2015**

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
SUMMARY MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**

**September 17, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Commissioner Tays called the meeting of the Edmonds Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:30 p.m. in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room of City Hall, 121 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Emily Scott, Chair (arrived at 5:50 p.m.)  
Gerry Tays  
Sandra Allbery  
Chris Deiner-Karr  
Eric Livingston  
Tim Raetzloff  
Dave Teitzel  
Lora Petso, City Council Member

**STAFF PRESENT**

Kernen Lien, Senior Planner

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT**

Larry Vogel, Vice Chair  
Steve Waite (excused)  
Kristiana Johnson, City Council Member

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WINDOW REPLACEMENT FOR THE SCHUMACHER BUILDING (316 MAIN STREET)**

Mr. Lien reviewed that, as per the public notice, the purpose of the special meeting is to consider a Certificate of Appropriateness for window replacement on the Schumacher Building or potentially removing the building from the Edmonds Register of Historic Places. He advised that he received an email from the property owner asking that the property be removed from the Register. He responded, respectfully asking her to postpone her decision until after the special meeting. He further asked her to consider leaving the property on the Register if the Commission approves a Certificate of Appropriateness for window replacement. He did not receive a response.

Mr. Lien provided a historic photograph of the Schumacher Building, as well as a picture illustrating the proposed replacement windows. For the Commission's information, he also provided the Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which has been adopted by the Commission, as well as a technical bulletin regarding windows.

The Commission discussed whether or not approval of the proposed window replacement would set a bad precedent for future situations. Mr. Lien specifically noted the following from the Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use.*** The dividers on vinyl windows go in between the glass, so they would not have the same texture as the existing wood muntins.
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*** Based on the Commission's previous discussion, the windows are one of the defining architectural features of the building.

6. ***Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. When the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.*** As per the Commission's previous discussion, it appears that the windows could be repaired or replaced to match the existing windows. Commissioner Tays clarified the, upon his request, the property owner's assistant contacted a company that specializes in wood windows and learned that it would cost approximately three times more to replace the existing windows in kind. However, the company was never asked to inspect the windows to determine their condition and identify a cost for rehabilitation rather than replacement. He summarized that, at this time, the Commission does not have clear information about the condition of the existing windows. He asked if the property owner would be amenable to at least replacing the front windows in kind, and was told no.

The Commission discussed that the building has been modified numerous times since it was originally constructed, and it is likely that the windows were last replaced when the building was remodeled in 1987. Commissioner Raetzloff pointed out that the changes that were made in 1987 appear to be consistent with the Department of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and were intended to bring the building back to its original state. The windows were replaced in kind in terms of fabric, workmanship and design.

Commissioner Teitzel asked the Commissioners to consider whether or not they would have approved the building for the Register if the wooden windows had already been replaced with vinyl windows prior to application. He expressed his belief that the Commission would have approved the nomination, even with the vinyl windows. Mr. Lien recalled that "historic integrity" was discussed when the nomination for the Schumacher Building was brought before the Commission, and the Commission carefully considered all of the changes that have occurred since the building was originally constructed. He reminded the Commission of the presentation that was provided to them about a year ago about how to identify the historic integrity of a building.

Mr. Lien said he does not believe the proposed window replacement meets the criteria for approving a Certificate of Appropriateness based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. As Mr. Chave noted at the last meeting, the proposed window design is inconsistent with the historic character of the building.

Mr. Lien referred to a written statement submitted by Commissioner Vogel, who was unable to attend the meeting, which pointed out that if the property is removed from the Register, the Commission would have no say over future changes. Keeping it on the Register would at least keep the Commission's ore in the water. While he understands the need to maintain standards, denying the Certificate of Appropriateness would, in his opinion, eliminate the City's ability to influence the preservation and protection of this important piece of heritage. Commissioner Deiner Karr concurred with Commissioner Vogel's concern about taking the property off the Register.

