

APPROVED MAY 8TH

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

April 1, 2014

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Tays called the meeting of the Edmonds Historic Preservation Commission to order at 5:30 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Conference Room of City Hall, 121 – 5th Avenue North. He read the Commission's mission statement.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Gerry Tays, Chair
Tim Raetzloff, Vice Chair
Sandra Allbery
Chris Deiner-Karr
Emily Scott
Larry Vogel
Steve Waite
Kristiana Johnson, City Council Member
Lora Petso, City Council Member (arrived at 5:35 p.m.)

STAFF PRESENT

Shane Hope, Development Services Director
Kernen Lien, Senior Planner
Diane Cunningham, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS

Michael Houser, Washington State Department of
Archaeology and Historic Preservation
John and Shirley Pauls

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMMISSIONER SCOTT MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2014 AS SUBMITTED. COMMISSIONER DEINER-KARR SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

The agenda was changed to place the discussion about the 2015 Historic Calendar prior to the presentation by Mr. Houser. The remainder of the agenda was accepted as presented.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

No one in the audience expressed a desire to address the Commission during this portion of the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

2015 Historic Calendar Then and Now

Commissioner Vogel reported that he met with former Commissioner Eccleshall to review pictures and select historic sites for the 2015 calendar. He will take current pictures of the sites, and Mr. Eccleshall will start working on the calendar layout.

As per the Commission's previous decision, Mr. Lien announced that Mr. Chave is working on a grant application to fund an expansion of the City's historic inventory survey. It was also discussed that the City Council allocated funding for the 2015 calendar.

PRESENTATION BY MICHAEL HOUSER, ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN AND MANAGER OF THE STATE'S HISTORIC REGISTER, WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION.

Michael Houser, Architectural Historian and Manager of the State's Historic Register, Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, explained the State's process for assessing the historic integrity of properties that are nominated for the Register. He noted that "historic integrity" is defined as the identity of a property as evidenced by the survival of physical characteristic that are still there. It is also the ability of the property to convey its historic significance based on what is left. He had a discussion with the Commission about the criteria the state considers when determining historic integrity:

- Location – Has the property been moved and taken out of its historic context?
- Design – Have the elements that created the design (form, mass, style, and space around it) been changed?
- Setting – Has the setting or the structure's surroundings significantly changed?
- Materials – Are the original materials still intact, or have they been replaced or covered up?
- Workmanship – Can you see the craftsmanship that took place when the structure was originally built?
- Feeling – Does the structure make you feel like you have been transported back in time?
- Association – How is the structure connected to other events?

Mr. Houser explained that once it has been determined that a structure has integrity, based on the seven aspects listed above, the next step is to identify its historic significance using questions such as:

- Is the structure more than 50 years old?
- What is the period of significance for the resource or the length of time a property was associated with an important event? If significantly altered, were alterations made during the period of significance or after?
- What were the character defining features of the property during its period of significance and are they still present?
- How do you assess alterations and additions, particularly those that occurred more than 50 years ago? Does the newer material replicate what used to be there or are architectural details obscured by adding stuff to the building? How does it affect the overall character and integrity of the property?

Mr. Houser provided numerous photographs to illustrate how the criteria and questions would be applied to various structures. He emphasized that unless a property has been determined to have historic integrity, there is no need to determine its historic significance. There must be historic integrity in order for a structure to be listed on the State and National Registers. The Commission spent a fair amount of time discussing how the process outlined by Mr. Houser could be applied to historic properties in Edmonds to determine their integrity, significance, and suitability for the Edmonds Register of Historic Places. Mr. Houser pointed out that the State does not designate portions of buildings as historic; its either all or nothing. In addition, the State and National Registers do not typically include sites where there are no structures.

The Commission had a discussion with Mr. Houser regarding the Bassett House, located at 729 Main Street and its eligibility for the Register. It was noted that the house is thought to have been built between 1888 and 1891 by the logging company and that people important to Edmonds history once lived there. However, none of this information has been verified. In addition, significant alterations have been made since the structure was originally built.

Mr. Houser explained that it is up to the Commission to determine whether or not a structure has historic integrity, based on the standards they have set. However, he cautioned against setting the bar so low that it impacts the integrity of the Register, itself, and sets a precedent for future requests to alter other historic properties on the Register.

The Commission continued to have a general discussion about what the City's standards should be for determining the integrity and significance of potentially historic structures, as well as a more specific discussion about the qualifications of the Bassett House for the Register. Mr. Houser noted that because they do not have factual information about who lived in the house in the early years, the question is whether or not the structure has integrity. He expressed his belief that it does not, and it would not be added to either the State or National Registers. Nor would it be considered a contributing property in a historic district.

A straw poll vote was taken, and the majority of the Commissioners indicated they did not support adding the Bassett House to the Register.

The Commission had a lengthy discussion about the process, standards and criteria they should use to determine whether or not properties are eligible for the Register in the future.

The Commission discussed that there are numerous properties in Edmonds that are eligible for the Register. Chair Tays challenged them to spend more time focusing on their mission, which is to add properties to the Register. The Commission agreed to focus more of their time getting historic properties on the Register.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Registration Committee

There was no report.

Education and Outreach Committee

There was no report.

Preservation Planning Committee

There was no report.

South Snohomish County Historical Society

Commissioner Allbery provided an update on the Edmonds Museum remodel project. She announced that a small event to celebrate the opening of the remodeled facility will be held on May 2nd, just prior to the first summer market event on May 3rd.

OTHER REPORTS

There were no other reports.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was scheduled on the agenda.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Continued Discussion on Nomination of the Bassett House at 729 Main Street for the Historic Register

This discussion took place earlier on the agenda.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR COMMENTS

There were no additional chair comments.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

The staff and Commissioners thanked Mr. Houser for his informative presentation, and Commissioner Allbery announced her intention to attend the State Preservation Conference in Wenatchee in May.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

APPROVED