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Gregory Howell
Vice Chair

Anthony Perko
Secretary



Angela Rayne
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Alyssum Skjeie

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Minutes for Wednesday, July 22, 2021
Virtual Meeting ID: 941 6966 6847 (Zoom.us)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Called to order at 12 p.m. with Jason Falsetto presiding.

Commissioners Present: Gregory Howell, Laurel Campbell, Alyssum Skjeie, Megan Moore, Anthony Perko, Angela Rayne (via zoom)

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Members Present: Wade Broadhead, Planner and Beritt Odom, Principal Planner

Staff Members Absent: Daniel Kogovsek, City Attorney

Applicants Present: Corinne Koehler and John Wilbar

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Falsetto moved onto the regular agenda.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND COMMISSION ACTIONS CONSENT AGENDA

1. HPC-21-04 215 E Orman Ave, Keating Middle School, Exclusion from Local Landmark

Adopted in December 2020, Title 4 of the PMC allows owners of landmarks listed on the National Register of Historic Places to “opt out” of local designation which is an automatic process. The processing of withdrawing local landmark status is the same as becoming a local landmark, involving public notice and public hearings. The Keating School Group, a standalone nonprofit, has been working on the rehabilitation of the now vacant Keating School currently owned by District 60 and wishes to opt out of local landmark designation.

STAFF REVIEW AND FINDINGS:

Staff Report given by Wade Broadhead

In most circumstances the city does not want to set a precedent of opting out important, highly visible, historic community assets, however there are mitigating factors that set the Keating School aside from a traditional opt-out. Erected in 1927 the Keating School is currently one of the largest vacant historic buildings in Pueblo. Encompassing 111,507 sq. ft. this large complex will be difficult to rehabilitate and may involve various uses, contingency plans and phasing. The Keating Group is in the process of purchasing the building from District 60 and seeking a developer partner to restore the building to a vibrant use. The group is dedicated to the preservation of the façade and as many of the historic elements as possible, however, some contingencies may result in some modifications that may not be perfectly congruent with local preservation standards in all cases. Furthermore, currently the building is owned by the Pueblo School District 60, and they are exempt from local land use controls and may elect at any time to follow another direction. Fortunately, both groups are dedicated to the preservation of the historic fabric of Keating and have signed a letter of intent/contract that preservation of the historic elements are a condition of the sale.

The National Register of Historic Places designation has been utilized for tax credit rehabilitation of large expensive building across the country since 1976. Many, if not most, of these buildings have not been located in local districts. This process allowed for an ‘all carrot, no stick’ approach that has been popular nationwide. Pueblo opted to automatically list national as local for a higher level of commitment to preservation. Local designation provides the most local control of historic resources but in this case the rehabilitation of Keating will almost certainly utilize tax credits and be subject to preservation review from federal staff in Washington D.C.

According to the newly adopted ordinance properties that are newly listed on the national register of historic places may opt out if they request so within 30 days, which the applicant has completed. While most properties on the national register should also be placed on the local register where the physical protection lies, in this case the property will be redeveloped utilizing other preservation incentives that maintain the historic character at the same or higher level than would occur with the Pueblo HPC. Furthermore, this property is currently owned by a school district which is outside local zoning and preservation jurisdiction. It is in the best interest of the city to support the voluntary partnerships between the school district and a community group which aims to revitalize the building utilizing preservation methods. This opt out also does not preclude the owner from opting back in at a later date when exterior renovation is completed.

ZONING DISTRICT:

Governmental Use, S-1 Zone District.

LAND USE:

Site Character

The 1927 Classical Revival-style Central Junior High School, renamed Keating Junior High School in 1937, is situated in the heart of Pueblo/Mesa Junction Area. The substantial two-story tan brick, Classical Revival-style school has an L shaped footprint. Constructed in stages, the block-long, 111, 507 square foot building consists of an east-west component built in 1926-27; 1929 east and west wings; and shorter, one and two story north-south

gymnasium additions (1959 and 1976). The front east, and west walls include imposing stone porticoes with ionic columns. The older portions of the school feature banded brick pilasters defining bays holding tripartite windows and stone sills. Keating continued to house educational functions until 2009 but is now vacant. The school retains an excellent level of historic integrity.

The school and associated property occupies almost the entire block with the exception of one small church located in the southwest corner under separate ownership. Much of the area is an open gravel lot and historic photos indicate it has been this way since construction. The school forms an educational promenade along Orman Ave. with its sister school Central High School across the street.

The applicant stated his intent to use grants and tax credits to rehabilitate or restore historic features of the building and adaptively reuse it according to a planned unit development.

