

**CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT
Historic Resource Review HRR.3.24**

DATE: June 3, 2024
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner

APPLICANT: Steve and Melissa Kenoyer
OWNER: HAWKINS WAYNE R & WANDA G

ZONING: Apartment Residential, AR
LOCATION: 120 S. 1st Street
PROPOSAL: Alteration of designated landmark

SITE INFORMATION / BACKGROUND

120 S. 1st Street is a designated landmark and within the St. Helens Downtown Historic District which is included on the National Register of Historic Places (c. 1984).

Within the district, it is considered “secondary significant” being built between 1905 and 1933 and before the fire of September of 1904, when much of the downtown was destroyed. Per the National Register nomination, it was built in 1914 and at that time (c. 1984) had minimal or minor alterations. Known as the Shinn house after the attorney who it was built for, the National Register describes the building:

DESCRIPTION: The Shinn House is a two and a half story rectangular structure with a symmetrical three-bay front. The gable roof is tiled and oriented with the eave end towards the street. A gabled dormer with a fixed four-light window is centered on the front roof. The gable and eave ends of the structure are detailed with exposed rafter tails and stacked purlin brackets with ornamentally cut ends. The house is sided with horizontal clapboards on the first story and narrow and widely spaced shingles on the second story. The foundation is concrete with a stucco finish. The double-hung wood sash windows have various number lights (six, eight and ten) above, one pane below. The front porch is centered and extends across a third of the front facade. It has a gabled roof with stick work and purlin detailing. It has two large boxed posts on clapboard sided piers and side rails of ornamentally cut boards. This detailing is also used on a second story porch at the rear of the house which overlooks the Columbia River. There are cantilevered bay windows on the north and south sides of the house and an interior chimney with a corbelled top extends from the center of the roof. The alterations to the house are minimal; a small addition has been built on the north side and a detached deck has been built south of the house, and the area west of the deck has been asphalted. The house faces west onto 1st street and the rear of the house overlooks the Columbia River.

The State Historic Preservation Office conducted a resurvey of the historic district in 2014, with a report provided to the city in 2017 that notes some potential category changes to certain properties (e.g., non-contributing to contributing or vice-versa), but this property is not identified for such change. SHPO also notes that “as has been common across the state over the last 30 years, the city has seen a large amount of historic materials replaced with modern materials, particularly vinyl.”

The property has been on the market for at least several months and the applicant is a prospective new owner who noted to staff that they want to resolve some pressing issues like a leaking roof before occupying the building. The roof and other alterations are proposed for the Historic Landmarks Commission’s consideration.

The proposal includes:

1. Replace roof with dark grey architectural roof shingles.
2. Replace broken front door with new solid wood / glass window.
3. Add safety rail for front porch/entry.
4. Add safety rail around parking area (drop-off).
5. Remove vinyl siding and repair original cedar siding.
6. Foundation repair.

For consideration of these, please note the definition of “**alteration**” which means *an addition, removal, or reconfiguration which significantly changes the character of a historic resource. Painting is not an alteration.*

And note that the historic resource in this case is the principal structure, not the property surrounding it, or the detached deck.

PUBLIC HEARING & NOTICE

Public hearing before the Planning Commission: June 11, 2024

Notice of this proposal was sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property(ies) on May 22, 2024 via first class mail. Notice was sent to agencies by mail or e-mail on the same date.

Notice was published on May 29, 2024 in The Chronicle newspaper.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA, ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

The applicable code section is SHMC 17.36.040 Criteria for alteration:

- (1) Except as provided elsewhere in this chapter, no exterior alteration, relocation, or demolition of a designated landmark or historic resource of statewide significance shall be allowed without a permit issued pursuant to this chapter.
- (2) Exterior remodeling, as governed by this chapter, shall include any change or alteration in design or other exterior treatment excluding painting.

(3) In order to approve an application for the alteration of a designated landmark or historic resource of statewide significance, the commission must find that the proposal meets the following standards:

- (a) The purpose of the historic overlay district as set forth in SHMC 17.36.005.
 - (b) The provisions of the comprehensive plan.
 - (c) A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
 - (d) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal or relocation of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.
 - (e) A property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
 - (f) Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
 - (g) Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
 - (h) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible (including environmental considerations), materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
 - (i) Chemical and physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.
 - (j) Archeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
 - (k) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible in appearance with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
 - (l) 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.
- (4) Prior to alteration, current photographs and/or drawings of all elevations shall be provided to the city for its public records. Photographs and drawings shall be archival quality; proof of such shall be provided with the photographs and/or drawings.
- (5) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the ordinary repair or maintenance of a designated landmark or historic resource of statewide significance, when such action does not involve a change in design, materials, or appearance.
- (6) Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prevent the alteration, demolition, or relocation of a designated landmark or historic resource of statewide significance, when the building official certifies that such action is required for the public safety because of its unsafe or dangerous condition.

Each aspect should be considered as they relate to the criteria for alteration above.

PROPOSAL #1: Replace roof with dark grey architectural roof shingles.

