

# League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

**Name of Agency:** Historic Preservation Commission

**Date:** 5/13/2024

**Observer Reporting:** Aly Welch

**Length of Meeting:** 7:30pm - 9:00pm

**Board Members Present:** Allison Munch-Rotolo, John Anderson, Anita Hornback, Ned Warnick, Matthew Root

**Board Members Absent:** Phil Gruen (excused), Jennifer Hamilton (excused)

**Others Present (e.g., staff, other agency representatives, media, public):** Ariel Medeiro (Assistant Planner), RJ Lott (Community Development Director), Jennifer Harder (Property Owner with application for alteration), Justin Rogers (Representative for application for alteration), unnamed public audience member

## **Business Pertaining to League Positions or Topics of Interest:**

1) Issues discussed that relate to League priorities or positions.

- City Planning - There is no state law requiring documentation for buildings more than 45 years old, neither in Pullman City Code. A 2011 proposal is being re-evaluated by the commission and Lott.
- City Planning - RJ suggested a draft attachment to the demolition application or adjustments to Pullman City Code. RJ also suggested a, "simple change," to city code to cover the intent of the commission's request. The Commission liked this idea.
- City Planning - Ariel Medeiro, as part of her Master's, asked Lott if she could update zoning code, which she has been working on and asked if this commission would have any input in the code. Warnick considers the plausibility and effectiveness of moving historic preservation codes to zoning.
- City Planning - at the previous meeting, Lott said if the commission were to require photographs, it would need to be updated in the Pullman City Code. Munch-Rotolo presented a dozen various codes east of the cascades in Washington, a few of which address photographs in code, a few of which address definitions of historic buildings, and many of which address CEPA. Pullman could borrow language from many of these codes she researched. The Commission would be the determining body according to CEPA.
- City Planning - A bit of discussion regarding waiting periods for demolition: Warnick and Lott were on the same page that a long waiting period is too much. Munch-Rotolo mentioned that they are misleading, because the demolition would've already waited various periods for SEPA (90 days) and the Commission would ask for maybe 10 days. Anderson thinks a waiting period is necessary, and photographs of the interior are not as important. Warnick agreed, and mentioned that Walla Walla's city code is usable. The Commission did establish a 180-day waiting period for a particular application.

2) Issues/topics that you want the League to know about, for community awareness and the business of your agency.

- **RJ Lott WILL BE BACK NEXT MONTH WITH A DRAFT CITY CODE PROPOSAL.**
- Allison Munch-Rotolo did say that what he brought today is what they've been asking for.
- Munch-Rotolo researched and presented over a dozen permits east of the cascades in Washington that effectively utilize a specific code for historic properties. Incredibly in-depth research on each of these city's/region's codes.
- The Planning Commission will go through City Code before a public hearing - could take a few months. Ariel Medeiros offered to communicate with both commissions.
- Community Development Newsletter versus Community Update?

3) Links to further information on an issue, if available.

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4) Local League Action Suggested:

- Position: City Planning
- Action Suggested: Be aware of upcoming changes to the demolition procedure and lack of accountability from historic property owners in Pullman.

**Public Meetings of interest to League:** *Were there any public meetings announced that you think League members may be interested in attending and/or becoming involved with?*

- Next HPC Meeting: June 10

**Attached Materials or Links:** *Please attach any materials, or links to such, received at the meeting that you feel are important to your report.*

- <https://go.boarddocs.com/wa/pullman/Board.nsf/Public>