



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 3/22

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

City Hall

Remote Meeting

Wednesday January 5, 2022 - 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Dean Barnes

Taber Caton

Roi Chang

Kristen Johnson

Ian Macleod

Lawrence Norman

John Rodezno

Harriet Wasserman

Staff

Sarah Sodt

Erin Doherty

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Russell Coney

Matt Inpanbutr

Lora-Ellen McKinney

Acting Chair Kristen Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

In-person attendance is currently prohibited per Washington State Governor's Proclamation No. 20-28.5. Meeting participation is limited to access by the WebEx Event link or the telephone call-in line provided on agenda.

ROLL CALL

010522.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

Spencer Howard, Northwest Vernacular encouraged the board to review the Battelle-Talaris landmark nomination, as the intention of the original designers Richard Haag and NBBJ is well laid out there. He said there is a lot of moving parts in the site and buildings. All that information in the nomination led to the designation in 2013 under four standards of both landscape and the buildings in recognition of their importance. Having that background information to understand what is being presented in the briefings is key. He encouraged the board to review the guidelines for the treatment of cultural landscapes: Landscapes are three-dimensional just like buildings and there are established guidelines just like for buildings for managing change that does not diminish their historic significance. The guidelines are key tools for being able to do that. Vegetation has a life cycle which is why regeneration plan based on thorough understanding of the original design and plantings is used as a management tool to support the retention and adaptive changes to use. Based on the scale of the proposed redevelopment, such a plan should be done for the site as a first step to inform planning and to inform decisions. As a design landscape the open space is not vacant land. You have to understand what you are dealing with in order to make decisions. You need to be able to understand what vegetation, topography, circulation, structures, spatial organization and water features are original to the site and what their role in the original design was. He encouraged reading the nomination report which provides a lot of the background coupled with the guidelines.

010522.2 MEETING MINUTES

November 17, 2021
MM/SC/HW/DB 8:00 Minutes approved.

010522.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

010522.31 Byrd Barr Place / former Fire Station #23
722 18th Avenue
Proposed exterior light fixtures and vent

Andreas Baatz, SHKS Architects provided a brief overview of the building which was constructed in 1908. He proposed three new light fixtures on the west façade and a gas fireplace vent on the south façade. He said the original lamps were removed in the 1960s. He said new lamp size and style was guided by Secretary of Interior Standards and the salient features of the original lamps. He said the new lamp style maintains the size and dimensions of the original lamp as well as placement at the masonry keystone elements. He said the lamps are steel with flame sprayed powder coating. He said the new lamp is compatible yet differentiated. He proposed installing 6" diameter fireplace vent through exterior masonry as going through roof is not feasible.

Ms. Doherty said the vent could be reviewed administratively but is presented here along with the light fixtures for simplicity.

Ms. Johnson said it is a beautiful building.

Ms. Wasserman said she liked the thought that went into the light fixture design and noted the new are distinguishable from old, yet compatible.

Mr. Macleod said he is picky about light fixtures and noted what was proposed is kind of custom and referential without being a replica. He said a vent is just a vent.

Ms. Johnson said it is very nice and is easy to approve.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application and issue a Certificate of Approval for the exterior alterations at former Fire Station #23 / Byrd Barr Place, 722 18th Avenue, as per the attached submittal.

EXPLANATION AND FINDINGS

This action is based on the following:

1. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 A, *the extent to which the proposed alteration or significant change would adversely affect the features or characteristics described in Ordinance 106050.*
 - a. The proposed alterations and changes to do not dramatically alter the building's appearance, and the lighting is in a location originally intended for light fixtures.
2. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 B, *the reasonableness or lack thereof of the proposed alterations or significant change in light of other alternatives available to achieve the objectives of the owner and the applicant.*
 - a. The proposed changes and alterations are not significant.
3. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 C, *the extent to which the proposed alteration or significant change may be necessary to meet the requirement of any other law, statute, regulation, code or ordinance.*
 - a. The proposed fireplace vent is necessitated by code.
4. The factors of SMC 25.12 .750 D and E are not applicable.
5. The proposed work as presented is consistent with the following Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation as listed below (or cite other applicable standards):

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard #10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

MM/SC/IM/DB 8:0:0 Motion carried.

010522.4 BRIEFING

010522.41 Battelle Memorial Institute / Talaris Conference Center
4000 NE 41st Street

Presentation documents in DON file.

