

MINUTES

Cheney Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting July 12, 2018

Commissioners Attending: Charles Mutschler, Scott Wilbanks, Lee Pierce, Martin Seedorf and Bettye Hull.

Commissioners Absent: Richard Donley & Steve Emerson.

Staff Attending: Susan Beeman.

Councilpersons Attending: None.

Call to Order: Chairman Mutschler called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m. and welcomed guests Fred & Catherine Lauritsen, Larry & Tudy Hatch, Francis Grover and Susan Grover.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of the April 5, 2018 regular meeting were approved as distributed.

Citizen Participation: None.

Old Business - Cheney Depot Report:

Chairman Mutschler gave an update on the Cheney Depot project, explaining that contracts are presently under review for transfer of ownership of the depot from BNSF to the non-profit group.

New Business - Local Register Nomination:

228 W 5th ST / Cossalman House (Fred & Catherine Lauritsen)

Patrick Hanley, Planning Department Intern, introduced himself and explained that he has been working on this nomination as a class project during his senior year at EWU. He described the history of the Cossalman family. James Wesley Cossalman was the son of Cheney pioneers William Wallace Cossalman and Mary Rebecca Cossalman, who came to Cheney in 1883. William was a member of the International Order of Odd Fellows, and in 1898, he contributed \$75 – equivalent to about \$2,000 in today’s dollars – to keep the State Normal School at Cheney open after the legislature failed to allocate funds for its operation. William founded the Meadowland Dairy south of town, and James inherited the family business upon his father’s death.

James Cossalman was a member of Cheney High School’s first graduating class in 1909. James married Ruth Case in 1918. Ruth was also active in the social life of the community, primarily as a member of the Tilicum Club from 1933 through 1969. James and Ruth were Cheney socialites throughout the 1950s, with their activities reported in the newspaper regularly.

Mr. Hanley said that the original blueprints for the house were identified as coming from Wisdom in Homes of Burbank, California, called “The Big Pine Design.” He noted that the low pitched gable roof with exposed knee braces are traces of Craftsman style, but the broad, one-story shape, the front entry located off-center and sheltered under the main roof of the house,

large picture windows, and the attached garage located at the side are characteristic of the California Ranch style. He added that this would be considered a transitional Craftsman/Ranch Style home.

At the time of construction, in 1951, this would have been a very modern, contemporary design. Many of the building materials were sourced locally, including lumber from the dairy farm south of town. Local slate, from a quarry south of Cheney, was used for the fireplace, front entry steps, and for a built-in planter near the entryway. The same slate was also used to build an outdoor fireplace and patio in the back yard, and a massive slate slab tops a picnic table on the back patio.

Mr. Hanley explained that sometime after 1996, the garage door was replaced. Two small additions have made at the rear of the house, but both are consistent with the character of the original home.

Showing photos of the interior of the home, Mr. Hanley described the knotty pine siding, wrought iron stair railings, and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch hand-pegged Tennessee oak flooring. Ceilings throughout the living room areas are sandblasted plywood. A glass block wall, very typical of 1950s construction, allows light into an interior hallway. In the living room, a 300# Masonite shelf reportedly came from the original Eastern Washington State College science building. Built-in china cabinets, storage drawers, and kitchen cabinets made of straight-grain fir are other characteristic details of the interior. Mr. Hanley noted that these built-ins were not shown on the catalog plans, but were added at the time of construction.

Mr. Hanley added that rear yard elaboration is a defining characteristic of the California Ranch style, and the Cossalman House features terraced landscaping, a pond, and a 7' tall slate fireplace/grill serving as a centerpiece to the back yard.

Mr. Hanley noted that while this is an early example of a Ranch style home, it included very forward-thinking architectural details and modern materials: a built-in dishwasher, and striated plywood ceiling tiles which were introduced to the public in 1948. In the bathroom, a wavy, opaque acrylic wall separates the shower and the commode.

He added that this home is an excellent example of a 'transitional' Ranch style, with Craftsman influences, and it retains excellent integrity. He noted that this house is unique for its era, it is unique for its placement in Cheney, and it is unique in its use of local materials.

Chairman Mutschler thanked Mr. Hanley, and noted that this was a very thorough and professional presentation.

Commissioner Seedorf made a motion to recommend that the Cossalman-Lauritsen House be placed on the Cheney Register of Historic Places. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce.

