



PORTLAND HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

## STATE OF THE CITY PRESERVATION REPORT 2019

FEBRUARY 2020

## Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission PROVIDES LEADERSHIP AND EXPERTISE ON MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING PORTLAND'S ARCHITECTURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE. The Commission reviews development proposals for alterations to historic buildings and new construction in historic districts. The Commission also provides advice on historic preservation matters and coordinates historic preservation programs in the City.

### 2019 Commission Members

**KRISTEN MINOR, CHAIR** – Commissioner Minor has spent over 25 years studying and shaping the built environment. She practiced architecture for 10 years, then spent 10 as an urban planner, and now works exclusively with historic and older buildings.

**MAYA FOTY, VICE CHAIR** – Commissioner Foty's experience includes numerous preservation projects on both the east and west coasts. With over 18 years' experience as a preservation architect working exclusively on National Register listed properties, she specializes in projects with complex seismic and material conservation issues.

**MATTHEW ROMAN** – Commissioner Roman has 25 years of experience preserving Portland's architectural heritage both as a designer and through involvement in nonprofit organizations like Restore Oregon, the Architectural Heritage Center, the Pittock Mansion, and the Preservation Artisans Guild.

**WENDY CHUNG (UNTIL APRIL 2019)** – Commissioner Chung is an 18-year attorney who has donated thousands of hours of public service to support historic preservation in Portland and statewide. As an at-large member, she brought to her role as Commissioner the unique perspective of a neighborhood volunteer, as well as that of an attorney with significant experience interpreting regulatory codes when applying approval criteria to specific land use cases.

**ERNESTINA FUENMAYOR** – Commissioner Fuenmayor has a Master's Degree in Historic Preservation and spent the last 10 years working in historic preservation in the Pacific Northwest. She has written several National Register Nominations and local landmark designations, as well as historic building surveys. She has been practicing architecture for the last 16 years focusing in multifamily, government projects and historic resources.

**ANNIE MAHONEY** – Commissioner Mahoney is an architect who has worked on historic buildings and new construction over the past 20 years. She has a broad range of experience working with public and private entities on institutional and commercial projects.

**ANDREW SMITH** – Commissioner Smith is an historical architect with more than 20 years of experience working on preservation and rehabilitation projects, including many utilizing historic tax credits. He holds a Master of Architecture from Tulane University, and practiced in St. Louis, Chicago and New Orleans prior to living in Portland.

**DEREK SPEARS (BEGINNING DECEMBER 2019)** – Commissioner Spears has been in the insurance and financial services industry for over 13 years and has experience evaluating regulatory structures. He has a great passion for acknowledgement, preservation, and protection of all culture and history.



COMMISSIONERS 2019 – Minor, Foty, Roman, Mahoney, Fuenmayor, Smith, Spears

The Historic Landmarks Commission is supported by HILLARY ADAM, primary staff to the PHLC, an expert team from the Bureau of Development Services, and KARA FIORAVANTI, supervising manager of the Design and Historic Review team at BDS, as well as BRANDON SPENCER-HARTLE, our liaison from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Cover: Left to Right. Billy Webb Elks Lodge pre-1943 and SE Stark and 80th 1939

## In Memory of City Commissioner Nick Fish

Preserving Portland’s historic monuments, landmarks, and historic districts is important work. The stories those places tell us about who we are can resonate over generations. Inscribed on the base of Skidmore Fountain, Portland’s oldest piece of public art, is a quotation from early northwest artist and civic leader C.E.S. Wood. “Good Citizens are the Riches of a City”.

No individual of our time embodied the spirit of that quote more than Commissioner Nick Fish. His life of service and humanity reminds us the riches of a city are defined not just in the character of our place or the nobility of our buildings but in the civic nature of our citizens.

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission dedicates this report and the work ahead to the memory of Nick Fish. May his life and legacy inspire us all.

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### 2019 Stats

#### Commission Reviews

5	Type III Historic Resource Reviews	20	Briefings
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## Message from the Chair

Dear Mayor Wheeler and City Council Members,

In many ways historic preservation, like many other city planning efforts such as urban renewal, in Portland Oregon is, and has been, racist or has resulted in outcomes that continue to disadvantage non-white populations. The politics of which buildings, neighborhoods, or areas of town get saved - and more to the point, which ones don't get saved - has always benefitted the powerful. That has been true during the 1920s, when Oregon's governor was part of the Ku Klux Klan and people of color were redlined into Old Town and Albina. That was also true from the 1950s to the 1970s, when "redevelopment" projects targeted massive swaths of Albina, from the Memorial Coliseum to the I-5 freeway to Legacy Emanuel to the PPS Blanchard building. It is true today when Portland's Chinese-American population as well as its African American population continues to be relocated into outer areas such as Gresham and East Portland. Historic preservation has all too often championed buildings constructed by and for the privileged class and specifically not advocated for saving places important to people of color, to immigrants, to blue collar people, to the disadvantaged and middle-class. These "everyday" stories need to be told. Many of these places deserve to remain part of the city's fabric, especially since they are among the most vulnerable to demolition. Doing so will enrich us all as a community. Preservation can offer financial benefits as well, and we must enable a wider spectrum of people to access these benefits to help defray the costs of maintenance and energy upgrades.

