



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 600 4th Avenue, 4th Floor

LPB 380/25

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

Hybrid Meeting via Webex Webinar or Room L2-80 Boards & Commissions

Seattle City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Floor L2

Wednesday, December 17, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

VJ Kopacki (VK)
Ian Macleod, Chair (IM)
Lora Ellen McKinney (LEM)
Lawrence Norman (LN)
Katie Randall (KR)
Erica Thomas (ET)
Harriet Wasserman (HW)
Cameron Wong (CW)

Board Members Absent

Taber Caton (TC)
Roi Chang, Vice Chair, (RC)
Becca Pheasant (BC)
Matt Zinski (MZ)

Staff Present

Sarah Sodt (SD)
Erin Doherty (ED)
Nelson Pesigan (NP)

Key

BM Board Member
AP Applicant
SM Staff Member

Chair Ian Macleod called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

121725.1 ROLL CALL

121725.2 PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeff Murdock of Historic Seattle urged the board not to approve the proposed controls and incentives agreement for the Caroline Horton House, noting that the agreement imposes no actual controls on the landmark.

Kathryn Helde, a longtime resident of 14th Avenue East, spoke in opposition to the proposed “no controls” agreement for the Caroline Horton House. Citing concerns outlined in written comments, Kathryn argued that the city’s economic analysis failed to consider reasonable-use alternatives and urged the board to reject the proposed no-controls agreement.

David Kurlander noted his long involvement in establishing the Millionaire’s Row National Register Historic District and securing landmark status for both the Burwell and Horton houses. David urged the board to review the public comments submitted by himself, Kathryn Helde, Historic Seattle, and Graham Black, emphasizing that they outline why controls are necessary for the Horton House.

121725.3 SPECIAL TAX VALUATION

121725.31 Stewart House
10455 Maplewood Place SW

SM Erin Doherty reported that City Council recently passed the designating ordinance for the Stewart House, and that property owner Carolyn Ramamurti submitted their tax application for historic replacement windows.

SM Doherty explained that the house retains many original steel windows, while several 1970s wood replacement windows had failed. The owners hired a specialist to restore the historic steel windows and fabricate new aluminum windows that match them, replacing the incompatible wood units.

BM Harriet Wasserman expressed strong support for the completed restoration work, noting that she remembers the house well and has always considered it a spectacular property. BM Wasserman stated that it is gratifying to see the home restored appropriately, described the project as a good one, and added that she is pleased the owners will receive a tax benefit for their preservation efforts.

Action:

I move that the Landmarks Preservation Board approve the following property for Special Tax Valuation: Stewart House at 10455 Maplewood Place SW, that this action is based upon criteria set forth in Title 84 RCW Chapter 449; that this property has been substantially improved in the 24-month period prior to application; and that the recommendation is conditioned upon the execution of an agreement between the Landmarks Preservation Board and the owner.

MM/SC/LEM/KR

7:0:0

The motion passed and was approved unanimously.

121725.4 DESIGNATION

121725.41 American Can Company Factory Building 2601 Elliott Avenue

Presenter Ellen Mirro of Studio TJP presented a brief history, walkthrough and nomination information about the building.

BM Katie Randall thanked Ellen for the overview and noted the building's strong historical ties to both the national canning industry and early local fishing operations, as well as its evident physical integrity. BM Randall stated that the property meets the criteria for designation and that it supports designation under categories C and D.

BM Randall is open to including criterion F, though does not feel the building stands out significantly from other large waterfront structures based on her own experience. Open to further discussion on the criteria, and does not feel strongly opposed to including F.

BM Wasserman thanked Ellen for both the full and summarized presentations, noting that she only knew the building in its Trade Center era, and found its earlier history fascinating. BM Wasserman agrees with the staff report and believes the building is prominent enough to warrant inclusion under criterion F, and expressed support for designating the exterior and the site under criteria C, D, and F.

BM Erica Thomas joined the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

BM VJ Kopacki commended the thorough work that went into the application and expressed agreement with the staff report that criteria C, D, and F all apply.

BM Lawrence Norman supported the staff report and criteria C, D, and F.

BM Cameron Wong expressed full support for the nomination under criteria C, D, and F and noted the building's strong association with Seattle's canning history. BM Wong said that during a recent visit to the waterfront, the building stood out visually, reinforcing support for criterion F.

BM Lora-Ellen McKinney echoed her colleagues comments and supported the staff report.

Chairperson Macleod noted the significance of Seattle's Filipino American fishing history and agreed with the staff recommendation.

Action:

I move that the Board approve the designation of the Former American Can Company Factory, 2601 Elliott Avenue for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description above; that the designation is based upon satisfaction of Designation Standards C, D, and F; that the features and characteristics of the property identified for preservation include: the exterior of the building and the site.

MM/SC/KR/HW

7:0:1

The motion passed and approved. BM Erica Thomas vote was recorded as abstained due to technical difficulties.

121725.5 CONTROLS & INCENTIVES

121725.51 Horton House
627 14th Ave E

AP Ian Brown, co-owner of Hall House LLC, explained that he and his wife have owned 627 14th Avenue East since 2016. The building has operated as an eight-unit multifamily property—including four SRO units sharing a bathroom—for roughly 75 years and has long provided diverse, long-term housing.

AP Brown focused his presentation on the issue of reasonable economic use and concluded that landmark controls would eliminate any path to reasonable economic return and requested the Board that no controls be imposed on the building or site.

