



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 21, 2022
TO: Historic Landmarks Committee Members
FROM: Heather Richards, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Public Testimony for HL 6-22, HL 7-22, HL 8-22, and DDR 2-22, Gwendolyn Hotel

Historic Landmarks Committee Members,

Following is the public testimony that has been received for the three Certificates of Approval for Demolition for the historic resources at 609, 611 and 619 NE Third Street, and the Certificate of Approval for New Construction for the Gwendolyn Hotel project.

We will send you any additional testimony that we receive between September 21 and September 28 at 5:00 PM on September 28, 2022.

Public Testimony:

- Email from Kira Barsotti, 09.16.22
- Email from Shanna Dixon, 09.16.22
- Email from Marianne Mills, 09.18.22
- Email from Megan McCrossin, 09.18.22
- Email from Courtney Cunningham, 09.20.22
- Email from Jordan Robinson, 09.20.22
- Email from Phyllice Bradner, 09.20.22
- Email from Victoria Anderson, 09.20.22
- Letter from Marilyn Kosel, 09.20.22
- Letter from Patti Webb, 09.20.22

From: [Kira Barsotti](#)
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: RE: Historic Landmarks Committee Public Hearing Notice - Gwendolyn Hotel - Letter to the Committee
Date: Friday, September 16, 2022 11:45:32 AM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

To the members of the Historic Landmarks Committee -

My name is Kira Barsotti and my husband and I have lived and worked in McMinnville for well over a decade, including our years spent at Linfield.

I'm writing to express my serious concerns over the proposed demolition of 3 historic properties on 3rd Street, and the plans for their replacement.

The historic character of 3rd Street is important to me, as I'm sure it is to many other citizens and business owners who live and work in this wonderful community. Personally, we chose our current home in part due to its walkability to this historic street and keeping the integrity of these buildings should be of utmost importance to this committee.

I hope you will consider families like ours, who care about preserving pieces of our wonderful town's history, as we look to new ways of building for the future. It does not appear that the plans outlined by the Gwendolyn Hotel for demolition and re-construction will meet this important need.

Thank you for your consideration, I know my concerns are felt by many citizens who call McMinnville home.

Sincerely,
Kira Barsotti
235 NW 8th Street

Dear Historic Landmarks Committee,

As an owner of Mes Amies, a business on 3rd Street for the past 19 years, the news of the possibility of the Gwendolyn Hotel's development causes me concern. After seeing the renderings, I am convinced that it is not an appropriate project for our Historic Downtown.

Removing Historic buildings to make way for a large, commercial property has not been what the previous Downtown Association's and community have been working to achieve when they spent countless hours working for grants, volunteering and supporting the Downtown in many ways, or what business owners like myself hoped for, when we invested years of our lives on 3rd Street.

Logistically, having that much traffic in and out of The Gwendolyn, close to the pedestrian zone of 3rd Street, will increase traffic substantially. Among the many reasons 3rd Street feels special, is that it is wonderfully walkable, and having a major parking structure so close to 3rd street will create car and traffic congestion. Physically, the fact that this would be the largest hotel on 3rd Street means that it will have an outsize impact on 3rd Street's integrity, and a hotel this large is unabashedly dominating.

I welcome future developments off 3rd Street. There are many locations nearby 3rd Street, with buildings lacking historic character, or structural integrity, that we would all benefit from, if a developer demolished them and redeveloped them into a hotel like The Gwendolyn. I believe the development of a downtown core, to serve out of town guests, can be done in a thoughtful way. Unfortunately, this project is not thoughtful, The News Register Buildings slated for demolition have historical importance and integrity, and are the buildings are the correct scale for our Downtown.

Lastly, please consider that as a Committee of Historic Landmarks, it is not only in reference to buildings alone you must consider impact, but the community's historic relationship to 3rd Street. It has long been the living room of the community, a place where you bump into neighbors, your child's teacher, where traditions are carried out. When a development of this scale comes into the community's heart, the question of how it will be received is a vital one, overwhelmingly the response that I have heard is negative. As the keepers of the history of our Downtown, please consider denying approval for this project.