We can start with better outreach to find out more about what exists in our built environment, especially in those areas of Albina that became local "conservation districts" back in the 1990s, but which in reality have not had protection from demolition or help for people of color trying to stay in their communities. City Council funded a historic survey last year in Montavilla, which was the first in that neighborhood. An ongoing historic outreach and survey program will help connect people to their neighborhoods and create a sense of pride and identity in all of Portland. We can and must do better than the three- (only three!)- designated landmarks in Portland important for their ties to African-American history and culture. We hope this will be a pivotal year for being able to identify, highlight, and designate more of these currently unprotected resources.

Regulation and designation can offer checks and balances on the capitalist model that otherwise would make the cheapest buildings and land the most vulnerable to redevelopment. The cost of this "business as usual" model perpetuates not only the bigger, structural problems of land, wealth, inequality and systemic oppression and exploitation, but also ignores the climate emergency which should loom over every single other concern on the table. Preservation, in short, helps to address affordability, equity, and sustainability, and is not a barrier to increased density. Density was once much higher in almost every older residential area of Portland, including in single-family historic districts. We need City Council's help and support for historic preservation. Density can - and should - be increased by taking on: building codes, developers who would rather build new than retrofit, regulations that disincentivize renters, and the sheer difficulty and cost in building ADUs or converting garages.

Preservation means protecting places important to all people in Portland, not just the most beautiful or grandest buildings. Our history is diverse, overlapping, messy, and always interesting.

Thank you,  
Kristen Minor  
Chair of the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission





Albina 1948 (Portland Maps)



Albina 2018 (Portland Maps)

These images show the decimation of Lower Albina that occurred in the name of progress with the construction of I-5, the Coliseum, and the Portland Public Schools building.

The 1948 image shows a connected grid of streets populated with houses that formed a community.

The 2018 image shows the street grids obliterated and small scale development replaced with big buildings and an Interstate.

If the city's decision makers had cared more about this community 50-70 years ago, a thoughtful preservation approach could have saved any number of buildings and the community could have remained relatively intact, while still allowing for the needed development.

# PRIORITIES AND GOALS

As a Commission, we continue to advocate for keeping the spaces and buildings that provide an authentic sense of place in Portland, while simultaneously allowing for increased commercial and residential density throughout Portland. What makes a place recognizably part of Portland? From a special alleyway in Old Town Chinatown, to a sleek yet sensitive new commercial building in Alphabet, to a study of transit alignments in South Portland, context matters. Supporting rehabilitation rather than demolition, for example, promotes the retention of Portland's heritage and character while reducing waste and meeting the City's sustainability goals.

Oregon has a way to go to create the kind of environment in which we collectively decide what elements of our built heritage gets passed to our future. Portland has benefitted greatly from historic preservation. The PHLC will take an active role collaborating with our counterpart commissions, City Council, the development and design communities, advocacy organizations, and the general public to ensure historic preservation is part of the solution for the needs of a growing community. As code updates are developed and adopted in the coming year, the PHLC will take a leadership role to ensure the historic preservation goals of the Comprehensive Plan are implemented appropriately. We are committed to consistency and clarity in our process and look for opportunities to educate and be educated through briefings and invitations to industry experts. The Commission's two major priorities and goals - equity and sustainability - are described on the next page.



Martin Mayo House 1929 (from Eliot Neighborhood website)



Rendering of Portland City Hall's green roof  
(Architectural Resources Group and Mayer/Reed)

# PRIORITIES AND GOALS cont.

## EQUITY

The City's 2035 Comprehensive Plan made significant strides in acknowledging prior deficiencies in the City's planning practices as it relates to inclusion of a diverse representation of public voices. For the first time the City established a goal related to social justice and equity. The PHLC supports this goal and seeks to ensure that the fabric of the city represents a broad range of Portland's stories and represents all of the City's diverse communities. Historically, the buildings we have protected were selected by those in power - predominantly white men. Meanwhile, many of the buildings and neighborhoods significant to non-white communities were bulldozed in the name of progress. Such demolition primarily occurred in Lower Albina, South Auditorium, and South Portland, and continues to happen all over the city, particularly in North and Northeast Portland. Those without power and capital often have no voice when faced with the potential loss of spaces and places that matter to them. Therefore, the City must listen to these communities, lead by example, and help to protect the places that help tell the complete story of Portland, specifically by elevating the voices of non-white, LGBTQ, and other marginalized communities.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Often when we think of "sustainability" we think of climate change and protection of the environment and our planet Earth. Development of green buildings is, indeed, one way to combat climate change. However, reduction of waste, recycling, minimizing resource depletion, and reducing our carbon footprint are others. Preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings accomplishes all four of these things, resulting in inherently green buildings. The PHLC wishes to partner with and further educate the community in this approach to combating our greatest challenge. And, we hope that the City will fully embrace preservation as a means to accomplishing our climate change goals.

