

**PORTLAND HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION HEARING**  
**February 26, 2024 Agenda Item #2 - 1:45p to 2:45p**  
**Briefing – Portland Monuments Project**  
**Commentary: Henry C. Kunowski**

The proposed amendments to current city policy Chapter 5.74 Public Art being made by the Arts, Culture and Equity office in Commissioner Dan Ryan’s office and the City Arts Program in the office of Management and Finance, specifically Chapter 5.74.85 Public Monuments Review Criteria is an ambitious undertaking that had its beginning in 2018 and was memorialized in a July 22, 2020 confidential memo from the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC). In that memo, a five-phase process was discussed to decide “which monuments & sculptures are recommended for removal?” In that memo, the monuments/sculptures under consideration were:

1. George Washington (toppled on 6/18, block removed on 7/12/20)
2. The Promised Land - Chapman Square – Vandalized-Removed
3. Harvey Scott - Mt. Tabor - Vandalized-Removed
4. Spanish American War Memorial - Lownsdale Square
5. Teddy Roosevelt - North Park Blocks - Vandalized-Removed
6. Abraham Lincoln - North Park Blocks - Vandalized-Removed
7. Thompson Elk Fountain – Between Plaza Blocks - Vandalized-Removed and Return planned in 2024

Further, Recommended for consideration are:

1. Joan of Arc - Laurelhurst neighborhood
2. Coming of the White Man - Washington Park
3. Lewis & Clark Column - Washington Park (PP&R purview, not RACC)

Currently, there are 8- monuments/sculptures that are listed on the 1984 Historic Resources Inventory with a Rank I status; Significant Resources and these 8 are also noted in the Oregon Historic Sites Database as considered eligible/contributing to the National Register of Historic Places. These monuments listed are:

1. Abraham Lincoln, Removed and considered previously considered a contributing resource in the South Park Blocks NRHP Listing - Vandalized-Removed
2. Teddy Roosevelt, Removed and considered previously considered a contributing resource in the South Park Blocks NRHP Listing - Vandalized-Removed
3. Shemanski Fountain, a contributing resource in the South Park Blocks NRHP Listing
4. Coming of the White Man, Washington Park
5. Lewis & Clark Memorial, Washington Park
6. Lewis & Clark Fountain (Chiming Fountain) Washington Park
7. Sacajawea, Washington Park
8. Charles Merrick Memorial Fountain, 5630 NE Alameda Street (at NE Sandy)

Other than those (5) monuments noted below that have been removed, there are (6) monuments that are listed as significant and subject to removal as outlined in the proposed amendment.

At this juncture in the proposed arts policy amendment, what is being called “The Five” monuments; Lincoln, Roosevelt, Washington, Scott and Promised Land statues will be considered under a later process as yet to be determined.

**The principal concern with this current proposal** is that it fails to address past omissions to follow extant city codes (COP Title 33.445.330 - Demolition of a Significant Resource) nor does it invite the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission, through inclusion in the proposed amendment on the review and decision-making process for monuments that fall under its purview for Significant Resources. For these significant resources, the city already has a process: COP Title 33.846.080 Demolition Review and 33.445.340 120-Day Delay. How will this code interface with what is proposed?

Further, the proposed amendment does not cite ORS 358.653 *Conservation program; leases. (1) Any state agency or political subdivision responsible for real property of historic significance in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer shall institute a program to conserve the property and assure that such property shall not be inadvertently transferred, sold, demolished, substantially altered or allowed to deteriorate.*

According to the COP Title 33.910 – Definitions; *A Significant Resource is a building, portion of a building, structure, object, landscape, tree, site, or place that the City has determined to be significant for its archaeological, architectural, cultural, or historical merit but has not been designated by the City as a landmark or district, and has not been listed by the federal Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places. Rank I, II, III resources identified in the 1984 Historic Resource Inventory that have not been demolished or removed are Significant Resources;*

Finally, according to the packet of information the PHLC received as part of this briefing, a report was included. This report; PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WITH PORTLAND'S MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS - A Report on Recommendations for the City from Portland's Monument Engagement Process Committee June 2023. In this report on page 45 is a statement on the role of the PHLC:

*The nominating authority can make many changes without further review as required by the National Park Service. The City of Portland may desire review from its Historic Landmarks Commission or general citizen engagement based on changes proposed; however, in many cases, this is not required by the National Park Service.*

However, according to the State Historic Preservation Office regarding this statement; *While the statement is technically correct about the process, {SHPO} have our own state rule that we use to administer the program that limits what {SHPO} can do here administratively without taking an amendment to the SACHP. These are:*

*(19) Petitioning the Keeper:*

*(a) The SHPO may petition the Keeper to take the following actions without review by the committee:*

*(A) Remove a razed historic property from the National Register;*

*(B) Amend a National Register nomination form for a historic property when the amendment is not a major revision;*

*(C) Change the contributing status of an individual historic property within a historic district listed in the National Register;*

*(D) Change the contributing status or recommend the relocation of a secondary historic property, such as a garage, shed, or other small-scale building, object, site, or structure that in the opinion of the SHPO does not qualify for listing in the National Register on its own merit included within the boundary of a historic property; or*

*(E) Any combination of paragraphs (A), (B), (C), and (D).*

**Therefore, it is recommended** that the proposed arts policy amendment be amendment further by reconciliation between the art policy and that of extant city code under COP Title 33, ORS 358.653 and OAR 660-023-0200, Division 23 Procedures and Requirement as well as any other federal, state and city policies on cultural or historic resources. It is also recommended that the PHLC be included in the policy amendment as is the proposed Monuments Advisory Commission in the proposed section 5.74.85 B. 2.