



City of Oregon City

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Staff Report

File Number: 17-237

Agenda Date: 4/11/2017

Status: Agenda Ready

To: City Commission

Agenda #: 3a.

From: Community Services Director Phil Lewis

File Type: Report

SUBJECT:

Ermatinger House Update

RECOMMENDED ACTION (Motion):

Bringing forward for Commission discussion.

BACKGROUND:

The Ermatinger House underwent a major restoration project which was completed in 2015. Extensive structural repairs and historical restoration were executed during this time. Total project cost just under \$750,000 of which grant contributions to the project were just under \$240,000. During construction, there were a multitude of unexpected complex structural failures discovered. To offset the unexpected costs, some finishes funding in the budget was diverted to repair these structural components. One of the budget lines that contributed to repair the structural issues was the wall finishes. The proposed wall finish was reproduced/replica wallpaper of the 1840's era. At the time, the anticipated cost was in the rough order of magnitude, \$18,000. We have done some research since completing the project to seek grant opportunities and garner the potential cost of the specified wallpaper. The muslin backing and application to the walls was estimated just under \$30,000. The estimate depending on exact patterns for the wall paper replicas was estimated at two to three times the muslin cost estimate. Both estimates were well beyond our fiscal capacities even with potential small grants that we may be qualified to receive.

1/4" drywall, smooth finish and paint was a proposed option to finish the interior and provide an opportunity to open the house. The wall application would still make the future application of replica wallpaper available and more sustainable due to the flat surface. This application will also hide the distinct differences between the original walls and the newly installed plywood sheer walls. This would reduce the future wallpaper purchase and application cost. It would no longer be necessary to purchase and apply the muslin. Interpretive windows (cutouts) would be provided to allow viewing of the original walls. In order to open the house with an appearance of completion, the drywall/paint project has been contracted and will finish by June 30, 2017. We are awaiting exact scheduling times from the contractor. The original contractor for the restoration decided not to take on the drywall project. It took several months to find contractors interested in coming in to quote the project.

Once the drywall/paint project has completed, we will be processing the furnishings that are in storage to evaluate for period of significance and obtaining some significant furnishing

donations of the specified period. Part of the restoration process included a furnishing plan that was based on the period of significance.

Staff are in the beginning phase of determining programming and operation of the facility. The Friends of the Ermatinger were provided some direction from Commission for the potential to manage the programming of the house. A draft of their proposal has been provided to the Community Services Director. Bill Hawkins has also provided a draft program option that the City could entertain. City staff will be working with the Friends of the Ermatinger and additional stakeholders to determine the best use of the facility and operating model.