

**City of Puyallup
Planning Commission/Design Review & Historic Preservation Board
Joint Meeting**

**Puyallup City Hall – Council Chambers
June 19, 2013
7:00 PM**

(These minutes are not verbatim. The meeting was recorded, and copies of the recording are retained for a period of six years from the date of the meeting and are available upon request.)

**COMMISSIONERS/BOARD
MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Steve Hastings, Chris McNutt, Aaron Couch, Nancy Johnson, Shelley Krashowetz, Heather Shadko, Scott Harm, Kristopher Stamon, Andy Anderson, Paula Harmes, Luke Heath, Jamie Prossick

**COMMISSIONERS/BOARD
MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Curt Gimmestad, Teresa Coe

STAFF PRESENT:

Director of Development Services – Tom Utterback;
Assistant Planner – Kendall Wals; Administrative Secretary
– Michelle Ochs

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Ms. Shadko moved to approve the Agenda. Mr. McNutt seconded the motion. The Commissioners and Board members unanimously approved the agenda.

AGENDA ITEMS

Downtown Character

Mr. Utterback gave a review of:

- Background on the topic and summary of previous meetings
- A map outlining the area of downtown, which is the focus of potential further protection with the intent of better maintaining the historic “feel”
- Public outreach accomplished during the previous year
- Existing tools for achieving the intent of protection/maintenance (Downtown Design Guidelines (DDG’s), Incentives focus through the historic register)
- Maps of existing downtown building massing shown from several different vantage points

Each member of the Planning Commission & Design Review & Historic Preservation Board (DRHPB) then gave a brief background of their work/commission/board experience.

General discussion ensued on the outlined downtown area, and included several ideas:

- Possible extension of outlined area to include Meeker Mansion or other historically significant pinpointed buildings
- New standards not necessarily excluding higher buildings, but rather blocking the placement next to historic buildings (Mr. Utterback pointed out that there are provisions in the DDG's that call for a transitioning of larger buildings down to smaller buildings with the use of setbacks or other devices, and that there is a separate standard for buildings located next to a building on the national register)
- Eliminating the CBD – Core zone, and using an economic overlay in place of an historic overlay to maintain the viability of the businesses
- Reviewing the DDG's to determine if further revisions could better protect the outlined area

There were several comments regarding what defines the feel of a historic downtown: the feel is not necessarily tied to a certain building, it's the pedestrian scale, ongoing activities, and the Farmer's Market that make up a vibrant downtown with the "feel" that citizens look for and want to be a part of.

There was discussion regarding increased recognition for those properties currently on the historic register and those looking to get placed on the register. This would hopefully stir interest in other property owners wanting to get involved with the process of renovations that would allow them to have the property placed on the register, which would lead to further protection of buildings within the designated area. There was extensive discussion on what defines a building as historically significant, and how to motivate property owners to list their structure.

It was suggested that restricting building heights does play a part in maintaining the feel of an area and the way an area looks. It was pointed out that in the survey results, citizens feel that higher buildings can be appropriate in the downtown area, but that the architecture and design would be important in determining its overall fit. There were several more comments regarding what contributes to the feel and look of the downtown area.

Specific scenarios were discussed including that a developer could purchase several properties downtown, demolish existing buildings, and then build a big structure that might not fit in with the surrounding area and it was commented on that big development downtown might be discouraged by the limited space for required parking.

There was discussion of specific properties in the outlined area (115 W Meeker-Karate building) and on what makes them historically significant or not. There was also some discussion of the benefits of listing a structure on the historic register, i.e., ten year tax abatement possibility.

There was a general consensus of the Commissioners and the Board Members that a stronger, building-based approach to downtown historic preservation warrants further review, which could better "pinpoint" and prioritize those buildings with stronger historic qualities – with greater design protection for them and abutting properties.

It was agreed that the DRHPB should look further into this "pinpoint" approach.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.