In addition to environmental sustainability, preservation and rehabilitation promotes greater social and economic sustainability as well. Older buildings provide a tangible measure of the continuum of our linear history and ensure that this history carries across generations and changing and growing communities. Significant places with positive associations bind communities together across time. Places with less than positive associations provide tangible space for reflection, education, and hopefully growth. Additionally, regarding economic sustainability, preservation and rehabilitation, rather than new construction, allows more money for construction costs to go to workers within the community for their labor rather than to materials from outside the community, thus allowing more money to stay within the community and sustaining the City's economic growth.

The PHLC will continue to seek ways to link financial and regulatory incentives aimed at the rehabilitation, seismic upgrade, and adaptive reuse of our historic buildings. Priorities include advocating for a state rehabilitation tax credit, supporting changes in the Historic Resources Code Project, and advocating for local preservation programs that think outside the box such as energy retrofit grants, easements, fee waivers, and other construction incentives.



# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS

The Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) of approximately 5,000 properties was completed in 1984 by the City of Portland as a project of the Historic Landmarks Commission. Being listed on the HRI is not a historic “designation,” but a determination of eligibility for Landmark status that comes with a demolition delay period. Every year the Historic Landmarks Commission requests funding from City Council to update Portland’s Historic Resources Inventory (HRI). Why is this inventory important and why is it important to keep it up to date? On the next two pages we describe a few projects that were undertaken by BPS and were partially funded by City Council budget decisions in 2018 and 2019. While these projects have not yet resulted in individual resources being added to the HRI or designated as Landmarks, they have provided a framework for future HRI projects and, hopefully, following City Council action later this year, will result in the first HRI update since 1984. In addition, the first two projects described below are on track for listing in the National Register of Historic Places which will provide greater opportunities for these resources. The continuing pages describe other ways in which preservation matters.

## African American Multiple Property Documentation

In 1998, the Bosco-Milligan Foundation published *Cornerstones of Community: Buildings of Portland’s African American History* as an index of both extant and demolished resources related to Portland’s African-American heritage. In 2010, Cornerstones property data was mapped by BPS, identifying extant and demolished resources, including those demolished after the survey was initially conducted in the 1990s. Since 2010, demolition permits have been issued for the removal of an additional 14 commercial properties and 38 residential properties (and counting) associated with Portland’s African American heritage.

Since 2017, BPS has worked with community partners to expand the Cornerstones project into a Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) to tell a more complete story of Portland’s built environment through the experience of African Americans. The intent of the MPD is to identify which buildings and environments played significant roles in Portland’s African American history and why. In assigning value to these properties for their cultural merit, it sets the stage for property owners to seek Landmark designation and reap benefits that historic designation offers (FAR transfer, Special Assessment property tax relief, Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, etc). Celebrating and preserving properties significant to the African American community are important tools in ensuring Portland’s multi-cultural heritage is not erased in the face of change. We anticipate the MPD’s listing in the National Register of Historic Places later in 2020.

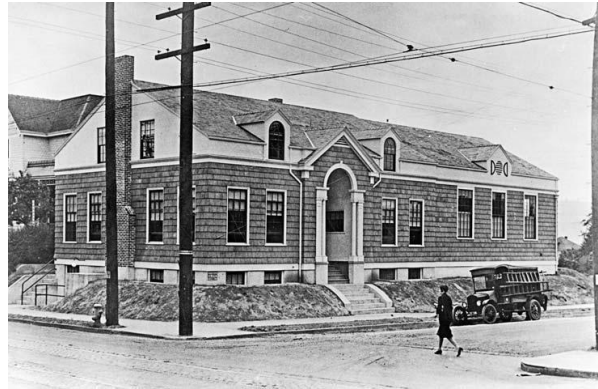
## Billy Webb Elks Lodge National Register Nomination

As a result of collaboration with the community on completion of the MPD, members of the Billy Webb Elks Lodge came forward with an interest in having their building designated as a Landmark. In its 98-year history, the Billy Webb Elks Lodge has served the traditionally African American neighborhood of Albina as a Black YWCA, a USO center for Black servicemen, and as an African American Elks Lodge. Today, the building is still serving as an Elks Lodge and is used for community services and as a social gathering place providing an environment



# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS cont.

