

Panel considers making Clise house a county landmark

by Herb Belanger
Times suburban reporter

The King County Landmarks Commission will take final public comments on the James W. Clise residence in Marymoor Park near Redmond at its meeting tomorrow.

The commission session will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Room 400 of the King County Courthouse.

Highline's Morasch House and Auburn's Neeley Mansion also will be on the Landmarks Commission's agenda.

The Clise residence, owned by the King County Parks Division, was given preliminary consideration as a county landmark at the commission's Jan. 15 meeting. It is listed on both the state and National Registers of Historic Places.

Adding it to the county register would provide additional protection to the building since any alterations or changes made to it would require Landmark Commission approval.

The house, built by James W. Clise, a Seattle banker and president of the first trust company in this state, was first used as a

hunting lodge. In 1907, three years after it was built, it became the Clise family's year-around residence.

The commission's final determination on the historical significance of the residence will be made March 11, its first public meeting after tomorrow's hearing.

Tomorrow the commission also will announce its final decision on the status of the Morasch House in Highline.

The Morasch House was the first of the county residences considered for landmark designation by the commission in a meeting Nov. 23. The emergency meeting was called because of pending zoning reclassification and subdivision appeals involving the 5½-acre tract on which the house stands.

Granting those requests could have affected the status of the building.

The commission's preliminary determination was that the house

had historical significance and additional information was received at the Jan. 15 public hearing when Kjrjs Lund, historic preservation officer, recommended its designation as a community landmark.

Meanwhile, after a public hearing on a request to rezone the property from single-family residential to multi-family residential, a hearing examiner recommended that the County Council deny the change. But Stephen Araki, attorney for the owners of the Morasch House, Marian Kurosu and her son, Roy, submitted a new proposal whereby the half acre on which the house stands would be omitted from the zoning reclassification.

A rehearing was held Jan. 28

and the recommendation of James N. O'Connor, zoning and subdivision examiner, is expected sometime next week. An appeal of a recommendation to deny the subdivision request is being held in abeyance until after O'Connor presents his latest recommendation.

The Highline Historical Society is seeking to have the Morasch House and an acre of land on which it stands preserved as the nucleus of a community historical area.

Also on the Landmarks Commission agenda will be a preliminary decision tomorrow on whether Auburn's Neely Mansion meets the criteria for the county's Register of Historic Places.

The next step in the process

before the Neely mansion can get on the county's Register of Historic Places would be a public hearing, followed by a commission recommendation to the County Council.

Built in 1894 by Aaron Neely, the two-story Neely mansion on the Auburn-Black Diamond Road

already is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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