Warmly,
Shanna Dixon
Mes Amies
522 NE 3rd St.
McMinnville, Oregon
503-474-1721
shanna@mesamies.com

From: [Marianne Mills](#)
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: Re: Gwendolyn Hotel
Date: Sunday, September 18, 2022 9:08:06 PM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

Heather,

I would like to submit this written statement regarding the proposed Gwendolyn Hotel project. I have remained on the sidelines regarding the proposed changes to our downtown area. I realize that there are things that need attention (trees, underground infrastructure, etc.) that will impact 3rd St as we know it. Coupled with a project the size of the Gwendolyn Hotel, it feels as though it is just too, too much for our downtown at one time. I may not be aware or understand the scope of the necessary work but as an outsider, it just feels as I have described, “too, too much.”

The proposed hotel seems very outsized for our 3rd street area. Eighty five rooms plus dining and bar options seems out of proportion to what we have going on 3rd Street, at this point in time. I don’t deny that the addition of some attractive options at the east end of 3rd St. would be good. But, again, the size of this project just seems to be too much for the space.

I believe that many locals find it frustrating to take advantage of some of our great restaurants and business establishments because of parking issues. Even two years ago, my 93 year old mother enjoyed “going out” and dining various places downtown, but once her mobility became an issue, parking was problematic as was getting around on the sidewalks with her walker and wheel chair. I just see this as another deterrent to some locals from enjoying our great downtown.

I also realize tourism is an important part of what makes us “tick” as I grew up on the Oregon coast where it was the mainstay of the economy. But, I think locals have to feel as though their wants and needs are not forgotten for us to be the kind of community we want to be.

As for the demolition of historic buildings, I believe that we ought to think twice before doing so. These historic buildings are part of the charm of our community. I, too, have a bit of an understanding of having to make a decision between renovating or razing as a 1917 farm house has been in our family since it was built. We chose to remodel/renovate as opposed to razing the place. And, it was an undertaking as it did not have a foundation. But, the end result was well worth the effort and it has retained the “farmhouse charm.” And, it lives on for future generations of life.

I have another thought that I want to express. I love our downtown, but I know that there are people in our community who do not. I sat with a group of folks over five years ago who were lamenting the loss of an appliance repair shop, Sears, Penny’s, etc. There are people who miss what they used to know. I understand the reasons for the change in our downtown area, but I do think there are people who will not ever be on board with the “new McMinnville.” (I believe as I have some point of reference because of having been around in the 50’s, 60’s, 70’s and beyond.) I, as I said, really like what it has evolved into. But, naysayers could have some impact on voting issues that impact future development. Fortunately, there are folks who are forward thinking moving into the community and see the needs in infrastructure, recreation opportunities, green spaces, etc. for which money needs to be requested to proceed on projects. But, I think the long ranging impact of this one decision needs to be examined.

Please urge the decision makers to carefully consider the ramifications of any decision that they make regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,

Marianne Mills
(resident of McMinnville since 1972)

From: [Megan McCrossin](#)
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: Re: Demolition 609 NE 3rd, 611 NE 3rd, 619 NE 3rd
Date: Sunday, September 18, 2022 3:25:48 PM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

To the Historic Landmarks Committee,

This email is to voice my opposition to the proposed demolition of three buildings on third street, 609 NE 3rd, 611 NE 3rd, and 619 NE 3rd, in order to build a large hotel. I feel strongly that we should maintain the quaint, historic feel of third street in McMinnville and work to resist large building projects such as the one proposed.

Thank you for working to keep the historic nature of our downtown a priority.

Sincerely,

Megan McCrossin
19550 SW Eagle Point Rd
McMinnville, OR 97128

From: [Courtney Cunningham](#)
To: [Adam Tate](#)
Cc: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: Comments/concerns regarding demo of News Register building
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 1:55:40 PM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

Hello Adam—

I am reaching out to the Historic Landmarks Committee (HLC) to express concern about the upcoming demolition of the News Register building. The historic nature of McMinnville's Third Street is a distinctive and important part of our city's charm and character. McMinnville has long valued historic preservation city-wide and I question the precedent that will be set by wiping out nearly an entire city block of our community history.