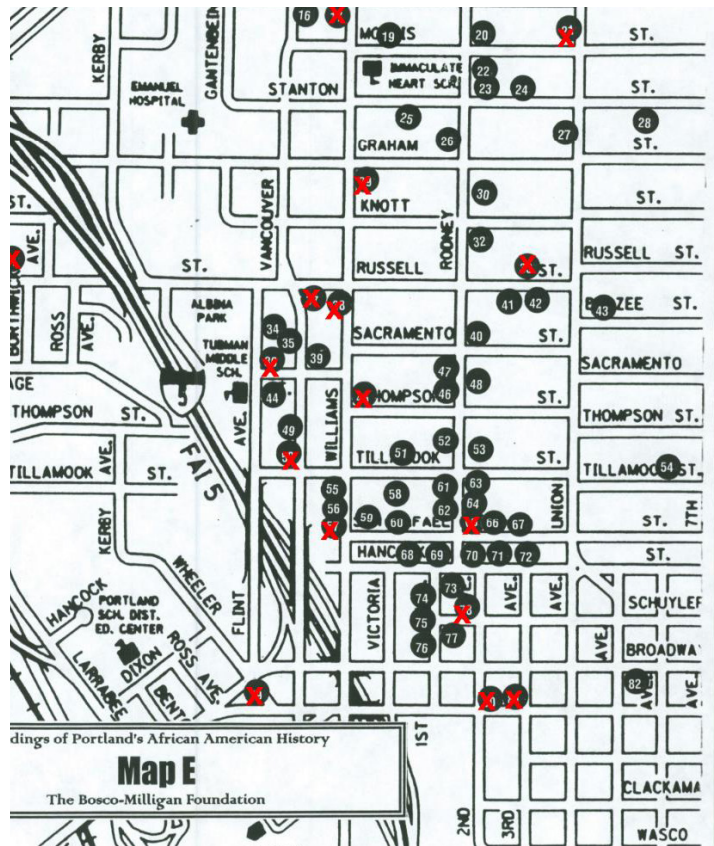
that promotes safety, dignity, respect, and pride for people of color who have long and deep ties to the Albina community. Because of needs for physical improvements and a desire to ensure the long-term protection of the building and its stories, designating the Billy Webb Elks Lodge to the National Register of Historic Places will help advance the interests of Lodge members while adding additional diversity to Portland's list of designated Landmarks.



Billy Webb Elks Lodge pre-1943

## Cornerstones

This is one of six maps (A-F) in the "Cornerstones of Community" document showing significant remaining locations, as of 1995, in Portland's African-American history identified in the Cornerstones of Community survey. Since that time, buildings with a red "x" have been demolished. Perhaps the biggest losses have been the shared spaces; the stores, churches, and restaurants. With the exception of the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, none of these resources have been designated or protected.



# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS cont.

## Montavilla Main Street Survey

Deploying funding allocated by City Council, in 2019 BPS completed a historic resources survey of the commercial core of the Montavilla neighborhood. In addition to engaging an independent consultant, University of Oregon graduate historic preservation students and community members documented approximately 160 parcels for potential architectural, cultural, and historic significance. The survey culminated in a context statement identifying what aspects of Montavilla's geography, history and culture shaped its built environment; what property types were associated with those developments and why those properties are important and what level of integrity is needed for them to qualify for Landmark designation. Identifying these key aspects of Montavilla's history will be critical for guiding future development: which buildings have cultural and architectural value? Which buildings retain historic fabric and what did that fabric look like? This information will help inform future development so that the Montavilla identity is retained and reinforced and not made into a generic street front that could be Anywhere, USA. BPS will bring the results of the Montavilla survey to City Council later in 2020 for adoption onto the HRI (anticipated to be the first such update since 1984).



SE Stark and 80th - Today



SE Stark and 80th - 1939

## SIDENOTE

### ANNOUNCING NEW PHLC EQUITY OUTREACH

Starting in 2020, the PHLC is planning a new outreach blog specifically geared toward seeking out and identifying historic resources that are important for their cultural heritage or connections to marginalized or overlooked communities. We specifically wish to find stories and places where people from diverse backgrounds worked, lived, or came together, and these places may not be the most architecturally impressive. The PHLC can help filter, collect, and recommend places to be added to the HRI once the HRCP creates a method for that process, but we also need City Council's help and support to occasionally (perhaps once a year?) support the research and writing of a historic nomination at the local level. Creating the blog, partnering with those in the local community, and celebrating success stories will not only make historic preservation more accessible and understandable, it will actively push back against the narrative that historic preservation is only for wealthy people.

# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS cont.

## Older Multifamily Buildings: Affordable Housing

For-profit developers are generally not in the business of providing new housing at a low price point. Finding the right balance between regulation and incentives is the key, and historic designations offer a meaningful financial incentive (even here in Oregon where we do not have a State Historic Tax Credit program). Historic multi-family buildings can qualify for the federal Historic Tax Credit program as well as a “Special Assessment” (sometimes called the “tax freeze”) through the State of Oregon. In order to take on costs associated with improving energy efficiency and seismic upgrades, non-profits such as Central City Concern, Innovative Housing, and REACH have been able to put together funding packages using enough federal assistance to serve a specific low-income population and to rehabilitate many older hotel and apartment buildings that continue to contribute their craftsmanship, durability, affordability, and character to our streetscapes.

### EXAMPLES:



**Name: Henry Building, SW 4th and Oak**

Photo: C. K. Henry Building, 2018 photo by Steve Morgan, Wikimedia

Historic Name/ status: C. K. Henry Building, 1909. Listed on National Register. Exterior features glazed terra cotta

Owner: Central City Concern

Major work completed: Seismic and ADA upgrade, added usable area in part of central light well, historic rehabilitation, 2018.

Funding: Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, and multiple other local sources

Units: 177 units (24 new) + commercial



**Name: Musolf Manor NW Davis and Third Ave**

Photo: after Rehabilitation 2019

Historic Name/ status: Built as the Foster Hotel, a workingman’s hotel, 1910. Japanese ownership for many decades. Contributing to the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District.