The 1984 National Register nomination noted the roofing type is tiled. Based on a black and white photo from that era, the texture of the roof appears tile-like. Color photos from this era don't show the texture as well but show a brown color comparable to the siding color of the second floor. The tile is assumed to be in place c. 1984.

There is no tile today. Comparing the 2009 photo with current, it appears the roofing is the same. Tile was replaced sometime before 2009. The earliest photo we have does not appear to be tile.

Tile was present as a roof material up to some point and it's certainly not tile today. And tile may have not been an original roof type. So, whether or not that is a distinctive material is moot. Applicant proposes a conventional roof type, and a sound roof is important to protect the integrity of the building.

Is the Commission ok with this? Ok with conditions?

Unless there is structural damage/work, no building permit is anticipated for this. Use of a heavy roof material like tile could result in a building permit, though that it not proposed.

PROPOSAL #2: Replace broken front door with new solid wood / glass window.

The 1984 National Register nomination mentions the door's four light fixed window centered on the door. The door appears to be the same one based on the early photo, and the 1984, 2009 and current photos.

Applicant noted to staff that due to a crack in the door, it is not necessarily secure. At least approval criterion (3)(h) is a consideration here.

The Commission should be satisfied that the door must be replaced and if so, that the replacement is acceptable. The applicant proposes a wood door with windows, but with a different style such as six window divisions instead of the current four.

The proposed door will look different but still may comply with (3)(k), as it pertains to new work differentiating from old, but still be compatible as to appearance and materials, assuming the Commission agrees with this.

Is the Commission ok with this? Ok with conditions?

As long as like-for-like, such as no change to the size of the opening, no building permit is anticipated for this.

PROPOSAL #3: Add safety rail for front porch/entry.

There is no evidence or documentation that shows any railing for the stairs leading to the front porch/entry. The 1984 National Register nomination does mention the two large box posts on clapboard sided piers and ornamental side boards, which is currently masked under the vinyl siding.

At least approval criteria (3)(g), (3)(k) and (3)(l) apply.

Using larger scale wood pieces seems appropriate. What the railing is attached to seems germane from the perspective of maintaining or preventing damage to historic materials (some of which we don't know the condition of while beneath a layer of vinyl).

Does the Commission think its ok to attach to the stairs since they are basic in style, but not attach to the box posts or any other portion of the principal building? Does the Commission think they should be freestanding and supported by themselves via ground mounting?

Is the Commission ok with the style and material, or do you want to impose conditions for that?

No building permit is anticipated for this.

PROPOSAL #4: Add safety rail around parking area (drop-off).

There is a grade difference and retaining wall that extends from the foundation of the building to the street that separates the historic building entry and parking area. Applicant proposes metal railing as an added safety measure for this area.

The building is the historic resource, not the lot or surrounding property in this case.

Does the Commission agree that no safety railing around the parking area should be attached to the building? This seems like the most logical condition.

No building permit is anticipated for this.

PROPOSAL #5: Remove vinyl siding and repair original cedar siding.

The 1984 National Register nomination mentions that the building is sided with horizontal clapboards on the first story and narrow and widely spaced shingles on the second story. It also notes it is a two and a half story building.

Photos from this era shows different siding for the first floor and second story consistent with the nomination. But note that the upper half story shows additional variation. The south side shows a vertical board and batten style and the dormer facing S. 1st Street has a brick-like pattern. The early photo shows the S. 1st Street dormer with the vertical board and baton siding. Current vinyl siding covers all of this today and this is visible in the 2009 photo. So, the vinyl was added sometime between 1984 and 2009.

We don't know the the condition of the underlying siding and extent of repair. (3)(h) can be a condition for this. Also, if the underlying siding of the dormer facing S. 1st Street needs to be replaced, it should be the assumed original board and baton style. Does the Commission agree or think any other conditions should apply?

What about the ornamental cut side boards along the front porch? The detailing is (or at least was) match for the second story deck on the back side of the home. Also, covered with vinyl and an unknown state of (dis)repair.

There is some potential for a building permit, depending on the extent of damage behind the vinyl.

PROPOSAL #6: Foundation repair.

The concrete foundation, especially visible along the Columbia River side, consisting of pillars and arches is assume original. There are no obvious issues with that. If the foundation work is strictly interior, there is no issue. But any exterior work could be an alteration.

The extent of repair is unknown, but assumed to be substantial based on comments from prospective buyers since the property has been for sale. (3)(h) can be a condition for this, a the least, if exterior work is necessary.

A building permit is anticipated for this. Unquestionably structural.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Based on the facts and findings herein, if the Planning Commission approves this Historic Resource Review, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. Any building permit submitted for the proposed alterations, as applicable, shall comply with the applicable standards for alterations and the conditions herein.
2. roof ok? any specific conditions?
3. door ok? should the door better match the assumed original, such as having four lights?
4. safety rail for front porch ok? Do you want to require no attachment to the stairs or box posts? should they be self-supported and not attached to the building at all?
5. safety rail around parking area ok? Does the Commission agree that no safety railing around the parking area should be attached to the building?
6. siding proposal ok? Require that siding and any front porch side boards in poor shape comply with:

Deteriorated **historic siding and front porch ornamental cut side boards** shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible (including environmental considerations), materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

And, if the underlying siding of the dormer facing S. 1st Street needs to be replaced, it should be the assumed original board and baton style?