Nathan Rimmer, 4000 Property LLC owner representative said there is a new team and noted a board site visit / walk through had been conducted recently. He said the site is zoned SF-5000, and they propose homes. He proposed retention of some landmarked buildings with new construction, to help prevent deterioration of overall landscape.

Dan Miles, Bassetti Architects went over agenda items. Using aerial view of the site he went over design considerations and concepts. Design considerations: quiet and contemplative, public and private outdoor spaces, discourage wandering into 'quiet' areas, expansion is anticipated, visual compatibility with the neighborhood, sense of privacy from within the site, complex should be attractive from above. Design concepts: enclosure, simplicity, beauty, provided transition from the temporal world to the 'tungsten tower', glimpse of the seminar facility from the road, layers of privacy, pond as uniting element, 'the nucleus', landscape paths throughout to provide variety. He proposed a vegetated buffer to reinforce the sense of the pond, buildings A, B, C, and D are not on the orthogonal street grid. He said in Phase II buildings E, F and G were introduced on the orthogonal grid.

He said what the team heard from the board was that homes around the wetland and road were seen as too intrusive. He said the focus today would be on the development of the overall site plan and said new homes are laid out to reinforce historic development plan. He said project goals are the economic viability of the site which is a large expense to maintain. He said structures are needed to sustain ongoing maintenance noting the wooded area around the wetland, aging/failing trees and the need to regenerate the landscape which is overrun with blackberries.

Jim Keller, Site Workshop said they have been studying areas and ways to preserve groves of oaks and landscape elements. He noted proposed vehicular circulation and said garages are proposed to be internal to buildings with single driveway used by two residences. He said on a spur in the northwest portion of the site, one driveway services seven houses. He indicated pedestrian routes / circulation via campus pathways, sidewalks, residential pathways, and residential vehicular routes.

Mr. Miles focused on the southeast corner of the site to areas outlined in red on the site plan. He said defining characteristics of the historic buildings are ridge line of hipped roof broken with windows, vertical windows grouped in threes and fours, wood decks and bridge, a key feature of all buildings is foundation of board formed concrete with rusticated appearance, and with a floor plate cantilevering over it. He noted Building D rusticated base treated like plinth, vertically oriented punched openings, covered balconies, vertical railings, occupiable space under eaves, broken roof plane, storm water runnels and cantilevered overlook. He noted Building F exposed rafters marking importance, horizontal mullions at taller windows, simple vertical railings, cantilevered overlook, heavy concrete base, floor to ceiling windows. He noted how the heavy concrete base steps up the hill.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE EXISTING ARCHITECTURE:

- Buildings meet the ground in one of two ways: “floating” over the ground or with a heavy concrete base
- Heavy concrete base used to emphasize stepping up the hill
- Hipped roofs, each treated a little differently
- Eave lines are irregular
- Ridge lines are often broken in order to bring light into the spaces below
- Windows are sometimes punched, sometimes floor to ceiling
- Windows rarely have horizontal mullions
- Roof is cut away to reveal rafters in special locations
- Wooden decks and bridges
- Rainwater is a visible feature, channeled along the ground plane at the building edge

He provided photos examples of precedents of how they might express rusticated concrete in a lighter way. He said Building G might be honored in the way they place five homes at an angle to pay homage to original layout. He said they explored massing and roof forms and noted unified rusticated plinth base, repeating shed roof with repeating vertical elements, stepped back second story, indoor / outdoor experience. He said they explored developing space between single family residences to honor the Japanese-inspired design of the campus.

Mr. Miles said there is a sense that Building G recedes into the landscape and he said it is a difficult building to adaptively reuse. He said removing it allows the development of the pond edge that is consistent with original plan and vision of the site. He said it allows the landscape to come in between buildings more.

Mr. Miles said that NBBJ anticipated more building development on the site and showed a rendering of that past proposal. He noted the poor condition of the trees and the need to regenerate the forest, it was always unplanted and just forested. He said there is a 5-6' grade change from the wetlands to the adjacent entry drive.

Mr. Keller said that none of the landscape there now was part of the designed landscape plan.

Mr. Miles said they are trying to recreate a sense of a natural landscape and the tree buffer will be part of that. He said the entry road was too close to center and has been removed. He said they have relocated proposed homes so there is more of a tree buffer, walkways to homes have been paired to create a sense of similarity to buildings A, B and C. He said a lighter touch has been explored with two – three story homes having the second-floor cantilevers over the first and with simple roof forms. He said they want to restore the original feeling of the entry sequence.

Mr. Barnes appreciated the detailed and helpful presentation. He noted there is not much room for on street parking and there is limited parking for visitors.

