



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

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LPB 147/23

MINUTES

Landmarks Preservation Board Meeting

City Hall

Remote Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2023 - 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present

Dean Barnes

Roi Chang

Ian Macleod

Lawrence Norman

Becca Pheasant-Reis

Marc Schmitt

Padraic Slattery

Harriet Wasserman

Staff

Sarah Sodt

Erin Doherty

Melinda Bloom

Absent

Taber Caton

Matt Inpanbutr

Lora-Ellen McKinney

Acting Chair Ian Macleod called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

041923.1 PUBLIC COMMENT

Eugenia Woo, Historic Seattle spoke in support of designation of the Cettolin House on criteria C, D, and E. She thanked the current owners and the Cettolins for their

strong stewardship. She noted the house’s amazing history and thanked David Peterson for the nomination document which she said was a joy to read.

Deb Barker signed up to speak but was not in the audience. Mr. Macleod said they could hear from Ms. Barker later if she arrived in the meeting.

041923.2 MEETING MINUTES

March 1, 2023

MM/SC/RC/HW 5:0:2 Minutes approved. Ms. Pheasant-Reis and Mr. Schmitt abstained.

041923.3 CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL

041923.31

Parker-Fersen House

1409 E Prospect Street

Proposed landscape alterations at driveway and walking paths

Nadirah Baldwin went over existing photos and the site plan. She proposed replacement of the cracked concrete driveway with gray granite pavers. She went over site plan and noted new drain, curve for vehicle turnaround, and walkways. She noted the herb garden would be removed to extend the driveway. She said the work would not cross the pedestrian right-of-way nor public sidewalk, and would be on homeowner’s property only. She proposed replacement of the cracked concrete front walkway with similar pavers. She provided specifications for pavers and noted that a darker, charcoal paver would be used on driveway and pedestrian pathways but not on the front walkway.

Mr. Norman joined the meeting at 3:41pm.

Ms. Wasserman appreciated the concise presentation. She said the pavers will be a huge improvement and the proposed color is nice. She supported the proposal.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said she had no issues with what was proposed and said it would be helpful in maintenance of the site and house. She said it looks good.

Mr. Macleod appreciated the concise presentation and said it would be a huge improvement to the property.

Action: I move that the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board approve the application and issue a Certificate of Approval for the exterior pavement alterations at the Parker-Fersen House, 1409 E Prospect Street, as per the attached submittal.

EXPLANATION AND FINDINGS

This action is based on the following:

1. With regard to SMC 25.12.750 A, *the extent to which the proposed alteration or significant change would adversely affect the features or characteristics described in Ordinance 113423.*
 - a. The proposed layout and material changes to the exterior pavement are minor and do not detract from the character of the house or site.
2. The factors of SMC 25.12 .750 B, C, D and E are not applicable.
3. The proposed work as presented is consistent with the following Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation as listed below (or cite other applicable standards):

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

MM/SC/HW/RC 8:0:0 Motion carried.

041923.4 DESIGNATION

041923.41 Cettolin House
4022 32nd Avenue SW

Returned to Public Comment period:

Deb Barker said she was a former Landmark Board member and Acting Chair. She thanked board members for their commitment and urged them to support designation on criteria C, D, and E. She said the house was hand-built by the owner. She said she was humbled by the property owners’ decision to seek landmark status. She said the house was unanimously nominated and she hoped it would be unanimously designated as well.

Returned to Presentation:

David Peterson Historic Resource Consulting proposed a quick overview with more focus on information requested by board members at the nomination meeting. He said the house was built by Fausto Cettolin from 1926 until 1939. He provided context of the neighborhood and site. He said the area is the traditional land of the Coast Salish and Duwamish people. He said White European arrival brought changes among which was the straightening of the Duwamish River and the establishment of a timber mill on the water. The timber mill became a steel mill after 1900 and the immediate surrounding area became a company town for the steel mill. He said there were multiple shifts and workers lived nearby. He said the transportation network was altered over time and noted the regrade of Avalon for vehicular access and the neighborhood became less of a company town. He noted post war infrastructure developed around the neighborhood

including the West Seattle bridge and Fauntleroy was expanded and widened to accommodate. He said a half block of houses was demolished and the neighborhood became isolated and more connected to the Delridge/Youngstown neighborhood below.

At the nomination meeting, board members asked for more information about Italian immigration to Seattle and the subject area. Mr. Peterson said numbers of Italian immigrants here were small up to 1900. He said the numbers increased after 1900 due to traumatic times in Italy. He said Italian immigrants tended to live in east coast cities but work and better pay pushed them west. In Seattle, Italian immigrants settled in "Garlic Gulch" at the north end of Rainier Valley with a smaller Italian community in West Seattle. Fausto was born in Pianzano, Italy in 1890. Fausto served in the Italian military 27 months; he was injured and awarded a silver medal from the King. He said Fausto arrived in the United States in 1913, and after going through Ellis Island went to live with his brother in San Francisco and found work at a steel mill. Fausto moved to Seattle and worked at a 'sister' mill of the one he had worked at in San Francisco. Erma moved from Northern Italy to Seattle with her mother to live with siblings following the death of her father. They lived in the same neighborhood as Fausto. Fausto and Erma met and were married in 1921 and started their family which eventually included six children.

Mr. Peterson said Fausto started building the house in 1926, the design likely inspired by memories of buildings in his hometown of Pianzano, Italy. As a young man there he was a plasterer apprentice there and likely used skills he learned there. He said the interior of the URM building was completed in 1929 when the family had four or five members. He noted the red tile pyramidal roof, the multiple plaster work techniques, and porch balusters hand-cast by Fausto. He said that by the 1936 tax photo, the house was largely complete except for the front porch. He said that the property consisted of three parcels, the north yard, south yard and the house on the middle parcel. He said the north yard was vegetable gardens and chickens. The south yard was terraced, with tables and benches made by Fausto, as a place to relax.

