

1 **Historic Preservation Commission**

2 **January 19, 2023**

3
4 Pete Hammer called meeting to order at 5:28pm. Roll call is taken. Present: Pete Hammer, Jo Ann
5 Kuehner, Kathy Smith, Jill McNaught, Casey Forsman.

6 Jo Ann Kuehner moves to approve the agenda. Jill McNaught seconds the motion. Motion carried
7 unanimously.

8 Jo Ann Kuehner asks if during the Workshop we stop taking minutes. Laura Fisher Permit Technician for
9 city of Chehalis explains that everything is recorded.

10 Casey Forsman moves to approve the meeting minutes for October 20, 2022. Jo Ann Kuehner seconds
11 the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

12 There being no Citizen Business or Old Business Pete Hammer moves to item #7 on the agenda, New
13 Business. Jo Ann Kuehner proposes discussion of rules the commission follows from 1999.

14 Jill McNaught has made copies of the rules and regulations and distributes them to fellow
15 commissioners. Jo Ann Kuehner encourages Jill McNaught to talk more about it.

16 Jill McNaught explains that there were a couple of changes made. One being regarding attendance. She
17 refers to #8 if a member is absent for 2 or more regular meetings they may be up for dismissal. Pete
18 Hammer thought that it might have been 3 absences.

19 Jill McNaught suggests to the group that they get the agenda at least 5 days before the meeting. She
20 also shares that the agenda should come from the chairperson and sent to the city staff.

21 Casey Forsman thinks it should be initiated by the commissioners and then provided to city staff.

22 Jill McNaught continues with defining that if the Chair is gone, the Vice Chair has all the authority to take
23 over. If the Vice Chair and Chair are absent, then the committee can appoint a Chair for that meeting.

24 Casey Forsman adds that it is to make sure there is a continuum of consistency. The goal is to continue
25 to have meetings and get work done and not lose anymore time.

26 Nick Swanson City Planner asks the group to speak more on the point regarding the agenda originating
27 from the chairperson.

28 Jill McNaught clarifies that it is number 6.

29 Laura Fisher Permit Technician City of Chehalis suggests the group brings this idea to the Building and
30 Planning Manager as it may be a bit of a challenge getting information to the group for the agenda. This
31 could be a process that needs to be developed so that the commissioners are made aware of someone
32 maybe wanting to paint their building downtown. She is not sure how that would work and suggests
33 more discussion be had with Tammy.

34 Jo Ann Kuehner feels that the group or the chairperson should be conferred with first before the agenda
35 goes out and wants to be sure they get an opportunity to discuss things they want to discuss.

36 Laura Fisher explains that the agenda provides the opportunity for discussion under the item of New
37 Business. This is where the group can bring up New Business they have to share and would like to
38 discuss.

39 Further discussion is had by the commissioners regarding the rules and bylaws and as to whether or not
40 they might take a vote on having the chairperson create the agenda at this meeting.

41 Jo Ann Kuehner reiterates that the group wants to have a say in what the agenda has on it.

42 Pete Hammer agrees that as a courtesy to Tammy it should be a topic of discussion later when she is
43 present. He would like her to have an opportunity to look at it.

44 Nick Swanson City Planner agrees that it would be appreciated.

45 Pete Hammer states the group will vote on this next month.

46 Jill McNaught speaks to the proposed Chehalis Historic Preservation Ordinance. She has done a ton of
47 research. She would like to speak with Tammy more about why she believes the commission is giving
48 the citizens a tax break. There is no instant tax break. When the Historic Preservation Commission puts
49 a home on the registry there is no instant tax break. She has called the Assessor's Office. There is none.
50 There is a tax incentive for updating and remodeling a historical building. As of right now the Lewis
51 County Assessor's office has no applications and no one has ever applied for it. In Washington state only
52 600 have ever applied for this tax break which is more of an incentive to remodel and update your
53 building. Our rules as written now are that we adopt the secretary of interior standards for

