

January 15, 2015

Oregon City Public Library Renovation and Addition

606 John Adams St
Oregon City, Oregon 97045

Historic Design Review Type III– Narrative and Criteria - Draft

List of Approvals Sought

Historic Design Review - Type III
Site Plan and Design Review – Type II

Project Narrative

Introduction

The Oregon City Public Library is currently located and operating in the existing Carnegie Library completed in 1912. The Carnegie Library was just placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014. In 2012 Oregon City Commissioners approved a 14,500 gsf addition to the existing library to accommodate the Oregon City's need for a larger facility. Oregon City voters approved the library bond in May of 2014 to design and construct the 14,500 gsf addition.

Site and Context

The proposed site is the Carnegie Park block (approximately 210' x 274') bound by John Adams St. to the west, 7th St to the north, Jefferson St. to the east, and 6th street to the south. The existing Carnegie sits in the middle of the block with its main entry and classical façade facing John Adams St. The site is relatively flat from John Adams to about half way to two thirds east toward Jefferson St. where grade slopes between 4 and 12 feet up south to north. The geotechnical survey indicates fractured and solid basalt 4-8 feet below existing grade that follows the site contours. Mature Dutch Elms occupy one third to one half of the northern site with a few located along the east and west perimeter. All the Dutch Elms have been documented with Dutch Elm disease. The parks department is maintaining the trees to their best and longest life given the fact that they are diseased (see Arborist report attached). The south west area of the site contains a existing spray park and playground containing one steel slide and one steel swing structure. On street parking is available on 3 sides of the park with the exception of 7th St. and directly in front and opposite side of the Fire House. Sidewalks line the perimeter of the site with walkways at each corner that bring pedestrians into the park itself.

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swing structure. On street parking is available on 3 sides of the park with the exception of 7th St. and directly in front and opposite side of the Fire House. Sidewalks line the perimeter of the site with walkways at each corner that bring pedestrians into the park itself.

Within immediate vicinity of the site (inside a 250-foot radius) are a variety of public facilities and amenities. Across 6th Street is the Atkinson Memorial Church and Education Wing. To the west along 6th St. is the Pioneer Community and Senior Center, the Stevens Crawford Museum (1908). Along 6th St. to the east at the corner of Jefferson St. is the Richard Bloom Tots Park. To the west directly across John Adams is the Ermatinger House Museum (1845) and Oregon City Fire Station. 7th St. has commercial and retail services. East on Jefferson is an existing parking lot newly acquired by the library for staff, Dental office, Family Counseling Center and a residence at the corner of Jefferson and 6th St.

Other nearby historic properties include the Judge Ryan House (1892) located southward on Jefferson Street, and the Zumwalt House (1896) and Andresen House (1913), as well as the McLoughlin House (1909).

The site is outside the 100 year floodplain and has no wetlands or other natural features of note.

The New Building Design

Overview

Through an extensive design and public outreach process, Oregon City Commissioner's on **November 12, 2014 (Verify exact date)** approved a two story scheme that lightly connects symmetrically to the east facade (back) of the tall one story existing Carnegie library. The two story scheme was selected as it has the smallest footprint, thus taking up less park area. The addition is located behind the Carnegie, preserving the entry view, allowing the addition to be subordinate to the historical building. Each floor is approximate 7,250 gsf with the upper level set back from the ground level (base) to reduce the overall mass and height due to the upper level.

Existing Building

The existing Carnegie Library is considered to be in the American Renaissance Style. It is a tall one story building with a low ceiling basement. The east side of the basement steps up 18" due to basalt below. The upper floor is a net usable 3700 sf. The layout consists of 1 large room with high ceilings and a central fireplace, a smaller reference room and the original Librarians office. The lower level has net usable area of 1500 sf. (1200 is occupied by a non-compliance ceiling height which is currently staff area and mechanical).

The exterior is clad in red brick masonry with decorative brick pilasters that are clad in a cream brick with an articulated base and ornate entablature. The cream painted wood windows are large yet high above finished floor to accommodate the perimeter shelving inside. The Carnegie sits up on average of 4' above the approach grade to emphasize the buildings stature and provide a civic presence typical to classical style design. A central entry portico and stairs define the existing entry.

The proposed addition will preserve the classical front façade and existing entry.

