

**CITY OF REDMOND
LANDMARK COMMISSION**

April 17, 2014

NOTE: These minutes are not a full transcription of the meeting. Tapes are available for public review in the Redmond Planning Department.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Thomas Hitzroth (Chairperson—LC), Miguel Llanos (Vice Chair—LC), David Scott Meade (Chairperson—DRB), Joe Palmquist (Vice Chairperson—DRB), Craig Krueger, Scott Waggoner, Kevin Sutton, Mike Nichols

EXCUSED ABSENCE: None

STAFF PRESENT: Kim Dietz, Senior Planner, Redmond Planning Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Susan Trapp *with* Lady of Letters, Inc.

The Landmark Commission is appointed by City Council to designate, provide additional incentives to, provide review of changes to, and provide expertise on archaeological and historic matters pertaining to properties qualifying for either a national, state or local register status.

LANDMARK COMMISSION

The meeting of the Landmark Commission was called to order by the Chairperson of the Commission, Thomas K. Hitzroth, at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. PALMQUIST AND SECONDED BY MR. MEADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 16, 2014 MEETING. MOTION APPROVED (8-0).

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

Topic: Certificate of Appropriateness for Stone (O.A. Wiley) House

Description: Removal of landmarked holly tree and replacement with Japanese maple

Applicant: Randy Reeves

Staff Contact: Kim Dietz, 425-556-2415, kdietz@redmond.gov

Mr. Hitzroth noted that when this property was landmarked in 2007, one of the features of significance was the mature holly tree on the site. He reminded the Commission that that was part of the City of Redmond Landmark Commission's findings of fact and decision. When that document is completed and the chair of the Commission signs it, it then goes down to the King County Land Office. The findings of fact become part of the property record. Thus, it is a legal decision that the Commission will be making at this meeting that will affect the property record and property description. If someone requested a title search on this property, this decision by the Commission will appear as part of the conditions and restrictions on the land.

Ms. Dietz noted that the Commission has met on this topic before. The applicant's intent is to remove the holly tree and replace it with a vine maple. The mature pine at the rear of Stone House is diseased. Half of it was taken out at one point. The disease spread, however, and the rest of it did die. That tree has also been removed. The legal record will be updated to indicate the mature pine is no longer on site. The focus of this meeting will be on the holly tree, located near the fireplace of the Stone House. Ms. Dietz presented two alternatives provided by the City Arborist. The tree could be cut and then treated with herbicide. That would prevent it from growing again. The applicant could hand-dig the stump, but the key is not to do that with a backhoe as to preserve the Stone House structure. The process does require an amendment to the historic record for this parcel. The Landmark Commission will make a recommendation at this meeting, and that will go on to the Technical Committee. In addition, the applicant will be required to have a tree removal permit. Staff is recommending approval for this application. Ms. Dietz has not been able to determine if the holly was original to the site from the records she has access to.

Ms. Dietz said that question surrounding the history of this tree is a very special condition that, on this particular property, would allow that holly to be removed if the Commission did want to go forward with that decision. Ultimately, the area once used as the Stone House frontage, which was in the right-of-way, will be turned into sidewalk and additional seating as part of the new Cleveland streetscape. The patio and planting palette of the Stone House would be updated in the Cleveland plan as well. At the last Commission meeting on this topic, there was a discussion about replacing the tree with an in-kind species. Three choices were made available to the applicant from Great Plant Picks. The applicant is interested in putting a vine maple in that would be drought-resistant. The tree will grow to be 20 feet tall, but the applicant feels that this tree is a little more manageable than the other options.

Mr. Reeves, the applicant, spoke to the Commission and said his plan was to replace the holly tree with a deciduous species to allow for more light penetration, especially during the winter months. The building to the south of the Stone House is fairly large in scale and blocks a lot of light. Also, the applicant believes the existing holly impacts the architectural statement of the house, much of which is focused on the fireplace. The applicant said the open aspect of the vine maple could enhance the architecture of the site. He also believes that the vine maple is a simple species to maintain. It does not require much pruning. Some have beautiful red stems that might pick up some of the brick elements of the site.

Mr. Llanos asked Mr. Reeves how the vine maple would deal with the issue of rodent infestation. Mr. Reeves said that currently, the holly tree is a vector for rodents getting onto the roof. Thus, a smaller scale tree that would be further away from the Stone House could help in that regard. Mr. Hitzroth noted that the Commission in 2007 was split on whether or not the holly was a historical part of the site. Since it had become part of the nomination, the Commission made it a feature of significance. Clearly, there was a lot of conversation over whether it was original to the property. But the consensus has been that, essentially, it is not. Mr. Reeves reminded that the holly is generally considered an invasive species. He said at one time, this holly tree might have been an enhancement to the property, but now, it is not an attractive tree and removing it would enhance the Stone House overall.

