



# City of Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

## Briefing

### SUMMARY MEMO

**Date:** 3/8/24

**To:** **Darion Jones** | Senior Policy Director of Arts, Culture, and Equity  
**Jeff Hawthorne** | City Arts Program Manager  
**Chariti Montez** | City Arts Program Coordinator

**From:** **Staci Monroe** | Design & Historic Review  
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**Re:** **Briefing on Portland Monuments Project**  
**Summary of 2/26/24 Landmarks Commission hearing**

Thank you for taking advantage of the opportunity to hold a preliminary briefing with the Landmarks Commission regarding your project. I hope you find it informative and valuable as you continue with your project development. Attached is a brief summary of the comments provided by the Landmarks Commission at the 2/26/24 hearing. This summary was generated from notes taken at the public meeting and a subsequent review of the public meeting recordings. To review those recordings, please visit: [efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/16634473/](https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/Record/16634473/).

These Landmarks Commission comments are intended to guide you in further design exploration of your project. These comments may also inform City staff when giving guidance over the course of future related land use reviews. It should be understood that these comments address the project as presented on 2/26/24. As the project design evolves, the comments, too, may evolve or may no longer be pertinent.

Preliminary briefings are not intended to substitute for other Code-required land use or legislative procedures.

Please continue to coordinate with me, as necessary as you prepare your formal land use application.

*Encl: Summary Memo*

*Cc: Landmarks Commission*

This memo summarizes **Landmarks Commission** guidance provided on 2/26/24. Commissioners in attendance include Andrew Smith, Peggy Moretti, Maya Foty, Hugo Hamblim-Agosto.

- The Commissioners present provided the following comments on the five monuments in storage:
  - Support retaining the monuments as eliminating them sweeps the bad parts of our history under the rug.
  - The stories need to be complete and tell the good and the bad or else we're bound to repeat the horrific things we've done in the past.
  - Presents an educational opportunity for the young to learn about our history and take the lessons forward.
  - American history is convoluted and written by those that hold power. It is important to add as much depth and dimension and diverse voices from Black and Indigenous communities to these stories.
  - Consider adding other monuments to tell the other side of the story.
  - Inclusive interpretation to accompany them is needed for educational purposes.
  - When the monuments go back it very important to consider how to keep them from getting vandalized. Need to consider visibility, anti-graffiti coating, light, etc.
  - A commissioner noted the future locations of the monuments in storage make sense.
  - Keep in mind seismic upgrades may be required for installation of the monuments, which could impact a budget. They were required for reinstalling the elk on the base.
- Preservation isn't about precious materials; it's about heritage and the stories.
- A commissioner stated support for the committee concept in the draft policy.
- A commissioner noted the proposed review process makes sense.
- A commissioner stated disappointment at the description of Theodore Roosevelt in the Lewis & Clark report. It overlooked that he started the National Parks System.
- It is important that public engagement is efficient and inclusive to obtain good outcomes.
- The Commission should play a role in the process and be involved in future conversations. *Note - BDS Staff will work with the City Arts Program Staff to provide monthly updates on the progress of the monuments in storage to the Commission so future briefing opportunities can be identified.*
- Encourage the City to partner with the groups and organizations that can raise awareness with our constituents. Working with Architectural Heritage Center (AHC) and Restore Oregon would help to get the word out so the public can come and participate as much as possible. For example, AHC will be doing a lecture program about the Thompson Elk Fountain. They would be happy to host other presentations.

Files related to this Briefing can be found here: [efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/16575190](https://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/record/16575190)

Please contact me with any questions.