



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 377/25

December 8, 2025

To: Landmarks Preservation Board members

From: Sarah Sodt, City Historic Preservation Officer
Erin Doherty, Landmarks Preservation Board Coordinator

RE: Controls and Incentives Agreement
Caroline Horton House – 627 14th Avenue E

Recommendation and Background:

We recommend that no controls be imposed on the Caroline Horton House located at 627 14th Avenue E in Capitol Hill. This property was designated a Seattle Landmark on June 1, 2022.

The landmark nomination application was submitted by community members Marvin Anderson, Kathryn Helde, and David Kurlander; not by the property owners. This process complied with the current code outlined in SMC 25.12 at the time of submission.

Following the Landmarks Preservation Board's decision to designate, the Landmarks staff initiated the negotiations of Controls and Incentives with the property owners, Ian and Anne Brown, and they agreed to participate.

On December 5, 2023, the property owners submitted an initial appraisal prepared by APT Appraisal & Consulting, LLC. The Landmarks staff requested additional information and clarifications in January 2024 and continued to discuss these matters with the property owners. In October 2024, the owners submitted an updated appraisal, and supplemental materials including the revenue generated by the existing apartments. The appraised values between the December 2023 and October 2024 documents remained the same.

The appraiser looked at other comparable sized apartment buildings and single-family homes to estimate the value of the existing building and land with Landmark controls at \$1,900,000. The appraiser evaluated other properties across the city where new townhome development was proposed and provided a concept to develop eleven townhomes on the subject property. They used this approach to estimate the value of the existing land without Landmark controls at \$3,100,000. The appraised value "with" and "without" controls has a \$1.1M delta, approximately a 40% difference.

The conversation between the Landmarks staff and property owners continued, seeking to clearly understand the details of the appraisal and the adjustments being made to comparable property values. The City consulted with finance and development specialist AECOM to review all documents provided by the property owner.

The City Historic Preservation Officer and staff reviewed the information provided by the property owner and their appraiser, in addition to two past decisions on other landmarked properties located in Capitol Hill: the Galbraith House at 1729 17th Avenue, and the Sullivan House at 1632 15th Avenue. Although the three properties differ somewhat in size and configuration, the Galbraith and Sullivan properties have similar zoning to the Horton property, LR3 (M).

The Landmarks staff went through extensive financial reviews of the Galbraith House property in 2017, and the Sullivan House property in 2018. The Landmarks Preservation Board imposed no controls on the Galbraith House property based on the factors outlined in SMC 25.12.590, primarily factor C, regarding a reasonable rate of return to attract capital for investment. In the case of the Sullivan House property, the Landmarks Preservation Board imposed controls on the Landmark. The owner of the Sullivan House property appealed, and the matter was taken up by the Seattle Hearing Examiner. During the legal proceedings, the City of Seattle retained an appraisal expert and based on that review, elected to withdraw and terminate the appeal. This outcome resulted in no controls being placed on the Sullivan House property.

The decision to impose no controls on the Horton House property is based on the factors considered by the Hearing Examiner in SMC 25.12.590, primarily factor A, regarding the market value of the property before and after the imposition of controls (“without controls” vs. “with controls”). The decision is informed by the information submitted by the property owner and their appraiser, and the outcome of the previous Galbraith House and Sullivan House property proceedings.

Additional Information for Consideration:

Included in the information submitted by the property owner, for other potentially comparable single-family homes, was another Seattle Landmark located on the same street as the Horton House. This is the Moore Mansion at 811 14th Avenue E; five properties to the north. The Landmarks staff looked at this property in more detail to see how these figures may relate to the “with controls” and “without controls” values estimated by the owner of the subject property.

The Moore Mansion is a single-family residence with 7 bedrooms and 6-1/2 baths, on a 14,000 sf lot. The house has 7,500 sf of finished living space plus a 2,100 sf basement. King County refers to the property as “Luxury Grade” in “Average Condition”. It sold in July 2023 for \$2.9M. [Real Estate listing and photos of Moore Mansion](#)

For reference, King County assessed the Moore Mansion at \$4.39M in 2023 and \$3.95M in 2024. The improvement (building) alone was valued at \$2.26 in 2023 and \$2.4M in 2024, indicating a significant value assigned to the house itself.

The subject property, the Horton House at 627 14th Avenue E was a former single-family residence, later converted to multifamily use. There are 7 apartments in the main designated building, and 1 apartment in a non-designated carriage house. Five of the units are bedrooms only, with shared bath and kitchen facilities. The two buildings total 6,900 sf on a 9,000 sf lot. King County refers to the property as “Average/Good Condition”. [Photos provided separately.]

For reference, King County assessed the Horton House at \$2.88M in both 2023 and 2024. The improvements (buildings) alone were valued at \$1,000 total. We do not believe this is the true value of the historic building and carriage house, but it indicates that King County is assessing the total value of the property based on potential redevelopment. That approach is similar to a “without controls” value.

The Moore Mansion and Horton House are different in terms of scale, design, and current use, but due to their historic status and neighborhood relationship they have similarities. Real estate images show the remarkable historic character of the Moore Mansion, but it sold well below the assessed value of \$4.39M. We understand the property needs repairs and updates. The Moore Mansion’s sales price of \$2.9M translates to approximately \$300/sf of Landmarked house (including the land). If you apply the same cost/sf figure to the Landmarked Horton House property that yields \$2M for the buildings (including the land). This is a general benchmark. We know that the Horton House would require considerable improvement to be more similar to the Moore Mansion, which means the adjusted Horton House value would be lower than \$2M. This comparison gives the staff additional assurance that the property owner’s appraisal of the Horton House at \$1.9M “with controls” is reasonable or could be lower.

Horton House 2023 & 2024 Appraisal from Owner	\$1,900,000 (with controls)	\$3,100,000 * (without controls)
Horton House 2023 & 2024 Assessment by King County		\$ 2,800,000 (sim. to “without controls”) (\$1K bldgs + \$2.7M land) assessment typically lower than market value
Moore Mansion sold in 2023	\$2,900,000 (\$300/sf of landmark house including the land)	
Horton House benchmark based on Moore Mansion sale	\$2,000,000 (\$300/sf of landmark house including the land) this cost would need to be adjusted; likely lower	

* Included in the information submitted by the property owner, was a potential redevelopment scenario for new townhomes on the Horton property to demonstrate a “without controls” value for the property or land. This is a type of development common

throughout the City of Seattle L3 zone. Due to the neighborhood amenities and Horton House location, there may be numerous other development alternatives with a high value. Based on this understanding, the delta between the estimated “with controls” and “without controls” could potentially be larger than the one associated with the proposed townhome scenario.

Actions:

The Board may take one of two possible actions at the December 17, 2025 meeting:

- Approve the Controls and Incentives Agreement signed by the City Historic Preservation Officer, and Ian and Anne Brown, as provided in SMC 25.12.510; or
- Not approve the Controls and Incentives Agreement and forward your own recommendation on Controls and Incentives to the Hearing Examiner, as provided in SMC 25.12.520.