Owner: Innovative Housing Inc

Major work completed: Major seismic and ADA upgrade, historic rehabilitation, 2009.

Funding: Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, and multiple other local sources

Units: 95 units of affordable studio housing for very low-income singles (+ commercial)



# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS cont.



Name: Fountain Place, SW Salmon and 10th

Photo: Wheeldon Annex, c.1920s photo by Angelus Studio, U of O Digital collection

Historic Name/ status: Wheeldon Annex, 1911. Expected to be on the National Register of historic places by January 2020.

Owner: Home Forward

Major work planned: Major seismic and ADA upgrade, historic rehabilitation.

Funding: Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, and multiple other local sources

Units: 80 apartments for people with income between 40% and 80% of the area median income.

## Older Single-Family Neighborhoods

Single-family housing as a model of development has been encouraged by the federal government for the last century through the mortgage tax deduction benefit, which unfortunately has and still does exacerbate inequities between renters and homeowners. The PHLC strongly supports additional density and change in all neighborhoods, including historically-designated districts. We would like to see more “missing middle” long-term rentals or owned units in these neighborhoods, as opposed to vacation rentals. However, there are multiple reasons why we (as the government) should not simply “get out of the way” and enable developers to build more units. Unless we are thoughtful about how change happens across our city, there are numerous critical things we collectively will sacrifice. One important notion we sacrifice is that added density will be affordable for the vast majority of Portlanders. Older, existing housing is inherently less expensive due to its longevity- the costs of its initial construction were amortized long ago. In Oregon, due to the passage of Measure 5 in 1990, the tax burden on newer residential development is significantly more than on older houses, making their replacements even pricier.

## EXAMPLES:



1. We can make it easier for people to build new ADUs, split large houses into 2 or more units, and convert garages into livable units. This garage on NE Failing was converted into a living unit sometime after 2002. There are now firms in California that will secure the permits, pay the full cost of the conversion, and then split the rental income with the homeowner for an agreed length of time.



# WHY PRESERVATION MATTERS cont.

## SIDENOTE

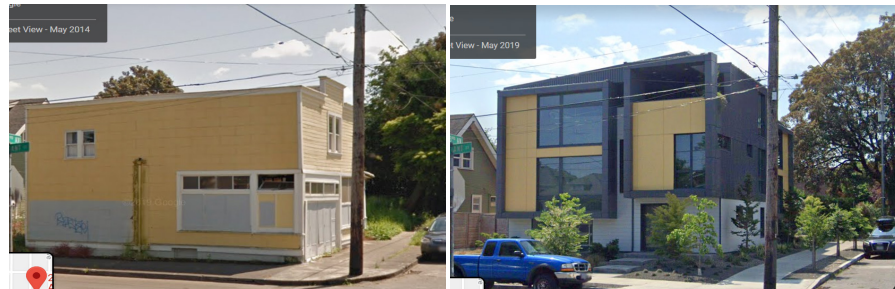
### INCREASE OWNER-OCCUPIED RENTALS

Rather than waiting for the oldest, most affordable single-family homes to be sold to developers and replaced, there are ways to increase density by encouraging owner-occupied rentals within existing single-family neighborhoods. One way is to encourage people who own property to become small-scale landlords. Many property owners are more willing to construct vacation rentals rather than housing, so how can we push back against this depressing trend? If we want individual property owners to become landlords on properties they own, then we need to make it easier for them. Perhaps a third-party property management entity with help and oversight from the city could be formed. This entity would specifically help groups of property owners construct and manage one or two rental units, shield renters and landlords alike from the worst examples of each, help families or individuals find rentals in an area, and provide incentives and information around maintenance and affordability of rentals.

2. A “before” and “after” photo in the vicinity of SE Franklin and SE 31st shows a demolished triplex in 2014 and the replacement homes- each a duplex with a basement apartment. Unfortunately, a check on Air BnB website shows the apartments available for short-term rental. More restrictions on vacation rentals might help long-term rental unit availability.



3. This old “corner store” in North Portland (photo 2014) was replaced by a single-family home that sold for \$1.2M last year. It is Earth Advantage zero-energy-certified, has solar on the roof, and “highest end finishes.” However, it will take as long as 35 to well over 50 years for a new “green” home to recover the carbon expended during the construction process (see <https://www.world-habitat.org/publications/new-tricks-with-old-bricks/>). Most older buildings can have their energy efficiency dramatically improved by sealing leaks around windows, adding insulation, replacing or updating water heaters and HVAC systems, and insulating ducts and pipes.



4. An example of a great infill project by Thoughtbarn architects, adding two new duplexes behind two existing (rehabbed) duplexes in Austin, Texas (see <https://www.thoughtbarn.com/projects/avenue-c/>).



# COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS 2020

## FUNDING

### Funding the Historic Resource Inventory - Now and in the Future

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission commends the current council for recognizing how important Portland's Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) is to accomplishing citywide planning goals. Due to Council leadership and funding, the Montavilla Mainstreet Neighborhood was surveyed in 2019.

