

Historic Preservation Review Board – August 13, 2008 @ 7:00 PM

The meeting of the Historic Preservation Review Board was called to order by Chair, Mary Jane Anderson, at 7:04 PM at Town Hall.

Chair Anderson called the roll.

Members present: Mary Jane Anderson, Chair; David Waldron, Michael Jean Carpentier, Kevin Peterson and Matt Shildneck.

Also Present: Sandy Strehlou, HPRB Coordinator and Jerry Riley Director of Operations for Spring Street International School.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for HPRB meetings of July 23, 2008 were approved with corrections. Referring to, Suggestion 5 Task 9, the word “possibly” should be removed. Coordinator Strehlou also suggested the board reconsider the update of the manual recommendation (pg 4 G. color “one neutral base color”) on color in light of the concrete stain on the Churchill building.

Design Review Spring Street International School

Jerry Riley, the director of operations for Spring Street International School presented the board with plans for the school’s new recording studio. The studio is being built in the modular section of the Spring Street complex and is not in one of the School’s iconic historic buildings. The school received a grant and donations to complete this project and will be using donated labor. Board member David Waldron is the architect for the project and has done a master plan for the school. This review is voluntary and it is understood that the modular buildings do not fit the general guidelines.

Design Review

General Guidelines (p 69) – No, The building does not fit the guidelines.

Compatibility Defined: (p 70):

Scale – No

Massing – No

Roof – Yes

Setback – NA

Entry – NA

Openings – No

Detailed Guidelines: (p 71 – 72)

Building Exterior – No
Materials – No
Landscaping – Yes – The Board recommends landscaping for screening
Fencing – NA
Secondary Structures – NA
Signage – NA
Utilities - NA

With the design review, the applicant's obligations under the historic preservation language in the ordinance were fulfilled, despite the fact that the project does not meet the guidelines. The Board understands the limitations of the applicant and instructed Strehlou to reflect this in the design review summary document. After the review Mr. Riley took his leave.

Historic Landmarks

The board agreed with Coordinator Strehlou that completing the Historic Landmark language and proposing a few properties for landmark status would be a fitting project for the board to complete for the celebration of Friday Harbor's Centennial. A general discussion ensued regarding the criteria for landmark designation. Acknowledging that local designation is typically less rigorous than state or national designation.

The board discussed how to deal with altered or modified buildings. After 50 years alterations may retain their own historic significance. Being in the inventory means a structure has been here a long time where as landmark status should be seen as a "gold star" rating. Coordinator Strehlou commented that being rigorous in recognition of landmarks and having fewer of them may be a good strategy. She also remarked that the language of the criteria must be technically solid and able to stand up to challenges.

The Board identified the following as issues that will need to be addressed before bringing any language to the Town Council for adoption:

1. How can the six criteria for designation be quantified so as to ensure consistent application?
2. Before adopting a designation program, the Board needs to be sure that the ordinance effectively applies to 100 year old buildings as well as 60 year old buildings.
3. Should the designation criteria be written to more closely reflect state and national standards if doing so will make buildings that have been significantly altered 50 or few years ago ineligible for landmarking?
4. Should some or all of the current and future Town of Friday Harbor preservation incentives be tied to local landmark designation?

5. Should the landmarking program be extended to historic properties outside the historic district?
6. Should approval of the property owner be required before an historic property is eligible for landmark designation?

Coordinator Strehlou suggested that the board review and consider the 6 criteria of historic significance prior to the next meeting/landmark program work session.

Administrative Review

Coordinator Strehlou informed the board of a recent decision to administratively review and approve an application to re-shingle of the oldest house in the Wisteria Court complex. The applicant's application packet was very thorough and proposed to replace cedar shakes with comp shingle. The HPRB has recently approved similar projects administratively. Strehlou recommended application of the admin review; Chair Anderson's approved.

Mary Jane Anderson, Chair

Peggy Sue McRae
8:45 Meeting adjourned