Mr. Rimmer said it is a unique site and a unique process. He said it gets back to their development philosophy and noted the use of modern size garages with anticipation that majority of parking will be in garages and driveways. He said the site has to work together and noted that parking at commercial space – primarily Building D will be available in off hours. He proposed retaining entire oak grove parking.

Responding to clarifying questions Mr. Keller said they have pushed houses closer to the wetland and away from the road. The wetland will be restored to functioning wetland capacity.

Mr. Barnes said tree removal was mentioned and he asked about number of trees that need to be removed.

Mr. Keller said sitewide they are going through detailed list of trees and condition to determine that exists. He said big mature canopies and forests will be prioritized.

Mr. Barnes asked where the quiet areas are.

Mr. Keller said there is a nice procession through the site, an idea of providing a habitat overlook into the wetlands area. He noted the oak grove area at the north, and said the roadway is almost like a pedestrian walk.

Ms. Chang appreciated the clear presentation and asked the team what design phase this is, and how much of what was presented could change drastically in future presentations.

Bob Baldwin, owner's representative said they are following Bassetti's lead at the third option and they will develop all areas as they move along. The board will have more review. He said today 's briefing focuses on pond view homes and wetland homes.

Mr. Miles said the design is iterative. He said they will share proposals as they continue to refine the design. He said it takes lots of time and effort. He said the team likes it; the pond view homes design makes sense and they hope the board likes it.

Ms. Chang said she understands there are many reviews. She said she enjoyed the presentation and where the design is headed.

Ms. Caton recused herself but appreciated the presentation and will be following along.

Mr. Norman asked about the percentage of proposed construction - asphalt and roof and structure being added to what is now a landscape-oriented green space.

Mr. Miles said they are meeting zoning requirements.

Mr. Rimmer said roughly 1.13 acres of structure footprint now with 2.9 acres proposed. He said there is 2.3 acres of roadway and parking now. He said there is 8.4 acres of common open space – meadow which is almost half of the site. He said it has been a largely undeveloped site and they think this is a good balance.

Mr. Norman said it would be helpful to see that information illustrated. He asked about water runoff and if there are drainage issues to consider looking at the site as a whole.

Mr. Rimmer said there is a large vault under the meadow that is filtered and directly discharged to lake.

Mr. Keller said they are considering proposing a series of bioswales, and onsite detention clustered throughout site.

Mr. Rimmer said while the pond is pretty, it is also functional. He said a weir gate at the west side of the pond discharges into a large storm pipe.

Ms. Doherty asked if it would be helpful for board members to provide feedback on the architectural character of the houses, proposed demolition of buildings E and G, trees is harder to speak to until see quantified numbers but three dimensional images are helpful, and the proposed commercial building addition.

Mr. Rodezno said the presentation was informative. He said he wanted to see the buildings on site retained. He appreciated the amount of consideration given to residential structures and the design notion of bringing in culture of Japan as it was a part of Rich Haag's original design. He noted the challenge of maintaining a cultural landscape and said injecting revenue with building additions such as this could elongate the lifespan of the site although he preferred preservation of all of the buildings.

Mr. Rimmer noted the importance of balancing needs of all aspects of the site.

Ms. Wasserman said she was happy with the presentation which she said was very helpful. She said after years of rumors of horrible things happening there it was nice to see thoughtfulness and real planning going into it. She is overwhelmed by it, but noted the economic need to maintain the site and said she would be willing to part

with buildings E and G. She liked the consolidation around Building D with the proposed addition. She said she worried about parking and wanted more information about the trees. She liked the proposed buildings and appreciated seeing the design iterations, and that the buildings are set back toward wetland and away from the entry drive.

Ms. Chang asked what the view of the new buildings will be like from Buildings D and F, and the community spaces.

Mr. Baldwin said they have developed a full Revit model and will be able to provide a 'walk-around' view of the site at their next briefing.

Ms. Chang said she wants to see how those buildings look from across the pond, pedestrian bridge etc. and in future with the proposed removal of Building G.

Mr. Norman noted the challenge with the proposed scale of the project and said the numbers will be helpful to understand. Is it a 30% impact or something else? He said the site is very green and feels like a park now, and proposed project looks like a housing development. This is an 18-acre site, unique in Seattle, and this is a landmark. He understands the economic need to add to the site but said this is drastically different. He appreciated the presentation but said it is hard to get his head around this.

Mr. Rimmer said they are working to balance and do it in a sensitive way. He said they will keep working on design and working with the board. He said they provide the requested information in a table form.