Beyond the demolition of these buildings, I consider the height of the proposed replacement building to be a very dangerous precedent to set now and for future building projects. The proposed building dwarfs existing and immediately surrounding buildings on Third Street and will not complement the historic nature of our otherwise charming downtown. I understand that building height is not controlled by the HLC, but I hope that the committee will take building height into account as it relates to preserving the cohesive, historic aesthetic of Third Street.

Thank you to the Historic Landmarks Committee for your work in guiding thoughtful change in McMinnville. I am grateful for the opportunity to express these concerns for your consideration.

Best,

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COURTNEY CUNNINGHAM
GLINT CREATIVE

OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Thursday | 10am – 4pm
URGENT NEED? PLEASE TEXT: 503.970.3324

RESIDENT, WARD 3
115 SE Mountain View Lane, McMinnville

From: [Jordan Robinson](#)
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: opposition to the demolition of historic buildings
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 4:01:26 PM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

Landmarks committee,

I would like to voice my opposition to the demolition of 3 historic downtown buildings to make way for a hotel. Yes, the downtown will change and evolve over time and by demolishing the buildings that have made it one of America's favorite downtowns we would be giving away the components that make it unique and special. There must be other places to put a hotel that do not strike at the very identity of our community.

Thank you for hearing my opposition.

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Jordan Robinson, MSW
Phone:503-472-6611
Cell: (503) 583-0020

From: [Phyllice Bradner](#)
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: Written Testimony for Gwendolyn Hotel Application
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 3:33:48 PM

[This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.](#)

Statement to Historic Landmarks Committee

I must register my resounding objection to the plan for demolishing three historic buildings on beautiful Third Street in order to build a big new hotel.

As the owner of a downtown business that is less than a block away from this project, I fear that two years of noise, heavy equipment, traffic disruption, and general chaos will cause irreparable damage to my business as well as the businesses of all my surrounding neighbors.

As a downtown McMinnville resident I am horrified that a huge hotel with 90+ units and only 60+ underground parking spaces would be situated right in the middle of our small downtown, which already has limited parking. I recognize that our town has become a popular destination and there may be a need for more hotel units, but it is sheer insanity to site a hotel this size right on our historic main street! This is the sort of building that should be off the main drag with adequate parking available.

As a retired Historic Restorationist, I am appalled that our Planning Department, Design Review Board and Historic Resources Committee would even consider the demolition of this large swath of the historic downtown streetscape! The buildings on “Oregon’s Favorite Main Street” should be treated with responsible restoration. A prime example is the recently re-purposed Tributary Hotel/Taylor Dale Hardware Building, across the street from the target property. The building was restored, earthquake proofed, and re-purposed as a small hotel. Sure, it was expensive, but the character of that corner was retained. A property owner who is not willing to make that kind of investment should consider building on a property that is not situated on an historic street.

As a concerned citizen, I feel that these big developers are treated with different criteria than the average resident. Recently a nearby neighbor with a small historic house replaced a broken porch railing with an attractive railing similar to the original. The Historic Preservation folks made the homeowner remove and replace it—at substantial cost—because it was fashioned from modern materials. If the requirements for historic integrity can reach down to that level, it must also be applied to something as large as the demolition and replacement of major structures.

Phyllice Bradner
203 SE Davis St.
McMinnville OR 97128
pbradner@gmail.com

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Phyllice Bradner
Bradner Art Studio
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503-474-3235, Cell 971-237-7564
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From: victoria.anne.h@gmail.com
To: [Heather Richards](#)
Subject: Proposed Demolition
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 7:21:20 PM

This message originated outside of the City of McMinnville.

Hello Heather,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed demolitions at 609, 611, and 619 3rd Street. My family frequently goes to Bierly on the weekends for dinner and donuts. This summer my infant son has particularly enjoyed watching the wind in the trees across the street at the affected property. It saddens me to think of the damage that would inevitably occur to those trees, even inadvertently, due to demolition and construction. I am also saddened at the thought of such a cozy corner of downtown having the pollution of 60+ cars added to it.

I understand the economic need for tourism, but there is a fine line between welcoming tourists to our town and changing the character of our town for the tourists. I believe this project as described would be doing the latter. Please do not approve this request for demolition. Thank you.