7. **foundation repair... condition could be:**

Deteriorated **exterior foundation** shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible (including environmental considerations), materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Attachment(s): Photos (5 pages)
Applicant's materials



This page early photos except bottom left one.

Columbia County Museum Association



←**Left:** This is the earliest photo we could find. This building was built in 1914. The building to the north of it (left side looking at this photo and visible in the photo **bottom left**) was built in 1939. So we can conclude it represents the subject building sometime in its first 25 years of existence.

←**Bottom left:** Based on the vehicles, this appears to be earlier 1990s or so.



This page photos c. 1983





This page: Top 2009. Middle and bottom May 2024.



This page photos May 2024



This page photos May 2024



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NEED. YAPUS.

120 S. 1st.

Current
DAY Photo
8/20/24

⑤ Safety
NEEDED

② New
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③ Foundation
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NEED
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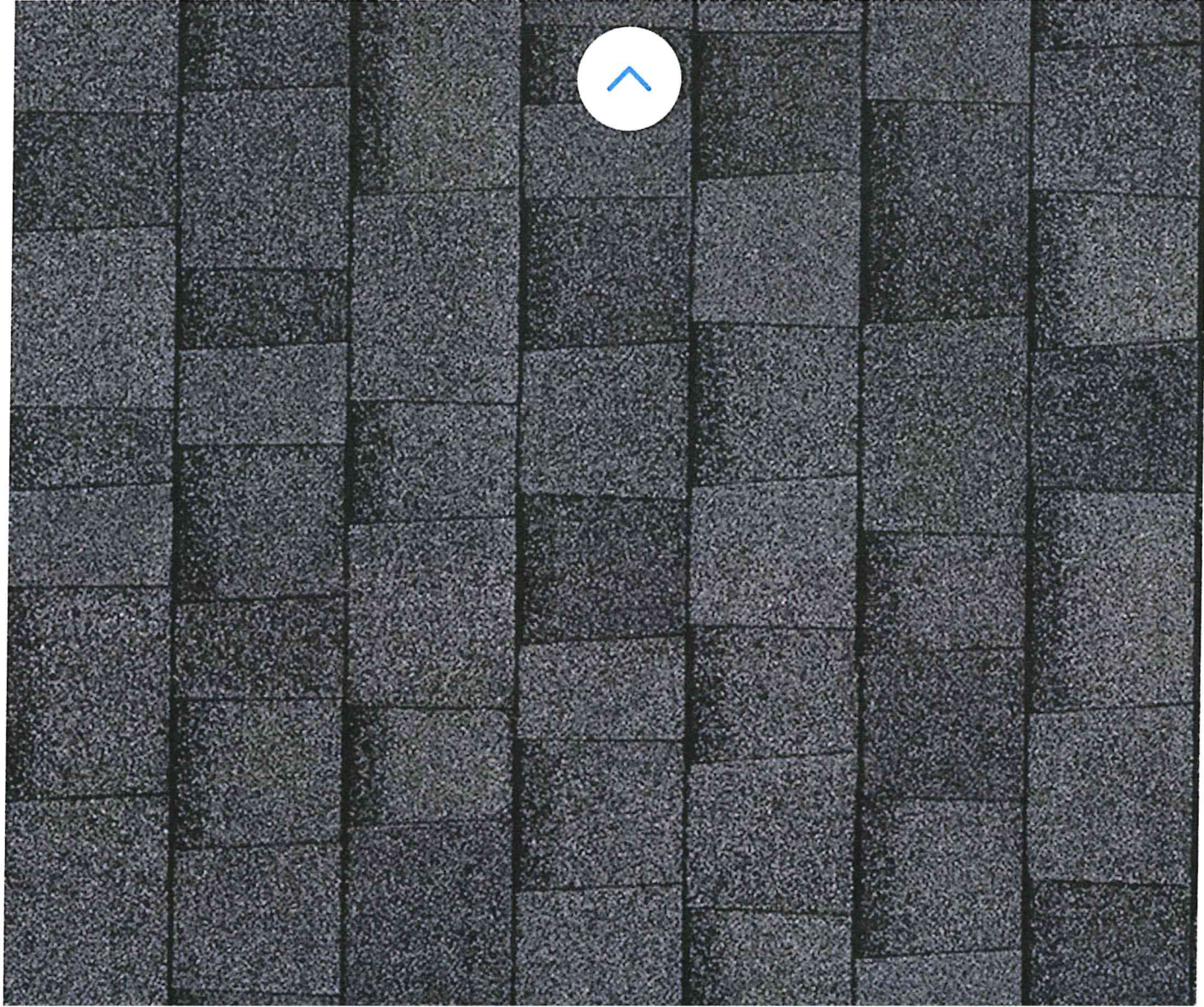
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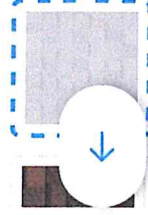
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