The new building will house the main entry to the library which is located in the connector or link between the old and new.* The base of the new structure is clad in masonry and will follow the Carnegie in mass and proportion, but not ornate detail, so as not to compete with the existing building. To reduce the contrast between the 1 and 2 story structures, the new masonry will continue to the height of the Carnegie parapet (20' +/-) which will create a 1-1/2 story expression. The second floor clerestory windows are capped with a cantilevered crown and up sloping soffit to again reduce the mass and height which allow the second level to float behind the Carnegie.

Exterior materials palette is simple to unify the composition. Similar to darker colored brick is proposed for the new addition with similar size and coursing as the existing. Use of limestone or precast coping, aluminum glazing system with matching crown and soffit material. The parapet will be either brick and

precast coping or metal matching the window system depending on location. It is undecided the exact finish of the aluminum glazing and metal panel. Either a light kynar finish to complement the cream colored accents of the Carnegie or a darker kynar finish to allow the upper level and roof line to recede and not compete with the Carnegie. Other accents could be a basalt or limestone cornerstone. Signage to be minimal and graphics simple.

Because the addition and entry are deliberately subordinate to the original structure the design incorporates a Library Plaza as the civic front door to the library expansion. Using the existing landscape and operational spray park as the focal point; new pervious paving, classical approach, new seat walls, covered entryway and new site trees will provide the foreground and gathering space to the new addition. The existing play equipment will be located in a new play area just to the east of the 6th St. entry walk. The equipment will be in the spirit of the existing but will meet current safety codes. (4) Accessible on street parking spaces as well as (3) 15 minute drop off parking spaces will be available along 6th St. Exterior site lighting will match existing which is an Acorn Style Park low pole light.

**Because of Library staffing and the 2 story addition, the entry must be centrally located to not increase staff size. The basement level will be for staff only as well to not increase staff size.*

Review Criteria

The proposed structure will connect directly to the existing Carnegie and is considered an addition and as such is to address the criteria listed in the Design guidelines: Alterations- Additions document. At the Pre Application Conference it was determined that the criteria found in Preservations Briefs # 14 New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns should be addressed as well as New Building Design in Oregon City Historic Districts as well.

New Building Designs in Oregon City Historic Districts

A. The Project and Location

1. What do you want to build:

Response: This project proposed a (2) Story 14,500gsf library addition to the east of the existing Carnegie Library along with developing an entry plaza around the existing spray park and play area at the southeast corner. The new addition allows the existing library to expand and add: Children's library, community room, maker space, technology, conference and training room, study rooms as well as increase the overall fiction, nonfiction, media and reference sections. Much of their collection is currently in storage and will be relocated to the new facility, including an extensive local history collection.

2. Where is the site?

Response: The site is located in the McLoughlin Historic Conservation District. It is a full city block bound by 7th St., John Adams St., 6th St. and Jefferson St.

3. The immediate context: What buildings are already next to the site? Style? Use? What buildings are across the street? Style? Use?

Response: The McLoughlin Historic Conservation District represents a diverse mix of styles, construction types, and uses characteristic of a historic neighborhood that gradually infilled over a period of 100+ years. The oldest structures in the neighborhood date to 1845. Predominant styles include Bungalow, Queen Anne, and Vernacular. The 7th Street business corridor includes 19th-century 'false front' architecture and early-20th-

century single-story commercial structures. Individually landmarked structures adjacent to the site include the Andresen House and the Ermatinger House.

4. *Are there existing historic building in the vicinity of your site?*

Response: Within immediate vicinity of the site (inside a 250-foot radius) are a variety of public facilities and amenities. Across 6th Street is the Atkinson Memorial Church and Education Wing. To the west along 6th St. is the Pioneer Community and Senior Center, the Stevens Crawford Museum (1908). Along 6th St. to the east at the corner of Jefferson St. is the Richard Bloom Tots Park. To the west directly across John Adams is the Ermatinger House Museum (1845) and Oregon City Fire Station. 7th St. has commercial and retail services. East on Jefferson is an existing parking lot newly acquired by the library for staff, Dental office, Family Counseling Center and a residence at the corner of Jefferson and 6th St. Other nearby historic properties include the Judge Ryan House (1892) located southward on Jefferson Street, and the Zumwalt House (1896) and Andresen House (1913), as well as the McLoughlin House(1909).

B. Style

What styles are appropriate? (Acceptable styles in Historic District Design Guidelines). Pick an appropriate style for the use.