Mr. Macleod said it still feels very dense with new development coverage. He appreciated seeing previous iterations of earlier master plans. He appreciated the site tour and spent additional time walking around. He noted the southwest corner of the site and said it is a very interesting portion of the site and needs stewardship, but it is clearly less developed. He said he understand the site was meant to be expanded on and that there is way to work with that, but he said this feels like tight massing. He said he understands the economic challenges and the need to address that but would like to see more iterations. He said he likes the direction the design is going. He is conflicted about Building G as it is a unique building and is part of the landmark, even though it has tiny rooms. He said he would like it to stay but understood the challenges. He said it looks like it is coming together and generally, he likes the direction. He likes the pedestrian circulation proposals.

Ms. Johnson asked Messrs. Macleod and Norman to comment further on location of proposed density.

Mr. Macleod said he preferred to see buildings more clustered. He noted activity clusters around Building D and A, B and C in the northwest. He preferred to see things breaking that grid, as it is too repetitive and rectilinear. He said that the beauty of the site now is it is not rectilinear; it is a total break from the street grid.

He said it seems packed in a geometrically efficient way, and would prefer to see them clustered them around nodes as an alternative concept.

Mr. Norman said he wants them to preserve the integrity of the interior park feel; it is important. He said Building G nestles in the site, and the five proposed residences are very prominent and takes attention away from the park feel. He said the proposed houses at the interior of the site outlined in red are the most problematic. He doesn't understand why they do not propose more density, it seems like a perfect opportunity for an apartment building or condo. He knows that it is currently not zoned for that, but thinks it would make the project work much better. Maybe they could get a variance from the city. He said it upsets him to see this park setting filled in with buildings, instead of having a denser development that could serve the same number of people within a smaller footprint. He said to keep the integrity of the inner park feeling is very important.

Mr. Rimmer said Mr. Norman hit on the underlying tension which is the zoning of the site. He said there were previous proposals for multi-family development, vertical in nature with more units, and received push back from the neighborhood as it is a single-family zone. He appreciated that it is a broad issue city wide, but that is not what they are doing here at this site.

Mr. Norman said it is rare to have 18 acres in the city; it is a special site, and it is hard for me to now want to be patient with it.

Mr. Rimmer said they have been patient for 15-20 years on this site, so patience is pretty much up, but said he appreciated Mr. Norman's position.

Mr. Barnes expressed concern about the proposed density of new housing in this area. He said he understands there are economic issues that come into play in trying to maintain the property. But when he thinks about the demographics and topography of the area, it's hard to see so much of it going from park like setting to a more residential/home environment. He understands the proposed housing where Building E is now, and straight down along the east side of the property. But he expressed concern about density of housing around where building G is currently. He said it goes from one commercial building to 12 new in that area. He echoed Mr. Macleod's concern about the housing in the southwest corner that is now very green, and the density of the housing in the wetland area. He would like to learn more about the trees. He said he likes Building D addition which consolidates commercial in one area. He said he was concerned about the lack of parking. He said residential visitors will have to walk a distance from parking. He expressed concern about the quiet areas being disturbed by new houses. He said he understood the economics of trying to get as many houses in as possible but noted that is a great property in the city, and the 18-acre park environment is turning it into residences. He said the site reminds him of Fort Lawton. He said he was concerned about losing the historical flavor that makes it the ideal place that it was.

Mr. Rimmer appreciates it is a big shift for sure. He thinks compared to the rest of the neighborhood, it is lightly proposed for density, and they reduced it a lot.

Mr. Macleod said the site was intended to be expanded upon. But it feels like every square inch is proposed to be built on except for the most important points – pond, wetlands, etc. He said the surrounding neighborhood is low density and the contrast is what sets this apart. He heard Mr. Rimmer say that multifamily is off the table. But he wants to go back to the proposed duplexes in Buildings A, B, and C. He said it is a unique experience there which feels off in the woods. He noted beautiful vistas from the decks. He is not saying it has to be fewer homes, but the proposed design feels like a sea of houses from every vantage point, in competition with the natural landscape; he said you don't get the feel of expansiveness of the site. He said it's about keeping the feeling and the experience of the site. Clustering and grouping houses could replicate the feeling that buildings A, B, and C already have. Looks forward to seeing the 3D modeling.

Mr. Baldwin said they will present a walk-around experience and it will show the lighter density of houses, than the surrounding neighborhood.