Discussion continued. Ms. Beeman asked the Commission members to enumerate what they considered to be 'character-defining features' of this property. She added that the Lauritsens will

enter into a Management Agreement with the City which will govern future use of the property, agreeing to follow the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines in future treatment of the house.

Chairman Mutschler noted that the classic Ranch architectural elements, the single story with roof design typical of Ranch style homes, would be noteworthy. The use of local materials, such as the native local slate in the patio, interior fireplace, and exterior fireplace, would be considered defining characteristics of this building. Even the way the house is sited on the lot, with landscaping to emphasize the natural setting, is significant. He added that this goes beyond a typical piece of pattern-book architecture, and it speaks to how someone who is just a bit above middle-class, but not tremendously wealthy, could find a design of home that would fit their interest, and personalize it.

He added that the roofing materials and outline, the original fenestration, the board and batten finish – all of this really does speak to preservation of the home, much as the Cossalmans built it. Even the additions to the house look the way they might have if the Cossalmans had designed them.

Commissioner Pierce stated that the use of slate in the interior fireplace and in the back yard is mentioned, but the slate at the front entry way could be added to the narrative description.

Commissioner Hull suggested there are probably very few homes in Cheney which have had only two owners. Mr. Hanley noted that the Lauritsens have now owned the home longer than the Cossalmans. He added that there is reference in the nomination to the outbuilding in the back yard which is identified as a contributing structure; it features board and batten siding to echo that of the house.

Mr. Hanley added that on a topographic map dated 1953, this house was nearly on the outskirts of Cheney. As the town has grown up around it, this site continues to feel quite secluded and private, due to the landscaping.

Chairman Mutschler called for a vote, and the motion to recommend listing the Cossalman-Lauritsen House on the Cheney Register of Historic Places was carried unanimously. Chairman Mutschler asked that the record show that Mr. Hanley has done an excellent job in preparing the nomination. Ms. Beeman added that Mr. Hanley has been an exceptional contributor to the Planning Department during his time in Cheney. This nomination was one of several projects that he was given, and he exceeded expectations in their accomplishment. He is leaving Cheney for full-time employment with the City of Walla Walla as a GIS Utility Specialist.

Ms. Beeman announced that the Lauritsens are inviting Commission members and the public to tour their home immediately following tonight's meeting.

**New Business: Renewal of Waiver of Certificate of Appropriateness -
Small Shed at 306 F Street (David & Bessie Lowe House)**

Ms. Beeman explained that a Waiver of Certificate of Appropriateness was granted in 2015 to allow removal of a carriage house and small tool shed located behind 306 F Street. The owners of the property, a national sorority, did not complete those removals, and have now decided to

retain the carriage house. At this time, they would like permission to remove the small tool shed at the back of the property.

Typically, if work is not initiated within a year from the time a Certificate of Appropriateness is granted, the permission is considered to have expired. Ms. Beeman said that since the more significant of the two buildings was no longer under threat of demolition, she has provided a draft Waiver of Certificate of Appropriateness that is identical to the one granted in 2015, but with references to the larger carriage house removed. She asked the board to consider granting a renewed Waiver of Certificate of Appropriateness for removal of the small tool shed only. She added that the tool shed is less than 100 square feet in size, and no other City permits would be needed for its removal.

Commissioner Seedorf made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hull, to grant the Waiver of Certificate of Appropriateness. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Hull reported on a visit to Port Townsend in May. She added that Port Townsend has one of the four remaining drive-in theaters in the state. Chairman Mutschler added that another is located in Kettle Falls.

Commissioner Pierce described his father rebuilding some of the officers' houses that are now being used as rentals at Fort Worden.

Commissioner Wilbanks described a recent visit to Maryhill Museum near Goldendale. He also toured the Presby Mansion at Goldendale. This three-story, 22 room house is made entirely of wood, and is retained in its original condition for use as a museum, and as the home of the Klickitat County Historical Society.

Commissioner Pierce reported on a recent trip to Republic and Colville.

Commissioner Seedorf spent 3 weeks in Europe earlier this summer with his 15 year old grandson.

Chairman Mutschler reported that he has started to scan 35 mm slides from his personal collection.

Staff Reports:

Ms. Beeman reported that Mr. Lucas is currently somewhere in North Carolina, taking a 10 day, 2,000 mile loop through the southeast. He sent photos back earlier this week from Mount Airy, the 'Mayberry' where the Andy Griffith television show was filmed.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m., to be followed by a tour of the Cossalman House at 228 W 5th Street.

Approved:

Charles V. Mutschler, Chairman

Susan Beeman, Secretary