



**ASHLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CITY COUNCIL UPDATE  
April 18, 2023**

Good evening, honorable Mayor and Councilors.

I appreciate the opportunity to address the Council on the work of the Ashland Historic Preservation Advisory Committee or HPAC over the last year. I have served on HPAC for the last five years, and was elected as Chair in the Fall of 2021. I am indebted to the former Chair, Dale Shostrom, whose considerable knowledge and experience in leading the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee over many years has proven to be an invaluable resource. I do not have a background in the building trades, but I do have a lifelong commitment to the preservation of historic buildings and the stories they tell. My aspiration to be able to read architectural blueprints remains largely unfulfilled, but my colleagues on the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee have shown great forbearance with my learning process. I also want to give credit to the exceptional support of the staff from the City Department of Community Development. Regan Trapp is the person the Committee relies on for organizing our monthly meetings, and she does so with remarkable cheerfulness.

As many of you know, the Ashland Historic Preservation Advisory Committee is a nine-member citizen advisory body that reviews planning applications, building permits and sign permits within the city's four historic districts. The Historic Preservation Advisory Committee works with developers and property owners to ensure that both new construction and renovations compliment the four National Register historic districts. In a typical year, before the pandemic, HPAC provided over 300 volunteer hours by holding Committee meetings, as well as advising community members, property owners and design professionals on potential and on-going projects through the Committee's weekly Review Boards.

HPAC resumed in person meetings as of October of 2022, although we continue to offer the option of participation via Zoom. Our Review Board meetings were discontinued with the pandemic as well, but will resume this week. These weekly in-person Review Board meetings, in which at least three members of the Committee review building permits, sign permits and pre-application submittals for properties in the historic districts and also meet with property owners, contractors and designers to provide informal initial design feedback. The Committee is eager to reconvene these Review Boards so that applicants will have the benefit of more timely advice about the specific requirements related to projects in the Historic Districts.

Despite the disruptions in continuing to hold meetings virtually for much of 2022, HPAC was able to fulfill its mandated responsibilities. These accomplishments are listed below:

- As noted, HPAC returned to regular, in person monthly meetings in October of 2022.
- HPAC held it first Committee retreat in January, which we hope will become an annual occurrence. The retreat provided the opportunity to meet in person to discuss the Committee's roles and responsibilities; review an audit report of the city's activities as a Certified Local Government

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prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office; refresh ourselves on the Historic District Development Standards and how to better incorporate them in Committee recommendations to application; consider new ways to promote preservation; look the city's newly adopted goals, visions and values; and receive an update on state legislation which could impact historic preservation in Oregon.

- HPAC reviewed and made recommendations on three land use applications and two pre-applications. Staff reviewed 10 planning applications and 24 building permits in the four National Register Historic Districts.
- HPAC has organized activities for our local Historic Preservation Week, which is being held the week of May 14<sup>th</sup> this year.
  - The centerpiece of the week is an awards ceremony to honor projects that are the best representation of historic preservation in Ashland for the last year. The awards ceremony will be at 12:30 on Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at the Butler Bandshell in Lithia Park.
  - Other events scheduled include two walking tours with local historian and writer Peter Finkle of Walk-Ashland-dot-com and Historic Commissioner Dale Shostrom: the first will be at 1:30 p.m. on May 17<sup>th</sup> – right after the awards ceremony - and will focus on the downtown.
  - And the second at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday will focus on the Railroad District. Additional information and registration details regarding these walking tours will be on the city website shortly.
  - The Ashland Memorial Mausoleum at the Mountain View Cemetery will also be open for self-guided tours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.
- After almost five years of working in collaboration with the Public Arts Advisory Committee on the “Marking Ashland Places” (MAP) project in the Railroad Historic District, we’ll be unveiling the first of five distinctive bronze medallions in the Railroad Addition historic district. These medallions commemorate significant historic sites in the district, and will be installed in the neighborhood sidewalks. HPAC continues to work with Public Art in considering the next phase of this exciting project.

The Historic Preservation Advisory Committee encourages anyone who is interested in historic preservation to attend our regular meetings, which are held in person – with the option to attend via Zoom - on the first Wednesday of the month, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you for your time.

Beverly Hovenkamp, Historic Preservation Advisory Committee Chair

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