Ms. Johnson said it is exciting to see views shown and see perspectives. She said a 'walk-around' video will show topography. She said it is unusual to see the character of the place and to see how development will change with all of the houses, vehicles, parking, traffic, and people walking around it. She said it is a huge site and she has only been there when it feels empty, so this will be a dramatic difference. She said it will be good to get people back onsite enjoying it. She said she was OK with demolition of buildings E and G, noting changes in the design making areas of the site feel distinct feels better, and rooflines make it feel like a group. She said architecture will help in grouping buildings together. She said she was uncomfortable with buildings around wetland but said the axon view will be helpful. She said the character of the site has changed so dramatically and seeing specific architectural development is helpful. She said the character of the proposed architecture feels compatible with the existing buildings. She said the color-coded drawing of the pedestrian and car traffic was helpful.

Mr. Miles said it is a unique landmark with landscape and buildings. He said the owners are interested in hearing board expectations. He said their proposal for work on landmark structures they will come back with construction document level information. They would choose 5-10 key homes for level of detail and drawing submittal with exact information on placement of doors and windows, locations and approval of materials and colors. They would like flexibility to make certain changes for individual homeowners. He said that is a way they think they could proceed through this process but they are open to other thoughts. He recognized the uniqueness of the landmark and the intended balanced approach.

Ms. Doherty said the process is regulatory and this is a unique landmark with no precedent. She said there are other landmarks that are campuses of buildings, but the scale proposed here is different from the former Marine Hospital on Beacon Hill where they contemplated the addition of one or two additional buildings, until the big addition on the north lot that, and that was designed in greater detail. She said a discussion is helpful. She said as a program, if we are able to do it this way it would

be with a completed Controls and Incentives agreement; and the board is approving masterplan with house designs that may have some ability to be adapted through Staff Review. She said they would have to be prescriptive in how that list of things come together. She said the team is starting to talk about that – windows, doors, materials, colors. She said it is essentially guidelines that are being created for a landmark which we typically do for historic districts, not individual landmarks. She said they may need a hybrid solution here, but it will have to be done in a way that fits with the way in which landmarks are reviewed through the Preliminary Certificate of Approval and Final Certificate of Approval process. Splitting the building rehabilitation into its own project may make sense, and the other events or phases will need to be parsed out. She will continue to talk to the property owner and said the board members can continue to offer thoughts, just know that the feasibility of it is still being considered on the staff side.

Mr. Macleod said it sounds reasonable to approve master plan rather than individual construction documents; he said it seems like board members are on the same page with that. He said the board should approve the bigger picture of the campus.

Ms. Doherty explained the north lot at the hospital was approved but there were two phases, distinctly noted as Phase I and Phase II, and they are moving ahead with Phase I of construction, but not sure when Phase II will happen. She said what is not known in this case is whether certain clusters of houses would be built together or not and said that is something that needs to be talked about. She said this will come down to the ownership and how they are going to set up the condos and how it is all going to be managed. In terms of big picture, what if only two houses to the south of the pond are built and others didn't happen for ten years. She said that is something to consider, if it doesn't all get built at once, what will that look like. She said that is part of the thinking of how to strategize in terms of how it is executed. She said we all need to be thinking about if it is not all built, what does that mean if the board needs to approve it in sections.

Mr. Barnes said Ms. Doherty raised some excellent points the board should consider and maybe should talk through it at a future board meeting. He said these are all new ideas to think about. He said it is helpful to understand nuances and how the board can work with developer on this.

Ms. Doherty said the Board does not need to offer any feedback on that issue today. She said the owners are thinking about how they will approach the execution, whether it is one building or groups of five, speculatively. At this point they do not know what that will look like, but it is tied together with how you approach the level of design completion.

Ms. Chang asked what is being presented at an ARC briefing vs. a Board briefing. How is that decision made. If you cannot attend a ARC briefing for this project you may miss a lot.

Ms. Doherty said it is the staff's discretion for scheduling briefings and a lot is driven by availability of time on agenda. She said nominations, designation dates are selected weeks / months in advance with public noticing, that they then need to work around. Certificates of Approval are driven by dates in the code, etc. She said this project benefits with full board input because of the scale and complexity. She said it was fortunate to have a window recently where there is a gap. She said she tries to bring these briefings to the full board but it may not always be possible. She said the team recently requested an ARC briefing on January 28 but that has yet to be confirmed. She reminded the Board that they can request the meeting recording/video if they miss a briefing.

Ms. Johnson said it is an unusual project and will continue to be so.

010522.5

STAFF REPORT