The 1984 HRI was limited in scope and excluded a number of culturally and ethnically diverse neighborhoods. For 35 years those communities have not been afforded the tools that other communities have leveraged to save important cultural resources. With the focus on context as a primary design tenet of the Design overlay Zone Amendment (DOZA) project, surveys like this are fundamental to understanding what makes Portland "Places" so unique. The Montavilla Mainstreet Survey demonstrates how culturally diverse Portland has been. Roots to our past are still there, like tracks under the pavement, to remind us of our shared history, including immigrants and blue-collar workers. If we don't want to live in "Anywhere, USA" we need to ensure that we don't create an overly generalized development model. *But unless we know what we have, we cannot prioritize what is worth keeping.* In the end, it's less about the architecture and urban design and more about the stories those places tell us about our multicultural history and the contributions of all. Understanding Montavilla is one step forward in expanding and updating the HRI Citywide. Future priority survey work might include:

- African American Landmarks. Using the template established by BPS, additional sites significant for African American history could be added to the HRI and/or designated as Landmarks.
- LGBTQ sites. The home of Darcelle (Walter Cole) was recently nominated, setting the stage for his club to become Oregon's first LGBTQ National Register Landmark. Future HRI work or designation documenting similar important people and places will be easier.
- Women's history. 2020 marks the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, presenting an opportunity to document and celebrate important Portland women whose stories have not been adequately reflected in the City's HRI.

The Montavilla Mainstreet Survey represents a modest \$30K investment on the part of Portland where \$20K was allocated to consulting fees and an additional \$10K for Intern support services. That \$30K investment coupled with BPS staff time will pay long-term dividends as the survey documented a number of potentially historic resources. Future investment in restoration and rehabilitation of these resources helps maintain our unique urban landscape.

## COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS 2020 cont.

One-time funding for an individual survey represents a start toward making the HRI a “living” document. What is really needed is an annual allotment of resources including funding for consulting work and for BPS staff to fully update the Historic Resource Inventory citywide, over time.

Moreover, we need to develop the infrastructure to maintain the database which evolves over time as information becomes available. This recommendation is best practices for any city committed to maintaining the historic and cultural resources that enrich city life and a sense of belonging for all. The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission requests your further leadership and commitment by funding work on the Historic Resource Inventory on an annual basis. We hope you will consider expanding BPS’s financial resources in order to develop the processes necessary to bring our HRI from 1984 into the present and future.

### BPS LEGISLATIVE PROJECTS

City code is in process of major change. The unusually large scope and number of BPS code-related projects underway requires intensive, legalistic-type review by each commission. While we find much of this change to be positive, we also cannot afford to be complacent or lose track of changes. We advocate for good design, for adaptive reuse as opposed to demolitions, and for equity in preservation, including meaningful local protections in areas that are gentrifying or have not had important cultural resources identified or designated.

#### Historic Resource Code Project (HRCP)

The HRCP allows for Portland’s Historic Resource Inventory to be added to and updated for the first time since 1984, and aligns our code with State regulations meant to increase local decision-making in historic regulation. Both of these can help Portland listen to new voices and previously overlooked communities to ensure that preservation benefits all Portlanders. New processes, levels of historic designation, and some much-needed incentives to historic properties are all included in HRCP.

#### Residential Infill Project (RIP)

The RIP contains much we support, including increasing density across all residential areas of the City, even those areas that are in historic or conservation districts. We can and should move away from residential “unit counts” to form- or volume-based allowances, thereby encouraging

## COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS 2020 cont.

internal divisions of larger houses. Yet the “unit count” is unfortunately still much more important in the current version than form and context. Modest, cohesive neighborhoods already being impacted by demolitions could see damage inflicted by out of scale 3- and 4-unit multiplexes without any design or historic review. It is also astonishing, at a time when we must limit carbon emissions, that developers still have no incentive in the code to add on to or retrofit existing buildings, rather than demolish them.

### Design Overlay Zone Amendments (DOZA)

DOZA began as a way to study Portland’s design review overlay and processes, and to streamline those for applicants where possible. These excellent process improvements are already going into effect for the Landmarks and Design Commissions. The Three Tenets of design - context, public realm, and quality and resilience - are a great underpinning for revamped Guidelines as well as Standards. However, we are extremely concerned that the “city-wide” focus of the proposed standards will not support better outcomes for projects going through a “standards” approval track. Neighborhoods do have their own character, as BPS’ own decades of analysis of various neighborhoods will show, and it is important to define the desired character of an area with help from the people who live there. Finally, we have serious concerns with the very large thresholds proposed for design review, which will remove the public’s voice in the design or outcomes of many large developments.

## OTHER PROJECTS

### URM Ordinance

Portland has approximately 1,650 unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings, which use stone or brick masonry for structural walls. These buildings range from small one-story residences to large 10- or 12-story buildings, and many have civic or educational uses. Many of these buildings are designated as historic landmarks and represent a valuable part of the City’s cultural heritage.