Neighborhood Compatibility

The neighborhood is generally composed of a residential area (Mesa Junction) with transitional mixed and commercial uses consisting of early Twentieth Century masonry and craftsman buildings facing to the north.

FINDINGS OF FACT FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION REQUIREMENTS/OR OPT OUT

ACTION:¹

According to PMC 4-14-8(I) states that delisting shall be taken in the same manner as designation. However, the findings for a designation are incongruent with the findings of the proposed action. The issue at hand is whether non listing of the proposed property would have any adverse impact on the City, neighborhood, or community or threaten a community asset that could be utilized for proliferation of the common good.

Under this reading of the intent of the ordinance non listing of the Keating school will not have a negative effect on the city or surrounding neighborhood for the following reasons:

1. The Keating Group has a contract with the school district to maintain the historic character of the school.
 2. The Keating Group has board members trained in historic preservation tax credits and plans to use them in part to fund any renovation.
 3. The current owner, Pueblo City Schools District 60, has publicly stated their dedication to the historic preservation of the school.
 4. State agencies and properties are outside the purview of the local zoning control and the school district could take any action they choose in the future.
 5. The current action does not preclude future owners from locally landmarking Keating School.
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Staff recommends APPROVAL of the Out of the Local landmark designation for a Landmark Designation.

Hearing: Mrs. Koehler was present to represent the applicant. Commissioner Perko raised the issue of the date of the application and the date of the nomination to the National Register which was in December 2020. Ms. Odom referenced the code that the ordinance allows for a six-month window to opt out and since the application was received in March 2021 the application and action was valid. A short discussion ensued about the finding of facts where Broadhead called attention to the fact that they are not relevant to the action and a small text amendment is warranted. Commission Perko read a modified findings of fact and all commissioner confirmed.

Commission Action:

Motion to approve by Commissioner Howell, second by Campbell

Motion passed 7 - 0

2. HPC-21-07 107 S Grand Ave, La Veta Block, Application for signage, Pueblo Arts Alliance, COA

Section 4-14-11 (c) of the Pueblo Municipal Code (PMC), requires all owners of historic properties to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for any alteration or rehabilitation that does, or does not, require a building permit. The applicant requests a Certificate of Appropriateness to add a painted sign to the north two bays of the primary facade. Pueblo Standards of Appropriateness were considered for this case.

STAFF REVIEW AND FINDINGS:

Staff Report given by Wade Broadhead

The La Veta Place/La Veta Block building was erected in 1891 and is a fine example of Late Victorian Romanesque architectural style common in the Pueblo Downtown commercial district at that time. The building was purchased and then locally landmarked by the Pueblo Arts Alliance in 2016. The organization secured a grant from the State Historical Fund for exterior renovation which is currently wrapping up.

The two-story red brick building fronts on Grand Avenue directly across from the El Pueblo Museum. The primary façade consists of plate glass windows modified wainscoting. The second floor contains replacement fixed pane windows with the bottom open for ventilation. The first-floor storefront has been heavily modified and consist of 3 vertical panes of glass with a white wood board where the transom windows once sat. The applicant is proposing a 49 square foot and a 7 square foot sign. The signs read “Pueblo Arts Alliance” and in a space above the southern doorway “Liminal Space, Gallery”, the logo of the alliance, consisting of

gears, will frame the Liminal Space Gallery doorway and extend onto the sidewalk if possible. The white wooden covered transom will be painted to match the sandstone, in an orange oxide tone. The Arts alliance will be painted a “Cedar Chest” dark red (see color sample) as well as a “Sea Glass” dark green.

One of the tenants of the Secretary of Interior’s Standards are to be flexible with changes are that are easily reversible, the proposed signage is easily reversible. Given the degree of heavy modification the request for a sign should confine plans to the areas that have been modified which is what the applicant plans on installing. Owners should have some degree of flexibility on facades that have been heavily modified until they restore the storefront. Painted signs are easily reversible and cause no harm to already disturbed facades. Furthermore, the 56 square foot of signage is well below what would be allowed in a B-4 Zone District, which would be the length 120 linear ft, times 2 so 240 square feet.

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness per the requirements contained in Section 12, Chapter 14 – Historic Preservation Code, Title IV – Building Regulations, of the Pueblo Municipal Code. The Historic Preservation Commission may approve this application if it serves the goals of the historic preservation standards and recommendations. The request is discussed in detail below:

Scope of Work

1. Paint the “Pueblo Arts Alliance” name and logo on the front façade northern two bays.
2. Paint “The Liminal Space Gallery” on the front façade.
3. Repaint the white wooden area to match existing sandstone as well as a free band in the old transom area and red oxide to “frame” the windows.

