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City Council

Special Recognition - 2017 Historic Preservation Awards and Olympia Heritage Register Plaques

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Title

Special Recognition - 2017 Historic Preservation Awards and Olympia Heritage Register Plaques

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Olympia Heritage Commission seeks recognition of the recommended award recipients for the 2017 Historic Preservation Award.

City Manager Recommendation:

Recognize the Historic Preservation Award recipients recommended by the Heritage Commission.

Report

Issue:

Whether to recognize the work that Olympians do to preserve and celebrate the city's special historic and cultural places.

Staff Contact:

Michelle Sadlier, Historic Preservation Officer, Community Planning & Development. 360.753.8031

Presenter(s):

Katherine M. Kelly, Chair of the Olympia Heritage Commission

Michelle Sadlier, Historic Preservation Officer

Notified:

Award Recipients Gray & Joy Graham, Artisans Group, and Maurice Major

Plaque Recipients Maria & Keith Ciani, Connie Phegley, and Kanako Wynkoop

Background and Analysis:

One of the Olympia Heritage Commission's important roles is to promote excellence in historic preservation. To that end, the Heritage Commission reviews nominations and recommends one or more recipients for Olympia's Historic Preservation Award. Although each recipient contributes something uniquely special to our community, the overarching goal of the Historic Preservation Award is to recognize the people and projects which serve as a model for preserving and championing Olympia's cultural and built heritage along with the stories embodied in these historic places.

The people recommended to receive the 2017 Historic Preservation Award all share the common characteristic of going above and beyond all expectations to champion the rich heritage of Olympia's urban and natural cultural landscape. The Heritage Commission is proud to recommend the following award recipients:

1. Gray & Joy Graham and Artisans Group, whose creative rehabilitation of the former Thorp Motors Building (222 Capitol Way North) has turned this underutilized historic building into a vibrant social and commercial hub.

Working with Artisans Group, the Grahams took on a major rehabilitation project to convert an often overlooked building into 222 Market, a collection of popular shops and restaurants that has quickly become a center of activity in Downtown Olympia.

Although the property was not on the Olympia Heritage Register to begin with, this team of creative thinkers has preserved and enhanced the building's historical character while introducing compatible contemporary design elements. The Grahams have since successfully applied to place the building on the Register and will soon participate in the property tax incentive program available for significant rehabilitation of historic properties.

2. Maurice Major, for leading citizen advocacy on the protection of Priest Point Parks' significant cultural and historic resources.

As a professional archaeologist and resident of Olympia, Maurice ("Mo") Major is deeply connected to Priest Point Park. In recent years, he has not only conducted archaeological surveys in the park professionally, he has also continued to advocate as a private citizen for protecting culturally sensitive areas in the park, including working with tribal members and other community volunteers from around our region.

The importance of the awareness Mo has raised on the cultural and historical significance of the features within this gem of a city park cannot be overstated; City staff now turn to him as a primary technical spokesperson to help monitor the condition of this important cultural landscape.

These award recipients join a long list of people and organizations who have received this recognition over the years (See Attachment).

The Heritage Commission would also like to take this opportunity to showcase the work of three property owners who have successfully proposed their properties for listing on the Olympia Heritage Register. Listing on the Register highlights a building's historical significance to our community, provides for some protections from development that would detrimentally alter its special character, and offers the property owner the opportunity to apply for special tax incentives to encourage rehabilitation and modernization that will give the building a long and healthy future.

The City provides a bronze plaque to commemorate the designation of each individually-listed Register property. Since 2016, the following properties have been added to the Register:

1. Frederick W. & Elsa H. Schmidt House (1912) - 2613 Capitol Way South

The first home built by the youngest son and daughter-in-law of Olympia Brewing Company's founder, Leopold F. Schmidt, this house was substantially remodeled in 1946 by prolific local contractor Karl L. Strandberg, who lived here at the time with his wife Opal.

Owners: Maria and Keith Ciani

2. Christensen Radio Repair Shop (1949) - 108 Franklin Street Northeast

This mid-century building was one of the first constructed Downtown after the major earthquake in 1949. For decades, it was the repair shop for Christensen Radio, which served the community out of the Avalon Store Building. Its original storefront windows, inset doorway, and canopy hardware are hallmarks of its use and period.

Owners: Kenneth Pugh and Constance Phegley

3. Avalon Store Building (1928) - 302-304 4th Avenue East

This commercial building formed part of the Avalon Theater development, designed by Northwest architect Franklin Cox Stanton. It housed two long-time Olympia businesses: C.R. Harris Paint Headquarters and Christensen Radio Shop. It is the last remnant of the original theater complex, once a Downtown entertainment hub.

Owner: Kanako Wynkoop

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

General community interest in preserving, enhancing, and championing the places that give our city its unique character and tell the stories of our people.

Financial Impact:

Included in base budget.

Attachments:

2017 Awards

List of Past Awards