



CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council & Historic Landmarks Commission
FROM: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner
RE: 2011-2012 Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Grant program cycle
DATE: September 17, 2012

As a Certified Local Government (CLG), a designation given to St. Helens from the National Parks Service in January of 2009, the City has access to certain grant funds. One use of those funds is to pass on that money to citizens to help preserve their federally recognized historic buildings. Luckily in this regard, the City has a federally listed St. Helens Downtown Historic District with several eligible properties. These eligible properties are generally in the Olde Towne (downtown) area.

For the 2011-2012 CLG grant cycle (March 2011-August 2012) the City conducted its first attempt at the pass-through grant program. The City funded four projects, all which were completed in time to be eligible for reimbursement. Below summarizes the program as a whole for this grant cycle and the individual projects funded.

- Total money received by private property owners after completion of their respective projects: \$12,673.56.
- Of the above amount the City included \$2,418.39 excluding staff time and other miscellaneous expenses such as office materials. Of the amount of money directly used for the program, the City got \$1,034.82 back. Thus, the net cash expense to the City was only 1,383.57 or about 11%.
- The largest grant award to any one project was \$4,000. These were matching grants which means the grant does not pay for all expenses, but does make projects easier to do (i.e. created financial incentive for projects).
- Staff time for this grant cycle included approximately 51.5 hours of the City Planner and 11.25 hours of the Planning Secretary.
- This project funded two residential projects and two commercial projects as follows in order of grant award selection by the Historic Landmarks Commission:

61 Plaza

Built in 1897, this is one of a handful of remaining buildings that survived a fire of 1904 that destroyed a great deal of the Olde Towne. Originally built as a church, the building is currently the location of Pieper-Ramsdell Agency, Inc. The grant helped fund façade improvements. The original cedar siding was showing its years and was replaced improving the building's appearance and longevity.



61 Plaza

Above: Before picture of entire building.
Right: Before picture showing siding in disrepair. **Far right:** After picture showing replaced siding.



105 Cowlitz Street

Built in 1910, this is one of only a few remaining single-family dwellings in the commercial part of Olde Towne. The grant helped fund replacement of deteriorating siding on a side of the home, which improved the building's appearance and longevity.



105 Cowlitz Street

Above: Before picture of the dwelling as seen from S. 1st Street. From the vantage point of this picture, the siding work took place on the left side of the dwelling.
Above Right: Before picture showing siding in need of replacement. **Lower Right:** After picture showing replaced siding.



145 S. 1st Street

This dwelling was built in 1905. The grant helped fund repair of porch dry rot and to restore an original 14" x 60" leaded glass window above the front door of the dwelling.



145 S. 1st Street

Above: Before picture of dwelling.

Above Right: Before picture showing front porch in need of repair.

Middle Right: After picture showing repaired porch and glass window above entry.

Lower Right: After picture of the window that was replaced. This is an original stained glass window that was fully intact before repair but beginning to buckle and loosen. As it was, there was a possibility that the window would fall and shatter. This repair will help this window remain intact and whole for many more years.



231/235 S. 1st Street

This building was constructed in 1913 as the St. Helens Masonic Lodge. More recently it has housed a variety of commercial businesses but is currently vacant. The grant helped fund façade improvements. At one point the building had a non-historic siding over the historic façade. Though that “false front” has since been removed, there were still nails to be removed, holes and cracks to be patched, and window repairs to be done amongst other needs to both improve the building’s appearance and weatherization.



131 / 235 S. 1st Street

Above: Before picture of the Masonic Building. **Above Right:** After picture of the Masonic Building. The difference in appearance is obvious. What is not as obvious but of equal importance is the work you can't see: the work done to keep the elements out of the building to help prevent deterioration over time.

The next CLG grant cycle that the City is eligible to apply for is 2013-2014. It is possible that the City can do this pass-through grant program again should it get funding for a future CLG cycle. The grants are non-competitive but the State Historic Preservation Office tries to circulate CLG grant funds throughout the state, so there is no guarantee of funding from one cycle to the next.