

1 **Historic Preservation Commission Meeting**

2 **February 17, 2022**

3 Michele Gallagher called meeting to order at 5:30pm.

4 Roll Call taken. Kristi Kaech present, Debbie Franz present, Peter Hammer present, Michele Gallagher present via Zoom.

5 The agenda was sent out to the commissioners last week. No errors or concerns found. The agenda is approved as distributed.

6 The minutes were sent out to commissioners as well. No errors or concerns found. The minutes are approved as distributed also.

7 Michele Gallagher opens up the court to any citizens who wish to speak on matters of the commission.

8 Amelia Schwartz shares that a citizen is present here tonight but is just here to listen. No citizen business to address.

9 Michele Gallagher moves to next item on the agenda. No commission business to address. Moving to the Public Hearing. We will take public comment on the  
10 proposed Historic Preservation chapter for the Chehalis Comprehensive Plan. If there is no further business to come before the board the public meeting is  
11 closed at 5:33pm. The Public Hearing will now come to order at 5:34pm. We are reviewing the Historic Preservation Comprehensive Plan.

12 Amelia Schwartz presents herself as City Planner for the city of Chehalis. We are meeting today for the Public Hearing of the Historic Preservation draft chapter.  
13 Hopefully, eventually we will have an actual chapter in the Comprehensive Plan. What this does is take the small amount of information about the Historic  
14 Preservation Commission and goals and policies of the city that used to be in the Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan to make its own chapter. This will  
15 give it a bit more direction and shape and guidance so that we can make a stronger Historic Preservation action in the city. The staff report is available for the  
16 public. It has been available for 2 weeks now. Do the commissioners have any questions?

17 Peter Hammer asks for clarity when it is referring to open spaces. Typically, we haven't really thought about this. We tend to think about buildings,  
18 neighborhoods, and districts. This draft talks about open spaces such as over by Thorbecke's Gym, Millett Field for example. There is no building there, but it is  
19 a historic field from a long time ago where they played football and there were all kinds of sporting events. I feel as though this expands the things we look for.  
20 This is a good thing. Another example would be if the city decided to cut down some old trees somewhere, the commission might be able to weigh in on that  
21 possibly. That is important. Open spaces and the charm of our town has a lot to do with trees, planted trees.

22 Amelia Schwartz points out that there are some parks in the city that are not part of the Historic Preservation Districts. With this we might have more agency to  
23 designate them. That can help them get funding, grants, and access to more park equipment, better landscaping, etc.

24 Peter Hammer agrees. Up on the hill there is a city park that is pretty much abandoned. I hike up there all of the time. It would be nice if this would have  
25 something to do with that. He noticed that the bench that was up there at one time was destroyed and fallen down the hill. Also, another question that is listed  
26 here in the draft is historic sites and areas on page 5. The list of buildings listed on the national register, the second one listed is the royal bakery at 242 NW  
27 Chehalis Avenue. It used to be the Star Tavern which closed down years ago. He thought that the city had purchased it and was going to tear it down for a  
28 parking lot. He would like to know if that is true. If it is, he feels that is something the commission should be thinking about.

29 Michele Gallagher believes that Lewis County purchased that. The city of Chehalis did not purchase it. She is not sure what their plans are. She does know that  
30 they are pursuing a mural on it. She feels that the mural would be quite fitting to our Historic District.

31 Tammy Baraconi can speak to that. That building is part of the County Seat. The County purchased it. They are improving that building and a couple of other  
32 buildings on Chehalis Avenue so that they can consolidate their staff into one spot. Community Development will be moving down here, the Building  
33 Department, Planners, Environmental Health will be downtown. The only thing that will no longer be downtown will be the fleet of vehicles. They will be  
34 moving out where Community Development is currently at by the credit union.

35 Peter Hammer thanks Michele and Tammy for clarification.

36 Amelia Schwartz provides the possibility for her to edit and remove the section to say that it is currently the Star Tavern. That can be a condition later on that  
37 she will fix.

38 Michele Gallagher likes where the draft talks about the trees in an open space. Do people have to get permits to remove trees?