Mr. Lien advised that the property is owner is not proposing to change the size of the window openings, so the vinyl windows could be replaced with wooden windows at some point in the future. Commissioner Tays noted that the property owner has not submitted an actual proposal to confirm that the size of the window openings will not be changed. There was some concern that it is difficult for the Commission to make a final decision without having actual plans and specifications before them, and Mr. Lien briefly reviewed the standard practice for reviewing development proposals associated with properties on the Register.

The Commission reviewed the property owner's current proposal and discussed various alternatives to address their concerns. They all agreed that it would be better if dividers were added inside the vinyl windows to simulate the existing wooden muntins. To clarify whether or not the Commission has the ability to place conditions on approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Mr. Lien read the following from the City's code:

*"The Commission's recommendation shall be in writing and shall state the findings of fact and reasons relied upon reaching this decision. Any conditions agreed to by the applicant in this review process shall be conditions of approval of the permits granted. If the owner agrees to the Commission's recommendations, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall be awarded by the Commission according to the standards established by the Commission's rules."*

Chair Scott pointed out that the existing windows are not original, so the proposal would not be damaging any original materials. If an historic district is created in the future, regulations could be put in place that would require the windows to go back closer to their original design if and when they are replaced again. She summarized that while the vinyl windows would alter the historic integrity of the building, they would not change the building's historic significance. She did not believe it would be worth losing the property from the Register if the Commission denies the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Chair Scott summarized that the Commission does not have the ability to require the applicant to replace the existing windows with wooden windows or repair the existing windows. Doing so could result in the loss of additional properties from the Register, and property owners would be leery of placing properties on the Register in the future. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the Commission has denied two nominations for the Register this year because the structures lacked historic integrity.

Commissioner Raetzloff commented that as long as the shape and size of the windows will not change and the applicant is willing to add false muntins, he would be inclined to support approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness. He does not want the building to go off the Register because the Commission denies the Certificate of Appropriateness for a change that most people will not even notice.

Commissioner Teitzel agreed with Commissioner Raetzloff. While it would be great if the property owner would have worked with the Commission earlier in the process, the building is an important artifact to Edmonds and he would like to maintain the ability to control what happens to the building in the future to the extent possible by keeping it on the Register.

Commissioner Allbery said the Commission is faced with a no-win situation. The proposed change would not alter the original essence of the structure, which has been lost in many of the historic buildings in Edmonds. On the other hand, the Commission needs to maintain a certain level of standard. She would be more supportive of the vinyl windows if the red trim were eliminated and false muntins were added to make the windows appear the same from the street view.

Commissioner Livingston commented that although the proposed vinyl windows are not consistent with the original wooden windows, adding the muntins will result in a similar appearance.

Commissioner Tays said he will vote against the Certificate of Appropriateness based on the precedent that it sets.

Vice Chair Scott suggested that the Commission have a study session in early 2016 about the process and criteria that should be considered when making decisions in the future. The study session could include a review of the difficult cases that have come before them in the recent months. She said she does not want to lose the building from the Register, but she does not like the fact that the Commission's plaque will be on a building that has vinyl windows. She feels better about the proposal in that it would not alter the original shape and location of the windows. She said she would reluctantly support the Certificate of Appropriateness if the applicant agrees to add false muntins and the color scheme is maintained.

COMMISSIONER RAETZLOFF MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR THE PROPOSED WINDOW REPLACEMENT ON THE SCHUMAKER BUILDING IF THE SIZE, SHAPE AND LOCATION OF THE WINDOW FRAMES IS NOT ALTERED AND IF FALSE MUNTINS (ALMOND IN COLOR TO MATCH THE WINDOWS) ARE ADDED TO PRESERVE THE APPEARANCE. IF THE APPLICANT DOES NOT ACCEPT THE CONDITIONS, THE COMMISSION WILL ALLOW THE BUILDING TO BE REMOVED FROM THE REGISTER. COMMISSIONER ALLBERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-1, WITH COMMISSIONER TAYS VOTING IN OPPOSITION.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

**APPROVED**