Because URM buildings are very fragile in a seismic event, the City has been exploring ways to ensure upgrades for URMS. Currently, mandated upgrades to URM buildings are limited to preventing loss of life. However, even these retrofits can pose an undue burden on communities or owners who don’t have access to funds for large retrofit projects. Several Commissioners helped to organize an educational conference on the topic in summer 2019. Additionally, currently two commissioners sit on the newly formed URM work group comprised of representatives of URM building owners, URM building tenants, and other subject matter experts charged with further evaluating reasonable seismic retrofit requirements, and developing recommendations for standards, financing options, incentives, tax strategies, and timelines for a seismic retrofit program for Class 3 and Class 4 URM buildings.

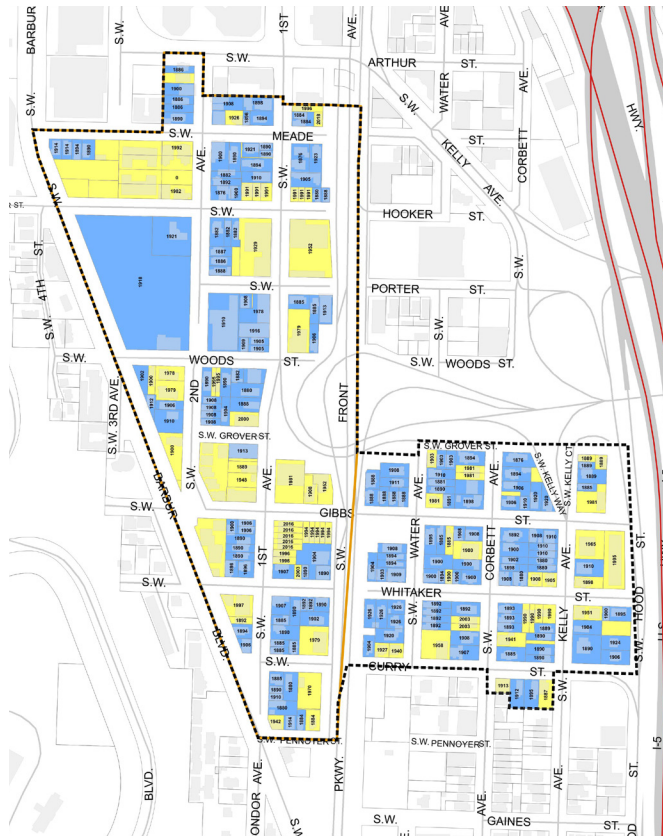


# COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS 2020 cont.

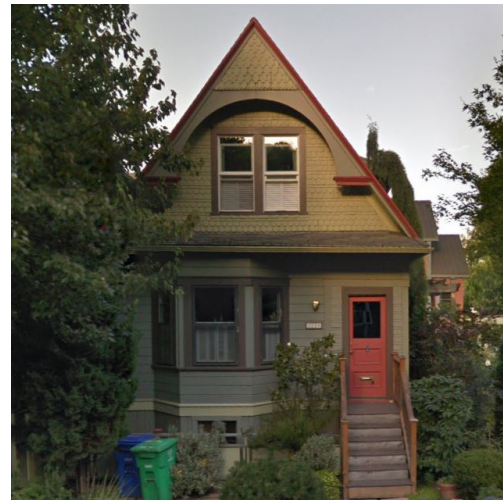
## South Portland Historic District Design Guidelines

This is a project to update the design guidelines for a small but vital area of inner city Portland. The Lair Hill neighborhood has not had design guidelines revisited since they were adopted by City Council in 1980 and the criteria do not reflect its multi-ethnic history. Additionally it has suffered from inhospitable transportation infrastructure that has isolated it from other areas of the City. Redevelopment and new transportation projects are putting pressure on this area which is close to downtown. New design guidelines will help to maintain the remaining historic character and lead new development to compatible solutions. Clear, contextual guidelines are needed. A Community Advisory Group is currently convening regularly (with representation from the PHLC) to advise on the development of the revised guidelines.

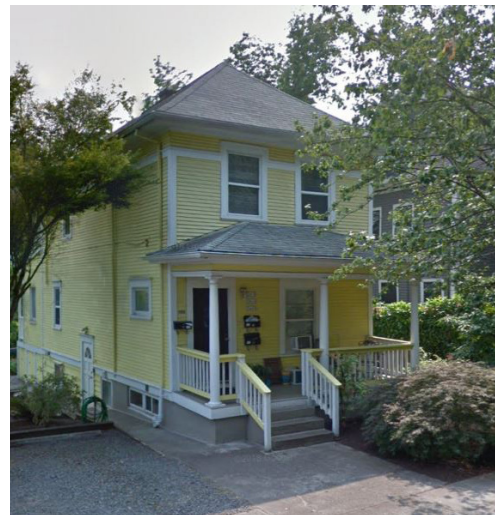
South Portland Historic District (City of Portland)



333 SW 1st Ave. 1907 (Portland Maps)



3406 SW Kelly 1898 (Portland Maps)



# PROJECTS OF THE YEAR

## Hallock-McMillan - Rehabilitation

### HALLOCK-MCMILLAN

The oldest commercial building in Portland is near the end of an extensive rehabilitation by developer/owner John Russell and Emerick Architects.