39 Amelia Schwartz responds that it depends. If it is a large removal of trees it may end up needing a SEPA permit. That depends on the quantity. Also, for some  
40 areas on the hillside that are in geologically hazardous zones or erosion hazard areas, it is required that only a certain number of trees be removed because it  
41 could make landslides worse. We do have on our website some information on how to identify and not remove Oregon White Oaks. We do not have a permit  
42 to remove trees.

43 Tammy Baraconi adds that is unless it impacts the streets.

44 Kasey Forsman approaches to speak. She introduces herself and provides her business address as 456 North Market Boulevard. She doesn't know if the city has  
45 any plans, but the Wells Fargo building is for sale along with the parking lot. She and her husband put an offer on the parking lot, but they did not want to sell it  
46 separately. We had a great idea for the open space with the Wells Fargo building. You could take out the bottom floor and create a piazza style open area with  
47 stalls that the Farmer's Market could utilize without having to close down the street, or the parking lot could be used. We could utilize that space. Also, the  
48 Colony House is long overdue for some attention. She doesn't know what the plans are for that place, but it is a major thoroughfare and is a bit of an eyesore.  
49 She wonders if there are any plans there, or to at least use the parking lot for the businesses downtown. The Wells Fargo building top part could be kept for the  
50 city storage or something.

51 Amelia Schwartz asks Kasey Forsman if that building is currently on the national historic register.

52 Kasey Forsman isn't sure. It looks like a modern brick building. Dr. Henrickson a dentist here over by Safeway thought it would be a great place for a dental  
53 hygienist school because the nation is in short supply.

54 Peter Hammer thanks Kasey Forsman for her ideas. Colony House is privately owned.

55 Amelia Schwartz feels that ideas like this tie into the policy section at the very end of the chapter. Hopefully eventually, when we hear these comments, the  
56 Commission would have more agency. After updating this part of the Comprehensive Plan, eventually get to some codes, and some systems in place, processes  
57 that can make these ideas work with developers or getting into historic registers.

58 Peter Hammer feels that separating it and giving it its own chapter makes it easier for people that are interested in seeing it all rather than finding it mixed in  
59 with a larger policy. There are two things that pop out to me in the policies. HP.01.02 reads to provide financial incentives for the reuse and revitalization of  
60 delapidated or vacant historic structures. Can we talk about what that means?

61 Amelia Schwartz responds that what was discussed when staff drafted this in possibly the November or December meeting was to possibly have reduced permit  
62 fees for people wanting to remodel or update or save some of the historic properties. This would be put to use that would also fit with some of the goals and  
63 policies here. That is where the city can offer some financial relief or incentives. We do have control over that, and it could help shape that code and policy later  
64 on.

65 Peter Hammer reads HP.05.04 and sees that would be the same thing we are talking about.

66 Amelia Schwartz adds it would also be making it a more streamline process on our website. If a person wants to remodel a building, not tear it down, stick to  
67 historic aesthetics and design we could potentially offer an application specifically for this. That is the goal. The chapter has to happen before we can put  
68 systems in place, but that is the idea. She asks if the commissioners found any errors or changes that need to be made in the document. When it is decided to  
69 make a motion, the conditions could include fixing typos.

70 Michele Gallagher agrees with Peter Hammer that it will be nice to have it all in one spot to be very transparent for the public. She feels that for future  
71 commissioners it will be helpful to have this to provide a better understanding of what we are doing.

72 Amelia Schwartz add that it will synthesize our goals, and ideas for the Historic Preservation Commission. To no longer be an afterthought.

73 Michele Gallagher states that the commission has heard from the public. There is no further testimony. Does the commission approve, deny, or table? She  
74 would like to entertain a motion.

75 Peter Hammer motions to give HPC 22.002 Historic Preservation chapter a positive recommendation to the Planning Commission subject to the following  
76 conditions regarding the Star Tavern which is no longer the Star Tavern and fixing typos.

77 Michele Gallagher asks the commissioners if all in favor with the condition of editing the Star Tavern's name to say aye. All are in favor, none opposed. Motion  
78 passes. Being no further business, the Public Hearing is adjourned at 5:53pm. Reopens the regular meeting. The Historic Preservation Commission meeting is  
79 now adjourned at 5:53pm. Our next meeting is on March 17, 2022

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81 Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

82 Michele Gallagher, Chair

83 Recorded by: \_\_\_\_\_

84 Laura Fisher, Permit Technician