

APPROVED

Forest Grove Historic Landmarks Board
Community Auditorium, 1915 Main Street
August 22, 2017 -- 7:15 P.M. Page 1 of 2

Members Present: Jennifer Brent, George Cushing, MJ Guidetti-Clapshaw, Larissa Whalen-Garfias, Kelsey Trostle, Holly Tsur (1 vacancy)
Staff Present: James Reitz
Council Liaison: Tom Johnston was absent
Citizens Present: 05 (Claude Romig, Scott McCahon, Bernadette Niederer and Dave Pinyerd (HPNW), Melody Haveluck)

1. **Call to Order:** Tsur opened the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

2. **Citizen Communication:** None.

3. **Action Items / Discussion:**

A. **Preservation Grant Request – 1653 Birch Street (Washington County tax lot 1S306BD15000). Applicant: Claude Romig. File Number 311-17-000035-PLNG.** Tsur introduced Claude Romig who described his project as a repair of the cornice, fascia and soffits. He explained that the distinctive rain gutters on his house - known as hidden gutters - allowed water to overflow and drain onto the wood underneath. These hidden gutters were basically just a dip in the roof line and they frequently overflow onto the cornice, fascia and soffits. He had them repaired about 10 years ago but they have rotted out again. This project would repair the damage, and the new work would be primed; the finish coat would wait because he intends to paint the whole house next year. He had looked into installing more traditional gutters, but they would cost upwards of \$12,000 and they would not be authentic to the original construction of the house. The Board felt that although the work might need to be done again in another 10 to 15 years, it was still a worthwhile project. **Guidetti-Clapshaw/Whelan-Garfias to approve a \$1,000 grant. Motion carried unanimously.**

B. **Preservation Grant Request – 1306 Birch Street (Washington County tax lot 1S306CA05500). Applicant: Scott McCahon. File Number 311-17-000037-PLNG.** Tsur introduced Scott McCahon who described his project as a foundation stabilization effort. He explained that one wall of his basement had severely cracked and the wall was collapsing into the basement. He also noted that he had some water leakage into the basement but he was not dealing with that at this time, only the stabilization of the wall.

McCahon said that he had contacted a structural engineer who recommended a technique called Power Braces which adds steel beams between the floor and the ceiling joists. These braces would be in contact with the wall and hold it in place. They can even tighten them up over time and eventually bring the wall back to vertical.

He had already had the work done due the relative emergency status of the wall deflection that, if allowed to continue unabated, might have caused even more damage to the house. The Board questioned whether a grant should be awarded for work already completed. Staff advised it was the Board's policy not to award that kind of grant and that it was the Board's decision as to whether or not to deviate from the policy.

Cushing suggested that the Board award the grant because of the nature of the repair work, noting that if it had not been done in a timely manner the house could have suffered even greater damage. He thought that the grant should be awarded because of the unusual situation. Tsur expressed concern that doing so could set a precedent for future grants that the Board might not like to approve. She noted that the application states that grants would not be given for work completed. A copy of the grant form was studied but the specific mention of the requirement could not be found. McCahon said he didn't remember seeing that stipulation or he would have worked to fulfill that requirement.

The Board decided that as this was an unusual situation and, not being able to find the requirement of grant approval before starting work, that they could offer the grant. **Cushing/Brent to approve a \$1,000 grant. Motion carried unanimously.**

- C. **Original Town Resurvey** – The consultant team from HPNW presented a survey area map, covering the area from Hawthorne Street to “B” Street, and 16th to 21st avenues. It was noted the Original Town plat was formalized in 1872. It was last surveyed in 1993 with a 50-year building-age threshold but in this survey the threshold will be 35 years, to span the gap up to when the area might be surveyed again.

They commented that the survey was not designed to enlarge existing historic districts, but rather to determine areas for potential future districts such as in downtown, as well as generally updating the inventory. In the Hawthorne Street area where they were working today, they noted that many of the homes seem to have vinyl siding and/or windows. They expected to have the survey completed and results available at the October 24th meeting.

- D. **Public Safety Open House:** Cushing noted that the event will be held on October 14th. He said that unlike in previous open houses, the Fire Marshal said the Board could not invite for-profit vendors such as earthquake retro-fit contractors. He has contacted NW Natural Gas and they are planning to attend; and he’s going to contact the State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) office to invite someone from their staff.

The Board discussed Whalen-Garfias’s kit homes but felt that might not be conducive to a public safety open house. With further discussion one item suggested was to develop an earthquake preparedness kit with a checklist describing what it should contain. Garfias and Guidetti-Clapshaw said they would work on this and some other ideas, to be discussed at the September meeting.

Cushing will send a list of local homes that had received grants for retrofits to Tsur so she can obtain photos of them for a display board.

- E. **Media Outreach – Editorial Calendar:** Trostle said that the *News Times* decided to not run the article on selling a historic home, as they felt it was promoting one firm over the others in town. She said though that with some minor edits, the FHFG would be glad to include this article in their newsletter.

Cushing said that he has started working on an earthquake preparedness article for the *News Times* and had some ideas about content, but would be careful to not mention any specific business.

4. **Old Business/New Business:**

- Approval of HLB Meeting Minutes. **The meeting minutes of July 25, 2017 were approved with minor edits.**
- Council Liaison Report: No report as Johnston was absent. Several Board members expressed concern that Councilor Johnston had now missed three meetings in a row and that the Board was not getting regular updates about City business. Tsur said she would contact Johnston by email and ask about his attendance, and may contact the mayor for his input.
- FHFG Report: Haveluck said that the Corn Roast will be September 16th. A new event has been added: a scarecrow competition. She also said that they are looking for actors for the Grave Matters tour on October 7th.
- Staff Update: Reitz reported that Roman Ozeruga would be appointed as the new Board member at the September 11 City Council meeting.

5. **Adjournment:** The August 22, 2017 meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.