Applicable Standards of Appropriateness (by section):

3.1.6 Signs

Historic signs are important architectural features of landmark structures and should be preserved and restored along with other architectural detailing. Any sign ordinances in effect for the zone district affecting a particular project shall apply. In addition, signs should be consistent with (but not necessarily replicas of) design features of the period of significance for the structure.

Guidelines

1. Signs of all types should be unobtrusive and blend in with the surrounding architecture.
2. Sign size should be of pedestrian scale and should complement the architecture.
3. Color for signs should be selected to harmonize with the overall building color scheme and historical character.
4. Businesses located above the first floor can have signs placed at the street level entrance or carefully designed window signs of appropriate size and material.
5. New signs should respect the size, scale and design of the historic building. Often features or details of the building will suggest a motif for new signs.

6. Sign placement is important: new signs should not obscure significant features of the historic building. Signs above a storefront should fit within the historic signboard, for example.
7. New signs should also respect neighboring buildings. They should not shadow or overpower adjacent structures.
8. Letter style of signs should be legible, using simple, well-proportioned typeface.
9. Banner signs are not to be located higher than the transom window.
10. Signs on transom windows or in the original location of the transom are not allowed.
11. Construction of new projecting signs should be limited to a pedestrian scale.
12. Sandwich board signs or projecting signs require a revocable permit on or in the public right-of-way by city ordinance.
13. Signs should have no plastic elements.
14. Electrified backlit and interior illuminated signs are not permitted.

The storefront has been heavily modified and the painting of the signs conforms to the guidelines with one exception, “do not paint over the transom.” The transom area has been obliterated and compressed with the storefront area so while the one sign is in the transom area it’s not a traditional transom window. Furthermore, staff will be recommending a change to the guidelines for this requirement as it’s a narrow reading of historic period and painted signs on a transom area allow flexibility for owners without compromising historic character. Numerous painted letters and numbers were painted on transom windows from the 1890s to the 1940s in Colorado. Reasonable text or addressing should be allowed on transom areas in historic downtowns.

The font for the logo is not typical historic font but, in this case, it is the logo of the owner and sits on a compromised façade on a stand-alone historic landmark, not a commercial district. The organization’s mission is more festive and artistic and should have a little bit of flexibility with regards to reversible signage.

Staff recommends Approval for the exterior rehabilitation.

CONDITIONS IF APPROVED:

Should the Historic Preservation Commission find it appropriate to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness, the staff recommends including with the following conditions

1. Time Limits: Date of issuance of permit: July 14, 2022.
2. Required Revisions: Any revisions or additions to plans required as a result of approval must be submitted and stamped “approved” prior to the sign-off of the building permit routing slip.
3. Changes: The project shall be completed as shown on the plans, which have been stamped “approved” and dated by the Department of Planning and Community

Development. The project shall not deviate from the approved plans without prior written approval from the Department of Planning and Community Development and may be subject to further review by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Hearing:

Commissioner Falsetto closes the open hearing.

Commission Action:

Commissioner Perko, seconded by commissioner Howell made a motion to approve HPC-21-07

Motion passed 7-0.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 12, 2021, Meeting: Motion by Howell to approve the minutes for May 12, 2021, seconded by Skjeie; motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Perko pointed out that he was absent for the May meeting, yet the record reflects he made a motion.

June 9, 2021, Motion by Campbell to approve the minutes for June 9, 2021, seconded by Howell motion passed unanimously.

IV. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion about upcoming Work Session meeting dates and time.

Official time of the combined regular meeting and work session will be the third Wednesday of the month from 1:30 to 3PM.

2. HPC-21-06 228 W Evans Ave. COA

Broadhead reported on a COA for a like to like re-roof at 228 W. Evans Ave that was approved.

3. SHF Citywide Hispanic Historic Context update

Broadhead reported on the efforts by the city to submit a Pueblo Hispanic Historic Context study to the State Historical Fund due by August 1st. He described the manner in which the study would be conducted utilizing local citizens and historians to augment a consultant.

4. Carlile School

Broadhead relayed a conversation with District 60 about Carlile school emergency closure. The school district stated they were looking at their options and Broadhead offered the city's preservation commission and staff's resource if needed.

5. Graffiti on Union Ave (Added by Campbell)

Campbell wanted an update on graffiti on Union Ave.

6. What is the Stone on the thatcher Building (Added by Campbell).

Motion by Perko to adjourn the meeting at 12:55; second by Howell; unanimously approved.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Wade Broadhead.

I. ADJOURN

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:55.