Mr. Meade asked about some of the historical photos, which were taken in 1938. Mr. Meade said the trees seen in front of the House at that time were not holly trees. Mr. Hitzroth agreed, but said that topic was debated during the Commission's 2007 discussion of the site. Mr. Meade asked if there might be a dwarf species that could be planted that would not grow too tall and overtake the structure. He did want the Commission to come back in 25 years to remove the tree that would be approved at this meeting. Ms. Dietz spoke to King County about the amendment the Commission is considering at this meeting. Once the holly is removed from the record, and an in-kind tree is not used for replacement, the City would remove this tree from the record entirely, and it would not need to be addressed in the future.

The vine maple the applicant has chosen among the three options is the one that requires the least amount of maintenance and watering. The applicant said the other two options have a thicker canopy, which is not what he wants. The option he has chosen is simpler to prune, as well. Mr. Llanos asked about the potential height of the tree, which could grow to 20 feet and thus require a lot of pruning. The applicant said, in many cases, vine maples do not grow that tall. If there was an issue with the tree getting that tall, a few selective cuts would solve the problem. Mr. Meade suggested that the biggest issue for the Commission was to remove the tree and replace it with a smaller tree.

Mr. Hitzroth said part of the landmark designation of this property is the idea to keep it as close to what it was originally in its massing, spatial relationships, and feeling. The Secretary of the Interior describes *feeling* as the property's expression of the aesthetic or historical sense of a particular period of time. Mr. Hitzroth said that, of the three tree options, the one that keeps this site in line with being a historical property is the cut-leaf vine maple, in that the house has had a green tree in front of it for its entire known history. To choose another tree option would take away from that historical feeling and massing. Mr. Krueger asked why the cut-leaf maple would be different than other vine maples. Mr. Hitzroth said that, because the cut-leaf is a green deciduous tree, that would match up with the trees that were around this building over its history and gave it its defining character.

Mr. Meade noted that the cut-leaf would be red when it changes color and begins to drop its leaves. The applicant said all of the vine maple options would be green until the fall, when they turn red. He said the native species he has selected predates the grafted variants that make up the other tree species options and is logically more historical and more consistent with trees in the Redmond area. He said the other two options would be harder to grow on this site. Mr. Hitzroth said he was not aware the cut-leaf maple would turn red in the fall. He noted, however, that he did not want to get too far away from the original character of the building. Mr. Krueger asked how the vine maple would grow, and if it started as a shrub. He said that starting with the native, hearty species the applicant has chosen would be a good decision and would look nice in the fall. Mr. Meade agreed, and said that any of the three tree options would be a good idea and would have similar character, but it will be critical to get a root barrier between the tree and the building. Beyond that, he said Mr. Krueger was correct, in that many of the trees planted in front of the Stone started as shrubs and simply grew too big.

Mr. Hitzroth said he believed the historical holly tree was never intended to be in front of the building to begin with. He did not want people to think the vine maple was always part of this site. Mr. Meade asked if a monument stand placed by the tree to note what was planted before would be a good idea. Mr. Hitzroth said that was a good compromise, in that it would not create a false sense of history.

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. MEADE AND SECONDED BY MR. KRUEGER TO REMOVE THE EXISTING HOLLY TREE AND REPLACE IT WITH THE VINE MAPLE SELECTED BY THE APPLICANT, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE WILL BE THE NEED FOR A ROOT BARRIER AND THAT THERE WILL BE SOME FORM OF SIGNAGE NOTING THE FORMER TREE PLANTED ON THE SITE. MOTION APPROVED (8-0).

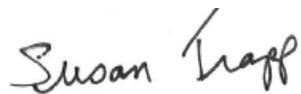
Mr. Hitzroth noted that the pine tree would also be removed from the property description of this site with regard to landmark designation. The tree had to be taken out due to a safety issue. When that tree is removed from the landmark designation, there will be no trees or vegetation on the property description. Ms. Dietz said that was correct.

Ms. Dietz noted that the Old Town Historic Core planning process has begun, which will run through 2014. A volunteer intern from the University of Washington is focusing on that and helping the City in this matter. On June 6, there will be a walk and talk discussing the Old Town Core, working with the group Feet First as part of the engagement process on this project. An urban diary will be recorded at several locations in the Historic Core. Some constructive recommendations will be talked about with regard to enhancing areas such as alleyways, Leary Way, building frontages, and other places, too. The City is working with businesses to provide some incentives for people to attend the event and stay in Old Town for dinner that evening. She invited the Commission to attend, and said the event would start at about 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

IT WAS MOVED BY MR. MEADE AND SECONDED BY MR. PALQUIST TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION APPROVED (8-0). MR. HITZROTH ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 7:31 P.M.

August 7, 2014
MINUTES APPROVED ON


RECORDING SECRETARY