54 rehabilitation of historical buildings. In those standards it states the Historic Preservation Commission
55 provide that tax incentive program. That is the standard most often used by historical district
56 commissions nationwide. The 2022 City Planning Commission, in the Comprehensive Plan page 68 & 69
57 historical planning it is promoting maintenance and the infrastructure and amenities within the existing
58 historical district or neighborhood through the permitting. She adds that it is their job as a commission
59 and for the City of Centralia she has read it is in their ordinance. Look at the Washington State law WAC
60 254.20.060 and 254.20.070. It is a requirement for cities to have a local review board. It also states that
61 the review board shall not be the same as the local legislative authority. If this is taken away from the
62 Historic Preservation Commission and change the ordinance we are not complying with the law.

63 Jo Ann Kuehner adds that it is a Federal law for the State to have this law. The Federal requires the
64 States to make this happen.

65 Jill McNaught goes back to the WAC 254.20.070 and reads that it is the responsibility of the local review
66 board to adopt procedures to determine on the properties meeting the standards. She adds that the
67 committee has a lot of responsibility. She thinks the committee should have a lot more set up in the
68 ordinance and the way it is written. She goes on to talk about the state RCW's for historical properties
69 which describe the local review boards and special validation criteria's which also says the Historical
70 Preservation Commission/Review Board is responsible for letting these homes have the chance to get
71 the special tax validation. She wants to look into it more with the property owner rehabilitation cost.
72 The rehabilitation cost being at least 25% of the assessed value within a 24-month period from
73 application. Those who qualify, the cost would be subtracted from the new assessed value for 10 years.
74 The work is approved by the local review board. It is our job to get these historical buildings the
75 incentive to keep their buildings historical. Taking that away from the ordinance is against state law.
76 The state law says it cannot be a legislative body, that is why the city has appointed the commission to
77 do it. She states that changing the ordinance is against the state law and federal law.

78 Jo Ann Kuehner agrees that is what she has read as well.

79 Jill McNaught proposes that the commission sticks to the ordinance the way it is written. She says it is
80 the same as Centralia, Thurston County, Tumwater, and every ordinance she has been able to find
81 online. The only thing she would suggest changing would be the amount of people they have to have
82 from 7 to 5.

83 Jo Ann Kuehner states that in the new rules they do not have those numbers.

84 Jill McNaught explains that the commission still has to go by the ordinance. The way she reads it the
85 ordinance supersedes the rules. She feels that the commission should have procedures in place or
86 processes for these building owners to help them get the tax validation. We should be writing ten basic
87 elements of preservation ordinance just for the special validation for taxes. Centralia has an application
88 for someone to go through the process and how to do it. She proposes a subcommittee be put together
89 to put that in place. It may be that RE Bennett and Cascade could be coming down the pike soon, but
90 they have 2 years to do it.

91 Jo Ann Kuehner points out that the ordinance they have was passed in June of 2021 and is not very old.
92 There is no reason why they can't stay with that.

93 Jill McNaught states that it is not only in the RCW's and state WACs. It is also what the city of Chehalis
94 Planning just passed in 2022. Jill McNaught motions to keep the ordinance the way it is with the
95 exception of maybe the number of people.

96 Pete Hammer would like some clarity from the city on how the process works. Whatever the
97 commission approves or recommends has to be approved by the city Council regarding ordinances.

98 Nick Swanson confirms that is correct.

99 Jo Ann Kuehner says the city has already adopted it in 2021 and asks why they can't just stay with it.
100 Further discussion is had regarding the change in numbers from 7 members to 5 which will make it
101 easier to have a quorum.

102 Pete Hammer entertains a motion to vote on the ordinance knowing that the city Council will then
103 review it. The staff has a recommendation as well which is counter to what they are talking about.

104 Nick Swanson confirms that is correct. Staff is still recommending the new ordinance.

105 Jo Ann Kuehner asks what staff had changed.

106 Nick Swanson explains there was a lot of cutting it down to have more relevant information in it. The
107 new ordinance has no reference to the special tax assessment powers.

108 Jill McNaught explains that according to what she has read through, the city of Chehalis will be breaking
109 the law.

