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CLARK COUNTY
WASHINGTON

COMMUNITY PLANNING

**Staff Report and Recommendations to the Clark County
Historic Preservation Commission**

TO: Clark County Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Jacqui Kamp, Planner

DATE: June 30, 2015

FILE: **HST #2015-00003, DESIGN REVIEW: Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed new rebuild of Shelter 'A' (Lewisville Park)**

I. SUMMARY

The **Lewisville Park** is located at 26411 NE Lewisville Highway, Battle Ground (Tax Assessor's Parcel # **225817000**). The property owners, Clark County Parks, have applied for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed rebuild of Shelter A, also known as the Alder Shelter. The proposal is to rebuild the shelter to pre-existing conditions as it was destroyed by a fallen tree during a windstorm in December of 2014. The park is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1986) and the Clark County Heritage Register (1987). Because of its listing in the Clark County Heritage Register, proposals for new structures require review by the Historic Preservation Commission.

According to the nomination written in 1986, the contributing structures at the park include the following:

1. Central Shelter, 1937-1938
2. Bathhouse, 1937-1938
3. Caretaker's Cottage and garage, 1936-1937
4. Shelter D (Dogwood), 1936
5. Shelter A (Alder), ca.1937
6. Shelter H (Hemlock), ca.1937

The two smaller shelters from the WPA (Works Progress Administration) era were Shelters A (Alder) and H (Hemlock). Both maintained a high degree of integrity although Shelter A had been given a new roof at the time of nomination. Both were built as open shelters of log up-rights supporting simple gabled shake roofs and served as a model for later shelters added in the 1950's and 1960's.

There are a total of 11 of these smaller shelters throughout the park. All reflect the rustic aesthetic and all are basically simple gables over twelve log upright supports. Some have stoves of either lava rock or cast concrete within. In some, the uprights are mounted on cement faced

with lava rock, recalling the Park Service's Albert H. Good's admonishment in 1935 that footings in the park structures should resemble natural outcroppings. The 9 post-1940 shelters are considered non-contributing because they were built after the period of significance.

II. BACKGROUND

Lewisville Park is the oldest publicly owned park in Clark County located on the East Fork of the Lewis River two miles north of Battle Ground. Acquisition was prompted by the federal government's work relief programs, specifically the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which made funds available for a vast variety of socially worthy projects including recreational centers. Lewisville Park was to become one of the WPA's most significant and lasting achievements in Clark County. The architecture of the buildings and the design of all other features in the park, reflect the rustic architectural aesthetic.

Designed by William J. Paeth, a former U.S. Forest Service employee, the buildings in Lewisville Park are examples of the fully evolved Northwest rustic idiom promoted by federal land managing agencies (notably the National Park Service) during the first two decades of the 20th century. Peeled logs, lava rock, basalt, river rock, and hand split shakes were the materials used to build the park's improvements. These man-made features were deliberately designed to be non-intrusive.

Clark County made grant requests for a variety of projects that included nursery school teachers, street and sewer improvements, parks, school playing fields, stadiums, and jails. The most significant in terms of historic resources is Lewisville Park. The only other park in Clark County to receive WPA funds was Vancouver's Leverich Park, and that appropriation went almost wholly to the rebuilding of the stadium now known as Kiggins Bowl. Nowhere but in Lewisville Park are there Depression era resources of the same quality, workmanship, and distinct style.

Lewisville Park is significant as a fine example of the rustic aesthetic in park development. It is also significant as a resource historically associated with the Depression era work relief programs and their impact upon the nation's economy. Lewisville Park and its development at the hands of formerly unemployed WPA craftsmen is a lasting tribute to the federal government's role in providing not only the means for capital projects but also the remedy for the social ills accompanying widespread unemployment.

III HISTORIC NAME

Lewisville Park

IV. COMMON NAME(S)

Lewisville Park

V. BOARD RESPONSIBILITY

Under Clark County Ordinance 40.250.030(G) Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Clark County Historic Preservation Commission has the responsibility for conducting design review of Register properties within the County and for jurisdictions with which there is a valid interlocal agreement.

VI. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Lewisville Park is situated on 154 acres along the East Fork of the Lewis River two miles north of Battle Ground. The park is an hourglass shaped parcel lying along the north bank of the river on a northeast/southwest axis. The central road, which bisects the park longitudinally, generally divides an overgrown hillside along the northern boundary from the developed park area to the south along the river bank. A narrow millrace divides the river at the south end and creates an island. Vegetation is heavy throughout the park and, for the most part is, it is indigenous: native conifers, vine maple, ferns, and salal abound. The man-made features in the park represent continuous development which began in 1936.