Mr. Peterson said from the front, the house appears to be one-story, three stories are visible from the rear. He said the house looks more Italian from the back. He noted the wood sash and deep-set windows, leaded glass tulip windows throughout, stairs with flared steps, concrete planters as part of wall element, interior terrazzo floors. He said Fausto loved to garden, and created terracing, plaster covered masonry walls, benches, terrazzo tables, a barbeque, and garden beds. A glacial boulder was turned into a fountain. Fausto put his name on terrazzo tables and on the front porch, Autore (creator) F. Cettolin. Fausto was the steel mill open hearth boss; he retired in 1961 after a 40-year career.

Mr. Peterson said that in 1966 Erma died after an eight-month bout with pancreatic cancer. While she was ill and frequently bedridden, Fausto installed a star-shaped flower bed in the north yard so that she could see it from their bedroom. Fausto died at home in 1969. He said Fausto Junior lived in the house for another 20 years. In 1991 the house and property were sold to a developer who sold off the north and south side lots. In 1994 the house was purchased by Susan and Stuart Wexler who made minor

renovations. Marilyn Kennell and Alan McMurray purchased the house in 2014 and have made no major changes. The current owners self-nominated the property for landmark consideration.

Mr. Peterson said Fausto used elements derived from Italian Renaissance gardens and noted the pebble mosaics, statuary, vertical elements, post columns, planters on top of wall. The mold Fausto used for making hand-cast columns is still at the house. Mr. Peterson showed photos of a house in Pianzano which may have been an inspiration and noted similar detailing as the subject house.

Mr. Peterson said he was unable to find much more information on the Italian American community in West Seattle. He said there was a larger Italian American community known as 'Garlic Gulch' east in the Rainier Valley. He said most Italian immigrants during the late 19th and early 20th centuries settled in East Coast cities. He said people came west for jobs and better pay. Seattle's Italian community began to coalesce around the turn of the 20th century. Our Lady Mount Virgin Catholic Church and Colman School are institutional buildings which provided a center to the community. He said Erma and Fausto often engaged with the local Italian American community but primarily with the smaller group in West Seattle; they didn't own a car and the Rainier Valley was far away and inconvenient to get to.

Mr. Peterson said the story is remarkable and there is nothing else comparable to it. He said it meets criteria C, D, and E.

Mr. Slattery asked if all the stucco was original.

Mr. Peterson said yes, and it is hard to capture in photos. He said originally the house was painted to highlight the "quoining". He noted the variety of plaster techniques Fausto used.

Mr. Slattery said it is a cool house, in stunning condition.

Mr. Barnes asked if the interiors are original.

Mr. Peterson said the only change was kitchen remodel but the floors throughout the house are original terrazzo and will last forever. He said terrazzo is a labor-intensive process.

Mr. Barnes asked if the mosaic on walkways is original.

Mr. Peterson said it is.

Mr. Barnes appreciated the presentation and said he was amazed the mold for columns is still on property.

Ms. Wasserman appreciated the presentation and said the house is wonderful. She suggested including the interior terrazzo floors in designation.

Ms. Doherty confirmed that the Board nominated the interior terrazzo floors, so they have the opportunity to add that to the motion when identifying features to designate.

Mr. Macleod asked about the size of the house.

Mr. Peterson said the house is 900 square feet per floor with the subbasement smaller. He said it is about 2200 square feet.

Mr. Macleod asked the number of children the Cettolins had.

Mr. Peterson said six.

Mr. Barnes said he agreed the interior terrazzo floors should be included.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said the report was fantastic to read and she appreciated other board comments. She said it is a fantastic story and a unique representation of a labor of love and bringing one's culture to a new country. She supported designation and agreed with the Staff Report. She said the changes made are typical and necessary to live and the character remains.

Mr. Schmitt supported designation based on criteria C, D, and E. He noted the integrity and said it is fortunate that all of the property owners have been good stewards.

Mr. Norman said he enjoyed the presentation and noted that it is a great story about a man who was determined to build a home for his family. He said he grew up in the Rainier area and had no idea about the Italian history there. He supported designation on criteria C, D, and E.

Mr. Slattery concurred.

Ms. Chang said she enjoyed the presentation, especially learning about Garlic Gulch. She said the house appears simple from the front exterior but noted from the back and inside, the house is a unique representation. She supported designation on criteria C and D, but she was not sure about E as there is nothing to compare it to.

Mr. Macleod supported designation and noted the remarkable level of hand-built craftsmanship; he pointed out the detail and workmanship and said that is why criterion E applies.

Ms. Wasserman said she supported designation based on criteria C, D, and E and said it is an outstanding work of a builder and she had no problem including criterion E.

Ms. Pheasant-Reis said she was swayed to support criterion E because Fausto had training in plaster work in Italy which he utilized in creating the house.

Mr. Barnes concurred. He said that even though it is the only one, it is so unique which makes it special. He said Mr. Cettolin used something that was within himself and his own labor which is enough to warrant criterion E.

Mr. Macleod said the criteria calls for ‘an outstanding work’, and does not need to be part of a portfolio of work.

Ms. Chang said she didn’t feel strongly about the question of criterion E and that she would support designation.

Action: I move that the Board approve the designation of the Cettolin House at 4022 32nd Avenue SW for consideration as a Seattle Landmark; noting the legal description above; that the designation is based upon satisfaction of Designation Standards C, D, and E; that the features and characteristics of the property identified for preservation include: the site and the exterior of the house; and the interior terrazzo floors.

MM/SC/HW/DB 8:0:0 Motion carried.

041923.5 BOARD BUSINESS