Victoria Harkins Anderson
Sent from my iPhone

September 20, 2020

To: City of McMinnville Planning Department
attn: Heather Richards, Planning Director
attn: Historical Landmarks Committee

From: Marilyn Kosel, 3rd St. property owner
516 NE 3rd Street.

Re: Historic Landmarks Committee public hearing / Gwendolyn Hotel

Dear Committee Members,

As you deliberate the demolition/building request put before you, my hope is that you will consider the precedent your approval may set. Though the three buildings being considered for demolition may be only be “contributing” to our Historic District, they do add to the authenticity of our historic downtown. Approval of this request may be followed by further requests for which a precedent will have been set. This could change the face of our Historic District quite drastically in the future.

The three buildings also house several locally owned small businesses that will be forced to move. The retail spaces called for in the new structure will likely not be affordable for local small businesses, nor are they likely to be geared toward local customers.

It's apparent that part of the reason our Historic District thrives is due to tourism. Tourism requires lodging. But does this structure need to be on 3rd Street? Or would it be more suitably located in the vicinity but not on 3rd Street itself? Please leave the face of 3rd Street authentic and intact. At what point is an Historic District no longer historic?

If approval does occur, here are some other thoughts. Though effort is being made by the builder to have the facade meet downtown design standards, more could be done. What part of the proposal embraces our history and culture? Though I love food and I am somewhat dependent on tourism, there is more to McMinnville and vicinity than wine, food, and tourism. Can this be reflected somehow in the interior or exterior design of the building? Through historical educational plaques? Art installation? Or interior design elements? How can this structure be utilized to further the authenticity of the Historic District and inform the public, rather than be only a fish out of water?

I also feel it is important to attract more diverse levels of tourism. What are we doing to attract visitors from a range of ethnic and economic groups? Rather than only those that can afford a boutique hotel? That may be a subject for another day, but inclusivity should be a goal. This issue also relates to how attracting only a limited demographic could affect our housing costs and available work force in the future.

Thank you for considering my point of view. I feel it is relevant since I would literally view the new structure out my window.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Kosel

To: Heather Richardson
City of McMinnville Planning Department

Re: Historic Landmarks Committee Public Hearing Notice, September 28, 2022
Gwendolyn Hotel Project

From: Patti Webb, PO Box 1228, McMinnville, OR, 971-237-2360
McMinnville Downtown Association Manager 1994-2008

I am unable to attend the September 28th meeting. I would like to give my testimony especially after all the years I spent helping to revitalize downtown. Every year I led a historic tour of buildings downtown whose owners were doing revitalization work on their properties. The program was being run by SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office). The State put a 15 year freeze on the property taxes if the owner followed the SHPO guidelines. It was a wonderful program and many buildings downtown took advantage. There are many levels of historical significance. Jeb Bladine's building is old but I believe not historically significant. In my estimation it would be a great building to replace or enhance. My own personal opinion is that the Hugh Development project for Jeb's building to be replaced by a very large hotel is out of scale for Third Street. Also, I have strong feelings that we don't need another hotel downtown. Let's get creative!! What do we really want to enhance our wonderful Third Street?

Jeb Bladine is my dear friend. I have nothing but utter respect for him. I called him my "hero" because he almost single handily understood what our downtown needed to get up and going...and that was to follow the guidelines from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program. Jeb was on the Board of Directors of Oregon Main Street for many years. Now we are known as one of the best Main Street Programs in the state. In the early days, our board and I dreamed of creating a very walkable downtown with people flowing in and out of shops. That time has come. Now I see weekly busses with tourists being dropped off to shop downtown or go to one of our many wine tasting businesses. We are clearly at a tipping point to where the big developers want to invest in our great little downtown. But, I worry that the more that happens, the higher the rents are going to go. We could possibly lose some of our favorite little shops if we don't plan the future smartly.

I would be in favor of holding off on making this critical decision. I'm wondering if the citizens who feel the same as I do, could request a "Charette". That is a group of local citizens who feel strongly about their downtown would meet several times with the architects of Hugh Development Co and be part of a process to create an even better use for his building.

Sincerely,

Patti Webb