The park has 13 shelters, a bathhouse and a caretaker's cottage. The cottage, bathhouse, large central shelter, the first community kitchen (formerly known as Shelter D, now the Dogwood Shelter) and two of the smaller shelters (Shelter A and H) were all constructed by WPA workers between 1936-1940. These buildings represent the epitome of the rustic style of architecture as it was ultimately developed in the Pacific Northwest. The logs used in their construction were felled in the park, peeled by hand, and horse logged to each site. Rocks for foundations, footings, and chimneys were gleaned from the volcanic underpinnings of the area or taken from the river.

For the complete physical description, please see the nomination.

VII. STAFF REVIEW AND COMMENT

Design Review Criteria:

When reviewing design changes to historic structures and sites, the HPC typically uses the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. However, with this case being a reconstruction of a park shelter, it is staff's opinion that those criteria don't apply. Staff used the Secretary of Interior Standards for Reconstruction for this specific case, which are listed below.

Standards for Reconstruction

1. Reconstruction will be used to depict vanished or non-surviving portions of a property when documentary and physical evidence is available to permit accurate reconstruction with minimal conjecture, and such reconstruction is essential to the public understanding of the property.

Findings: In December of 2014, Shelter A (Alder) was hit by a fallen tree during a windstorm. There is photographic evidence of Shelter A to utilize for reconstruction. Also, Shelter A and Shelter H both built at the same time have the same open shelters of log up-rights supporting simple gabled shake roofs, although Shelter A appears a big larger than Shelter A. These two shelters were also used as models for later shelters added in the 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, staff believes there is sufficient physical evidence available to permit accurate reconstruction. Reconstruction of the shelter is essential for users of the park.

2. Reconstruction of a landscape, building, structure, or object in its historic location will be preceded by a thorough archeological investigation to identify and evaluate those features and artifacts which are essential to an accurate reconstruction. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Findings: Typically, the archeological findings, together with archival documentation, are used to replicate the plan of the building, together with the relationship and size of rooms, corridors, and other spaces, and spatial relationships. As this shelter was recently damaged

and there is physical evidence for the reconstruction, staff is not recommending an archeological investigation be done.

3. Reconstruction will include measures to preserve any remaining historic materials, features, and spatial relationships.

Findings: According to the applicant, none of the materials were salvageable. However, staff recommends that if any remaining historic materials and features, such as remnants of a foundation or chimney and site features such as a walkway or path remain, they should be retained, when practicable, and incorporated into the reconstruction. The historic as well as new material should be carefully documented to guide future research and treatment.

4. Reconstruction will be based on the accurate duplication of historic features and elements substantiated by documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different features from other historic properties. A reconstructed property will re-create the appearance of the non-surviving historic property in materials, design, color, and texture.

Findings: As is stated in the findings in #1 above, the reconstruction will be accurate due to an identical shelter on site and will have the same materials, design, color and texture as the original.

5. A reconstruction will be clearly identified as a contemporary re-creation.

Findings: If there are any historic interpretive materials at the park, in printed material or online regarding the historic significance of Shelter A (Alder), staff recommends that the applicant update any and all materials to state that Shelter A is a recreation of the original due to the windstorm damage.

6. Designs that were never executed historically will not be constructed.

Findings: N/A

VIII. STAFF CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff believes that the proposal meets the applicable criteria as stated above.

In accordance with CCC 40.250.030 and the Clark County Historic Preservation Program Rules and Procedures, and the findings stated under the design review criteria above, staff recommends that the commission approve the certificate of appropriateness application for the proposal as submitted with the consideration that any existing historic materials (if any) that can be practically retained, be incorporated in the reconstruction.

NEXT STEPS: If the commission approves the Certificate of Appropriateness application, the conditions, if any, will have to be filled out on the Certificate and signed by the Chair at the meeting. This document will be forwarded to the Clark County Permit Center. If there are conditions, the applicant/designated agent will have to sign the conditions of approval form.

APPEAL PROCEDURES: If the owner/applicant or other interested parties disagree with the Commission's decision, an appeal to the Board of County Commissioners depending on location of jurisdiction.

IX. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Lewisville Park Certificate of Appropriateness application packet
- B. Lewisville Regional Park Shelter Information
- C. 1985 Lewisville Park Nomination
- D. 1985-1987 Newspaper articles
- E. Story of Lewisville Park – Carl Landerholm