110 Jo Ann Kuehner suggests the commission go ahead and vote on it. She seconds the motion.

111 Pete Hammer asks for a vote on the commission's recommendation on the ordinance to be passed on to
112 the city Council.

113 Jo Ann Kuehner clarifies that it is 2.66. It had been passed by the city Council on June 28, 2021.

114 4 commissioners vote in favor, 1 commissioner vote opposed.

115 Jill McNaught suggests forming another subcommittee for looking into the process for a property owner
116 to apply for the special tax vilification. There is criteria list they would have to meet.

117 Casey Forsman suggests creating their own application form similar to Centralia's.

118 Pete Hammer asks if you have a building in one of the historic districts can you apply to be on the local
119 registry.

120 Jill McNaught replies that is correct and it is the same process. It does not happen automatically. She
121 thinks Cascade and RE Bennet will probably go for that. She is unclear as to whether it covers the full
122 renovation or if only covers the historical parts of the renovation. She believes its just for the historical
123 parts of the renovation.

124 Jo Ann Kuehner speaks to the history behind Jo Ann Schwartz working for the city and was able to get
125 the grants for the St. Helens Hotel. The decision was made that because it would cost so much money
126 to replace the wooden windows, they didn't want to take the money. That is how Jo Ann Kuehner was
127 able to get money for her building. There was money leftover for historical buildings. Her building is not
128 on the historical register but was able to match the \$100 thousand. She now has a fabulous building
129 with great plumbing, and she rents to the working poor.

130 The group discusses further who will participate in the subcommittee.

131 Kathy Smith will head up the paint color subcommittee.

132 Nick Swanson would appreciate the commissioner's ideas.

133 Casey Forsman would like a Historic Preservation Commission Binder. Jill McNaught is missing some
134 information from hers as well.

135 Jo Ann Kuehner shares that there is a ribbon cutting ceremony happening next Tuesday at noon for Mint
136 City. She would like to have one of the commissioners attend if possible. She also talks about the

137 Westside Park and the Parks and Recreation Department having some funds available for parking or
138 fencing. She feels the group needs to have some oversight on what that group is doing.

139 Pete Hammer explains that the Westside Park was added to the Westside Historic District.

140 Jo Ann Kuehner thinks that Lilly with Parks and Rec may be able to get some funds for the Historic
141 Preservation Commission to help. She feels that the group should be able to review their plans for
142 maybe a painting or fencing before it gets approved.

143 Jill McNaught shares that anything in the Historic Districts are supposed to come to the Historic
144 Preservation for review and approval.

145 Jo Ann Kuehner speaks for the commission saying that anything planned for the historical districts or
146 historical areas for building plans or permitting should come through them first before anything gets
147 approved. They definitely have an interest. She speaks to the building next to Mint City that had work
148 done to the back of the building.

149 Nick Swanson explains that it was brought before the Historic Preservation Commission and the work
150 being done was to protect the integrity of the brick. In the minutes the applicant presented the work
151 they were going to do and the Commission approved it.

152 Discussion is had about cost issues.

153 Pete Hammer asks if there is anyway new construction within the historical districts, that they be made
154 aware of it and involved.

155 Nick Swanson thinks that could be possible.

156 Kathy Smith asks how the Historic Preservation Commission would get that information when something
157 new comes up.

158 Nick Swanson states that the best way for the most transparency would be through a meeting.

159 Jill McNaught adds that if it is within the Historical Districts the Historic Preservation Commission should
160 be a part of that.

161 Jo Ann Kuehner asks about the vacancies on the Commission and how much time this will take.

162 Nick Swanson believes that Kassi has posted the vacancies.


163 Jo Ann Kuehner knows of two interested applicants.

164 Pete Hammer entertains a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kathy Smith moves to adjourn. Jill

165 McNaught seconds the motion.

166 6:23pm Meeting adjourned.

167

168 Approved by:  _____

169 Pete Hammer, Chair

170 Recorded by:  _____

171 Laura Fisher, Permit Technician