



**Benton
County**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT**

Planning Division

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Benton County Historic Resources Commission

Meeting Minutes Monday, March 15, 2021

The meeting was held remotely through GoToMeeting.

A. Call to Order.

The meeting began at 6:33 pm.

In attendance were: Scott McClure, Chair, Nancy Taniguchi, Larry Landis, Cody Hull, Tanya Freeman, Doug Eaton, and Jay Sexton

Guest: Mark Van der Pol, Adrienne Fritze, Rebecca Landis

Benton County staff: Inga Williams, Associate Planner and Linda Ray, Administrative Specialist was the recorder.

B. Approval of March 1, 2021 and March 8, 2021 Minutes

Commissioner Taniguchi made a motion to approve the March 1st and March 8th minutes, seconded by Commissioner Hull, the motion passed unanimously.

C. Public Hearing on the Willamette Grange – LU-21-011

Planner Williams highlighted criteria in the Staff Report about the application for a new roof for the Willamette Grange. Jay Sexton represented the Grange hall as the applicant. Planner Williams concluded that staff recommends approval of the application. All guidelines and code criteria are being met; no historical material will be removed, the proposed project does not change the design of the roof, the project will involve replacement with new, stronger materials and will re-create a historical feature. The interior ceiling will be improved back to a more original condition with the removal of cross ties that were previously installed to hold the walls together. Planner Williams researched and was unable to find information on the original materials used for the grange roof. The roof was severely damaged in 1950 by a snow storm. The damage resulted in broken trusses and the repairs at that time did not sufficiently ensure the roof would last. Planner Williams noted that the alteration does not significantly changing the site. She recommends one condition for approval of the application and that is that the applicant reconstruct the roof to its known appearance.

Applicant Presentation: Mr. Sexton gave a brief history reflecting on the extensive damage sustained on the roof due to the 1950 snow storm. He explained that funding would be coming from several grants and fundraising. The Grange received the Siletz Tribal Grant which enabled them to hire an engineer to redesign the roof. The estimated cost of replacing the roof was \$72,000 but with rising material costs the contractor will revise his bid and it could come to \$100,000.

Commissioner Eaton asked how the Grange members planned to raise funds for the project. Mr. Sexton responded stating that Grange members plan to apply for 4 other grants, public fundraising and

raise awareness with an article in the Gazette Times. Mr. Sexton also stated that a community member has offered to assist financially in the form of a loan to guarantee that the work will be done before the rain returns. Previously, a plastic cover on the roof has made it through two winters but will not last another one. Once the Grange members are able to get 50% funding, they will apply for a grant from the Ford Family Foundation. Mr. Sexton emphasized the goal of making the Willamette Grange a community resource again. The hope is that the Grange will be used for other events (besides Grange meetings), such as; community events, meetings, etc. He noted that they organized a 501(C)(3) called the Willamette Community and Grange Hall Historic Building Foundation and gained IRS approval in April of 2020, that will allow them to apply for certain grants that would not otherwise be applicable.

Mr. Sexton closed with stating that the Willamette Grange membership has grown from 15 members to 30 members in the last year and hopes that number continues to grow.

There was no testimony in favor or opposition of the application.

During closing comments, Commissioner Taniguchi stated that the Grange has great historical significance and is encouraged by its growth. She was able to take the tour last year and can see that the building has a strong historic presence in the community. Commissioner Eaton commented by thanking Mr. Sexton for all his hard work and he is glad to see the project moving forward.

The public meeting was closed.

Commissioner Taniguchi made a motion to approve the application of reconstructing the Willamette Grange roof with the condition that it will be replaced back to its known historic appearance, which includes the flag pole. Commissioner Freeman seconded and the motion passed unanimously

D. Report by Conundrum House Subcommittee

The subcommittee consists of Commissioner Taniguchi, Commissioner Freeman, and Commissioner Sexton.

Comm. Sexton started the report. Very interesting and productive. Got to brainstorm about a bunch of themes.

Comm. Freeman added to the report, better grasp on the timeline and that Conundrum House can pull this off. Got more confidence that we can move forward.

Comm. Taniguchi added that we decided on a ghost story. Also have a Save-the-Date card and timeline. Decided that the event would happen throughout the month of May. Launch is May 1st. Culminate on May 25th. Meant to be family friendly. People throughout the country can participate.

Discussion ensued.

Comm. Eaton about the Save-the-Date – reading at an angle is hard. Concerned about the advertising and how we would make the event well known in the community.

Comm. Sexton – was our funding adequate and our timing adequate? We can start right now pushing it out to the community. Generate as much contact as we can with people. Also talked about that this is the time we can get people to do this – maybe next year no one wants to be on a computer.

Comm. Taniguchi – we also have funds we need to use this year.

More venues will be able to be used, through use of snapshots and videos, than just the courthouse. Can also direct people to the walking tours and driving tour. Can also use characters from different cultures as ghosts. Want it to be multi-cultural – Chinese, native American and African American.

At least four ghosts at OSU, if not more. Nothing says all of these ghosts have to be known, as we can completely manufacture the ghosts. The ghosts are coming back to say that you need to save these things because they are important.

What happens next – over next couple of weeks a lot of research needs to be done – identify the experts of buildings. Taking the idea and fleshing it out with research. Sussing out the communications of the ghosts – what are they trying to tell us.

Title - Specters from Benton County Past – a play on a Christmas Carol and the ghosts of Christmas past.

Comm. Taniguchi moved that the HRC work with Adrienne and Mark and other associates to promote Historic Preservation Month in Benton County through this ghost story telling and everything else we discussed. Seconded by Comm. Sexton. There was unanimous approval.

E. Discuss wording of the Proclamation

None of the commissioners had any proposed changes to the wording of the proclamation [Note: Comm. Eaton sent Ms. Williams some suggested changes subsequent to the meeting, which she incorporated into the document. Comm. Eaton also agreed to read the proclamation at the Board of County Commissioner meeting.]

F. Items from the Public

None.

G. Items from the Commissioners

Comm. Sexton stated that they almost have the portico deconstructed. They found a feeder line for the gas lamps inside for the original lighting.

H. Other Business

None

I. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.