Front and Oak, 1939, in a photo by Minor White (courtesy Cafe Unknown). Hallock-McMillan seen at left of image



Pre-renovation rendering. Photo from Emerick Architects



Rendering of proposal. Image from Emerick Architects



Partially-completed Hallock & McMillan

## PAE Living Building- New Construction



### PAE LIVING BUILDING

Designed by ZGF Architects this mixed-use building is located in the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District. It will be Portland's first Living Building, meeting all seven petals (requirements) of the Living Building Challenge. This was a Type III review seen by the PHLC in June of 2019. It is a successful modern interpretation of the 19th century character found in the district.

Rendering by ZGF Architects



ENDANGERED

## 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Policy 4.51 - City-owned historic resources.

“Maintain City-owned historic resources with necessary upkeep and repair.”

ENGINE NO.2 BUILDING (right)

Managed by Prosper Portland and owned by the City for decades, this 1913 landmark has experienced a severe lack of maintenance under the City’s ownership. This has led to break-ins, damage, and even fire. The city now seeks to demolish this landmark structure rather than invest in its rehabilitation.



OLD BLANCHET HOUSE (left)

While not a City-owned property, the old Blanchet House of Hospitality, a contributing resource in the New Chinatown/Japantown Historic District was once available to the city to purchase for \$1 - an option the City did not act upon. Located at the edge of the historic district, this building is now proposed for demolition for the purpose of landbanking the property. It is anticipated that the City intends to purchase the vacant property to absorb it into the Block 25 redevelopment proposal, spearheaded by Prosper Portland.

BELGIAN BLOCKS (below)

The cobblestones that make up many of Portland’s historic streets are in danger. A City Ordinance in 1975 designated the Parks Department to retain and preserve the stones as they are recovered through permitted construction projects. The cobblestones are stored in a location that is not secure, with many getting stolen, and the number and condition of those remaining unknown. The PHLC encourage City Council to bring attention to this and provide funding in line with the established ordinances.

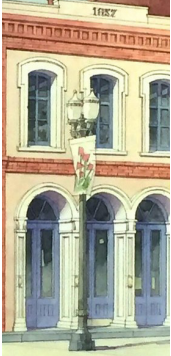


Parking Circle at Lewis and Clark college. Photo: Lyn Topinka 2014



APTA Streetcar Heritage Photo

# WHAT WE DO



The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission has a wide variety of tasks, goals, and collaborative partners. We are here as a resource for city officials and neighborhoods as well as applicants. We are professionals who believe in finding nuanced solutions that benefit all Portlanders, including future generations. Below is a list of some of the powers and duties afforded to the Commission by the Portland Zoning Code:

## Make Recommendations to City Council

- Establishment, Amendment, or Removal of Historic Districts
- Adoption of New Design Guidelines for Historic Districts
- Type IV Demolition Reviews

## Decide Land Use Applications

- Type III Reviews of New Construction in Historic Districts
- Type III Reviews to Establish or Remove Landmark Designations
- Type III Reviews of Alterations To Historic Resources
- Type II Appeals

## Provide Advice

- Design Advice to Applicants for future Land Use Reviews
- Legislative Advice on Code Projects to Other Commissions (Design, PSC, PDC), City Council, City Bureaus, Other Public Agencies
- Collaborate with Portland Design Commission

## Advocate

- Initiate and Coordinate Preservation and Outreach Programs within and outside of the City

## Commission Highlights

- Several Commissioners helped to organize a very successful Symposium on URM buildings comprised of both National and International speakers.
- Reviewed, and recommended for approval, several National Register Nominations, including The Multnomah School, the Zoo Railway Historic District, and the Fried-Durkenheimer (Morris Marks) House.
- Design Commission (DC) and the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission (PHLC) held a joint hearing during which PBOT gave a briefing on the Vertical infrastructure. PHLC and DC worked together to provide PBOT with recommendations for a thoughtful RFP process to endure the subsequent successful implementation of a small cell system.
- PHLC reviewed and provided input for on several BPS-led Code projects, including RIP, BHBD and DOZA Process Code Changes.



# COMMISSION REVIEWED PROJECTS

## 230 SW ASH GBD ARCHITECTS

The Landmarks Commission reviewed and approved a residential mixed-use project in Skidmore/Old Town Historic District that includes affordable housing units. It stands on what was a parking lot. The PHLC feels it is a good example of infill in a historic district and detailing that reflects a modern interpretation of cast iron architecture. Approved in 2018. Construction complete in 2019.



Photos GBD Architects

## ALBERTA ABBEY

PHLC reviewed an application to designate the Alberta Abbey as a Portland Historic Landmark. An early example of modernism in religious architecture, the building has been a fixture in the Albina Neighborhood for over 90 years. It was particularly important during the Civil Rights Era of the 1960s under the leadership of Robert E. Cochran, a vocal and highly active community advocate for African American social issues. Designation allowed the building to be adaptively reused as a local arts center providing affordable education, gallery, studio, and performance space to community members of all ages. Local Landmark status approved 2019.



Photo from AlbertAbbey.org

## ZOO TRAIN

PHLC reviewed a National Register of Historic Places nomination form and recommended listing to the State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation. This nomination encompassed the historic routing of the train through the Zoo and Washington Park.



Photo credit: Steve Morgan. 1980

THANK YOU