Response: The proposed addition design is a nuanced contemporary response to the existing American Renaissance / Georgian style of the Carnegie Library, the historic 2-story Commercial structures on 7th Street, and elements of the historic residential styles of the surrounding neighborhood. Consistent with the Department of the Interior's guidelines for new exterior additions to historic buildings, the proposed design may be distinguished from the original Carnegie Library as a product of its own time.

C. Site Considerations/Principles

1. *What does current zoning allow?*

Response: Institutional zoning allows a Library outright.

2. *Are there any specific requirements beyond the basic zoning regulations?*

Response: Yes....more to say...

3. *What is the setback requirements?*

Response: Minimum required setbacks: 25 feet from property line except when the development is adjacent to a public-right-of-way. When adjacent to a public right-of-way, the minimum setback is 0 feet and the maximum setback is 5 feet.

4. *What lot coverage is allowed?*

Response: Yes and more to say....

5. *What is the pedestrian access?*

Response: Sidewalks line the perimeter of the site with walkways at each corner that bring pedestrians to the park and the library entry. The proposed accessible route will be from the 6th Street sidewalk to the new main entry.

6. *Where is the vehicle access?*

Response: On street parking is available on 3 sides of the park with the exception of 7th St. and directly in front and opposite side of the Fire House.

7. *If your project is a multifamily-use, Can common space be shared (courtyard)?*

Response: NA

Assessment Question:

Is the building respectful of its neighbors?

Response: Yes and more to say....

Is the shape/bulk of the building consistent with its style?

Response: Yes and more to say....

D. Site Plan Development

1. *What is the size of the lot?*

Response: 210' X 274' rectangular site. 57,499 sf, 1.3 Acres.

2. *Where is the lot located on the block?*

Response: Full city block, bordered by 7th St, Jefferson St, 6th St and John Adams St.

3. *Is the site flat or on a slope?*

Response: The site is relatively flat west to east for 1/3 to 1/2 of the site then slopes upward from 4-12' south to north. Basalt follows the slope of the site approximately 4-6 feet below the finished grade.

4. *Are there any existing significant trees that should be saved?*

Response: The design genesis was to preserve the park and the natural surroundings. By reducing the footprint of the building the design preserves the maximum amount of trees. Mature Dutch Elms occupy one third to one half of the northern site with a few located along the east and west perimeter. However, all the Dutch Elms have been documented with Dutch Elm disease. The parks department is maintaining the trees to their best and longest life given the fact that they are diseased (see Arborist report attached).

5. *Where on the lot is the building to be placed?*

Response: The addition will be located to the east of the existing Carnegie, symmetrically north to south.

6. *Where on the lot are additional structures to be placed (garage, shed)?*

Response: The only additional structure will be the trash/recycling enclosure which is located at the southeast corner of Jefferson.

7. *Where on the lot is the yard/private area?*

Response: NA

E. Design Composition – What will the Building Look Like?

1. *Shape?*

Response: In plan, the proposed design is a symmetrical rectangular form placed behind and extending symmetrically to the North and South of the existing Carnegie Library. It is separated from the original by a light glass 'hyphen' element consistent with the Department of the Interior's guidelines for new exterior additions to historic buildings. The design of the glass 'hyphen' will maximize the visibility of the original building's east facade, which would otherwise be obscured by the addition.

2. *Any wings or extensions?*

Response: No, the addition is a relatively simple rectangle off the back of the Carnegie

3. *Roof shapes: secondary roofs?*

Response: The proposed design is a flat roof which is consistent with the original Carnegie and the 7th St. Commercial building style.. Proposed is a projecting cornice or brow at the height of the window head. The roof and parapet are stepped back to reduce the height of the building and provide screening for mechanical and solar panels.

4. *Porches?*

Response: There is a low covered entry walk or porch at the main entry off of 6th St

5. *Window Placement?*

Response: The windows on the lower level are large openings within the mass of the masonry base to echo the same window pattern as the Carnegie and emphasizing the strength and presence of the masonry. The second level windows facing John Adams, 6th St and 7th St. are designed to read as a clerestory or penthouse allowing for views back to the park and tree canopy. The light clerestory design of the second level reduces the perceived height as it relates to the Carnegie. The end bays of the masonry rectangle along Jefferson are full height with less fenestration responding both to the interior program, structural requirements and anchor the building to the ground in a similar fashion as the masonry columns of the Carnegie.