SM Doherty read a letter to the board summarizing the controls and incentives agreement's recommendation and background and potential next steps.

SM Sarah Sodt explained that although the memo outlined possible board actions, staff recently discovered an error in the required notification process. After consulting with the City Attorney's Office, SM Sodt advised that the appropriate remedy is for the board to table the decision until the January 7, 2026, meeting.

SM Sodt emphasized that board members may still ask questions and hold discussion at this meeting, but the final action should be postponed allowing staff to correct the notification errors.

BM Randall asked staff how long the current zoning has been in place for the property, seeking clarification on the zoning history.

SM Doherty did not know the exact length of time the current zoning had been in place and noted that when staff reviewed the Galbraith House in 2017, the zoning was already LR3 at that time. SM Doherty added that staff could research the zoning history further.

BM Randall asked for clarification regarding the letter's reference to the City consulting with AECOM to review the owner's appraisal materials and sought confirmation that AECOM had reviewed the appraisal, reached similar conclusions, and did not identify any issues with the valuations provided by the property owner.

SM Doherty explained that AECOM reviewed all of the comparable properties used in the appraisal to assess whether they were reasonable, while staff conducted a deeper review of the proposed townhome redevelopment scenario. Staff asked detailed questions about the feasibility of the townhome layout, including whether the number of units shown was realistic for the site, and received additional information from the Browns and their architect.

SM Doherty said a range of potential redevelopment outcomes exists, some potentially exceeding the \$3.1 million land valuation, and that both low and high-end estimates could shift depending on the chosen development approach.

BM Kopacki noted that both the prepared documents and staff's presentation included substantial discussion of the precedents set by the Galbraith House and the Sullivan House in reaching conclusions about the Carolyn Horton House and asked staff to clarify the current status of each property.

SM Doherty explained that both the Galbraith House and the Sullivan House no longer exist and confirmed, based on online verification, including Google Street View, that the proposed redevelopment projects for those sites have been completed, and in both cases the properties were replaced with townhomes.

BM Lawrence Norman asked if the subject property is in a historic district.

SM Doherty noted that it is not in a local historic district. It is part of a National Register Historic District.

SM Doherty clarified that although the property is located within a National Register historic district, that designation does not impose any regulations on private property owners. Requirements would only apply if a federal undertaking were involved, such as a federally funded project, grant, or permit, in which case federal review processes could be triggered.

Chair Ian Macleod followed up by asking whether the property is a contributing resource within the National Register historic district and requested clarification on whether it is also individually listed as a National Historic Landmark.

SM Doherty will check and provide the Board with more accurate information.

BM Wasserman said she was uncomfortable using the Galbraith House and Sullivan House as precedents, noting that both cases were deeply troubling to her at the time.

Because of past experiences, BM Wasserman cannot support imposing no controls on the current property and will not be able to vote in favor of that option, and acknowledged there may be various approaches the board could consider.

BM Randall was persuaded by the 40% differential and additional information presented, and believes it is reasonable not to place controls on the property as related to Factor A. BM Randall acknowledged the difficulty of the decision given the property's role in providing naturally occurring affordable housing. BM Randall said that, given the substantial economic differential and limited incentives, it is reasonable to impose no controls on the property.

Chairperson Macleod noted that the property is listed as a contributing building to the National Register Historic District. Responding to an earlier question.

BM Norman noted concerns about potential demolition vs. new construction and wanting to better understand those costs. He wished there was an option for rehabilitation and expansion, admitting there isn't much land to build on. He agreed with BM Randall that it would be best for there to be more financial incentives to Landmark property owners to develop preservation solutions.

BM Wong asked whether the property's location within a National Register Historic District makes it eligible for federal historic tax credits and whether that option has been explored. BM Wong also requested clarification on how landmark controls function, noting that as a newer board member, was unsure whether controls are strictly all-or-nothing or if there are intermediate options that allow more flexible development while still preserving certain elements.

SM Sodt did not know whether federal historic tax credits had been explored, noting that the City does not administer those programs or the National Register Historic District, and added that this analysis had not been conducted.

SM Doherty addressed BM Wong's question that one possible approach to more flexible controls would be to impose controls on the building's exterior while not applying controls to the site itself. SM Doherty said any new development on the property would likely require moving the house, and approving such a scenario would depend on future unknown decisions by the Landmarks Board.

BM Erica Thomas expressed concern about potential damage to the landmarked house if moving it and who might have responsibility for that.

Chair Macleod is generally uncomfortable with the idea of not placing controls on a designated property, as doing so runs counter to a core principle of the preservation program. However, Chair Macleod acknowledged the financial realities faced by property owners and agreed that BM Randall's analysis highlighted the limitations of available preservation tools.

Chair Macleod described the situation as challenging and noted that, with the decision likely to be tabled until the new year and will continue to review public comments and staff materials.

Chair Macleod added and hoped his remarks would reassure other board members who may feel similarly conflicted and expressed appreciation for the perspectives shared by colleagues, which helped inform the discussion.

BM Kopacki and BM McKinney appreciate the opportunity to have additional time for consideration at the next board meeting.

Action:

I move to table the conversation regarding the Horton House Controls & Incentives Agreement until the next Board meeting on January 7, 2026.

MM/SC/VK/HW

8:0:0

The motion passed unanimously.

121725.6 BOARD BUSINESS

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.