

Andrew Love

From: Mona Davis
Sent: Tuesday, April 22, 2025 7:38 PM
To: Richard Anderson
Cc: Andrew Love
Subject: RE: Historic district color pallet public hearing comments, 21 April 2025

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Hi Richard,

I appreciate your taking the time to provide comments and want to acknowledge receipt of your comments. Staff and the Planning Commission will likely hold a public hearing on May 19th on this issue and would encourage you to attend that meeting if you can.

We're happy to take your comments received last evening into the record to be considered as we work through this process too. I'm copying Andrew Love, contract planner, who is managing this work for the Planning Commission.

Thank you,

Mona Davis, Senior Planner/Interim CD Director

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From: Richard Anderson <richard@trainmuseum.org>
Sent: Monday, April 21, 2025 8:15 PM
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Subject: Historic district color pallet public hearing comments, 21 April 2025

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21 April 2025

Snoqualmie Planning Commission
Color Pallet Public Hearing

Good afternoon –

First of all, I hope these comments make it to the record. The information about this meeting did not specify where to email comments, and when I logged in to the meeting the agenda mentioned that remote zoom comments would not be accepted.

My name is Richard Anderson and I work for the Northwest Railway Museum as its executive director and chief curator, and I serve as a commissioner on the King County Landmarks Commission, which also sits as the City of Snoqualmie Landmarks Commission. My comments here are on behalf of the Northwest Railway Museum located at 9312 Stone Quarry Road, Snoqualmie, only.

Color is a sometimes controversial topic, but I do have a variety of experiences that I believe makes me qualified to comment on your proposed color pallet.

I have been involved in historic preservation for more than 40 years, and have managed a variety of building and railroad restorations, including two structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In my work and those that I supervise apply the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (“Standards”) to our restoration projects. The Standards were developed by the National Park Service and are the minimum standards expected for care of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but also applied to the Washington State Heritage Register, and the Landmarks Registers.

First of all, I recommend that you NOT select any color pallet. Historic buildings should be painted the color(s) that they wore during their period of significance. For instance, the Snoqualmie Depot is painted in the red-brown that it wore at the turn of the 20th century, and the color was derived from actual paint samples collected during the restoration process. These samples were combined with analysis of early 20th century orthochromatic black and white photographs conducted by Eastman Kodak. It is unlikely it will precisely match any of the colors proposed for your color pallet, but it is the correct color.

Second, color is subjective in the sense that the level of sheen and other characteristics can greatly affect the perception of color. For instance, gloss sheen can often make a color appear much lighter, and is more likely to reflect surrounding colors. The materials that the paint is applied to may have a rough, semi smooth, or smooth surface, which also affects the perception of color.

Third, paint companies seem to constantly change their paint formulas. In actuality, paint formulas have changed during the 30 years I have worked at the Museum, and each time it can change the way color formulas are rendered. In my prior example of the Snoqualmie Depot, original paint samples were linseed oil paint, which used a simpler and different selection of tints than are used today. Forty or fifty years ago, most buildings were painted with an alkyd or modified oil paint, which also has different characteristics as to how it looks when it cures. The Snoqualmie Depot is painted with a sheen and color formula that best represents a reproduction of the original linseed oil paint.

A further but important concern is whether a particular sub straight should be painted. Should a given surface even be painted? For instance, it is generally an exceedingly bad practice to paint brick. Most paints will seal the surface and cause the brick glazing to fail. This was a factor in the deterioration of the machine shop at the Snoqualmie Falls Generating station, and that brick failure was a factor in the decision to delist and demolish the structure during the upgrade to the power station.

I expect you may now be asking, how should color be approved? Please consider using the historic preservation program. King County employs historic preservation professionals and through your interlocal agreement with the county - and the certificate of appropriateness procedures – decisions about color can be made based on the unique merits of a particular building or structure.

Thank you for your consideration.

Richard R. Anderson | Executive Director

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