6. Dormers?

Response: No

7. Bay Windows?

Response: Yes, the second level has a central projecting bay with floor to ceiling glass overlooking the street trees and allows interaction between the exterior and the interior. This bay window is placed in line with the east side of the Carnegie allowing pedestrians to see the back of the Carnegie through the new addition.

Assessment Question:

Do these details add to or detract from the historic district?

Response: Add....more to say....

Design Guidelines: Alteration - Additions

A. Siting

1. *In addition to the zoning requirements, the relationship of new additions to the street and to the open space between buildings shall be compatible with adjacent historic buildings and with the historic character of the District.*

Response: The placement of the proposed addition is intended to maintain the historic character of the park and the civic character of the Carnegie Library at the center of the park.

2. *New additions shall be sited so that the impact to the primary facade(s) is kept to a minimum. Additions shall generally be located at the rear portions of the property or in such locations where they have the least visual impact from public ways.*

Response: The placement of the proposed addition minimizes impact to the primary facade. Because the site is entirely surrounded by public ways, the addition will be prominent from several approaches. However, the most historically important views from John Adams Street and the corner of 7th and John Adams are preserved by the proposed addition placement.

B. Landscape

1. Traditional landscape elements evident in the District (grass, trees, shrubs, picket fences, etc.) should be preserved, and are encouraged in site redevelopment.

Response: The site design of the addition project respects the existing park design and minimizes disturbance to existing site elements. The existing Spray Park is preserved in the proposed design. Some alterations to the existing playground equipment are proposed to open up the accessible entry route from 6th Street.

C. Building Height

2. *In addition to the zoning requirements, the height of new additions shall not exceed the height of the historic building, or of historic buildings in the surrounding area.*

Response: Multiple design approaches were explored that would have been able to comply with this guideline. However, after an extensive and exhaustive public review process, a consensus was arrived at that the addition should be two stories in order to minimize impact on the size of the park. The addition has been designed with a light, glassy upper floor to minimize the perceived mass of the building.

D. Building Bulk

1. *New additions smaller than the historic building or the historic buildings in the surrounding area are encouraged.*

Response: The existing Carnegie Library has approximately 5,000 square feet of usable floor space. The programmatic needs of a library serving Oregon City's current population require an addition of approximately three times that square footage.

- a. Where new additions must be larger, the new addition shall be articulated in such a manner that no single element is visually larger than the historic building or surrounding historic buildings.*

Response: The addition has been articulated, both horizontally and vertically, to break down the massing into elements that are subordinate to the original Carnegie Library. The articulation and ornamentation of the original Carnegie Library also serve to enhance its prominence relative to the simplicity of the addition.

E. Proportion and Scale

1. *The relationship of height to width of new additions and their sub- elements such as windows and doors and of alterations shall be compatible with related elements of the historic building, and with the historic character of the District.*

Response: Proposed windows are consistent with the 'storefront' type windows characteristic of the 7th Street Commercial style. Mullions are primarily vertical in orientation, and the typical width of individual lights is derived from the windows of the original Carnegie Library.

2. *The relationship of solids to voids (wall to window) shall be compatible with related elements on the historic building, and with the historic character of the District.*

Response: As described above, large areas of window are used to reduce the perceived mass of the addition relative to the Carnegie Library.

F. Exterior Features

1. *General*
 - a. To the extent practicable, original historic architectural elements and materials shall be preserved.*

Response: The proposed design minimizes impact on the Carnegie Library's exterior to the maximum extent possible. At the East (rear) facade, a number of original windows are altered in order to provide through-passage between the existing library and the addition. Otherwise, windows, ornamentation, cornices, and other character-defining elements are

all preserved by the project.

b. Architectural elements and materials for new additions shall be compatible with related elements of the historic building and with the historic character of the District.

Response: Exterior materials palette is simple to unify the composition. Similar to darker colored brick is proposed for the new addition with similar size and coursing as the existing. Use of limestone or precast coping, aluminum glazing system with matching crown and soffit material. The parapet will be either brick and precast coping or metal matching the window system depending on location. It is undecided the exact finish of the aluminum glazing and metal panel. Either a light kynar finish to complement the cream colored accents of the Carnegie or a darker kynar finish to allow the upper level and roof line to recede and not compete with the Carnegie. Other accents could be a basalt or limestone cornerstone. Signage to be minimal and graphics simple.