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Steve Wilson, President
Board of Directors, Center for Local Self-Reliance
P.O. Box 4200
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Re: Bungalow and Garden color schemes for the Caretakers House in Fairhaven Park

Dear Steve,

Thank you for seeking my advice regarding color schemes for the Caretaker's House in Fairhaven Park. I am very happy to contribute to this worthwhile project.

My approach to this project was to develop a series of appropriate color schemes that simultaneously addressed concerns of the Bellingham Planning Department as expressed by Brian Smart's recommendations (see below); reflected the mission and activities of the Center for Local Self Reliance; showcased this iconic architectural style; and complemented the surrounding landscape features and setting.

Mr. Smart's suggestions were to use 'garden colors' (green, barn red, sunflower yellow), research historic coloring, and look at Sherman Williams period style color strips (per phone conversation March 15, 2011). This was a good starting point and along with the other three goals produced the following results.

Architectural Context

The Caretaker's House is an Arts and Crafts Era bungalow. According to the literature, a bungalow's architectural qualities are best described with three to four colors delineated as follows:

- Body (wall surfaces)
- Trim (eaves, boards around the windows and doors, and porch railings)
- Minor Trim (doors)
- Accents (window sashes, doors, and sometimes brackets and rafters)

Roof color was integrated into the overall color scheme and brown roofs, such as the new Pabco SG-30 'Weathered Wood' one at the Caretakers House, usually worked best with early period olive, dark green, and russet, or the lighter 1920s yellow, orange, and sage green.

Porch ceilings could be any number of colors or stains, the lighter the color, and the more light reflected into the house. And pertinent to the Caretakers House, that concrete foundation and

pipe rail are historic materials to the bungalow such that they might best be painted with true concrete and pipe rail colors.



Historic color options: Morris Room Grey, Library Pewter, Bunglehouse Gray, Twilight Gray.

Past Colors and Tones

Historic photos and close examination of the house indicate that over the years the house has had many different color schemes. As this is not a project driven solely by historical restoration, but is guided by the above considerations, there are other schemes to explore.



Originally the Caretakers House had light trim on a dark body. Currently it is the opposite.



Traces of light green paint can be seen beneath the current brown, and various reds and grays are evident on the back stairs.

What Colors Can Do

Keeping in mind the Center for Local Self-Reliance mission statement to “...retain the historic ambience of the site while integrating lively food and herb gardens...and bring life back to this wonderful park,” what follows are some thoughts on color schemes for the Caretakers House in Fairhaven Park, Bellingham, Washington, based on Sherwin Williams historic Arts & Crafts paint colors.



Many Arts and Crafts color schemes were earth toned colors. This example on the Caretakers House is Aurora Brown body, Roycroft Suede trim, Roycroft Bronze Green accent, Bunglehouse Gray foundation.



An Arts and Crafts barn red might be this Roycroft Copper Red, with Roycroft Vellum trim, Rookwood Shutter Green accent, and Library Pewter foundation. Using the accent color to highlight the attic louvers helps to call attention to one of the Caretakers House features.



Light colors make the house appear closer to the street. In this case, the similar body and trim color also make the house appear larger. This example is Birdseye Maple, Classic Light Buff, Dard Hunter Green, and Morris Room Grey. To tie in the front fence colors, Aurora Brown could be used as the accent instead of the Dard Hunter Green.



Same color scheme except that the brackets are the same color as the eave. Graffiti may be a problem on too light a building. But a light trim that matches the gazebo and rose trellis (Parks and Recreation Department's Parker Paint CLW1015W white) would unify all those structures on the site.



Here is a green garden scheme which is Ruskin Room Green, Dard Hunter Green, Rookwood Shutter Green and Morris Room Grey. The green trim color is similar to the new Parks and Recreation Department standard, but the body color is more vibrant than their brown.



Colors reversed, with Polished Mahogany accent which ties in the fence and adds rich substantiality to the structure.

The Local Context

Looking around town, one can find many inspiring bungalow color schemes. Connections with non-bungalow buildings in the local context might be considered as well. As I am partial to the green on green color scheme, that is the one illustrated here.



Here are two local examples which are probably of the Ruskin Room Green body, Dard Hunter Green trim, and Rembrandt Ruby accent. (Sehome Hill and Cornwall respectively) If the Caretakers House has storm windows built for it, the accent would make a stronger showing.



Some of the prominent buildings in Bellingham that also have variations of this color scheme.

Driving Color Themes: Message and Mission Conveyance

Colors often convey use, function, or attitude. Hospitals are often white and send a message of cleanliness. Firehouses are red and shout "emergency." The colors chosen for the Caretakers Cottage should reflect aspects of its use, message, and mission. I use the below images to symbolically communicate a sense of what the House, organization and setting are about.



It is the woodland-garden connection of the Caretakers House site that most speaks for the double green color scheme.

An Option: Making it Vibrant

The previous selections have been from the Sherwin Williams Historical Color Collection, but other colors, such as from www.artsandcraftshomes.com, may be more visually activating. Or simply selecting an accent color which is more vibrant than the Historical Colors might also vitalize the House and draw attention.

Integrating Structures in the Landscape

Unifying the various site structures is a potential use of the color scheme. Besides the garden structures mentioned below, consideration might be given to the color and location of the new green-roofed garden shed and possibilities for color scheme integration in the new gateway and information kiosk.



Using the wood and rusted metal color in the fence somewhere on the House may emphasize the Center for Local Self Reliance's purpose.

Using the Parks and Recreation Department's Parker Paint CLW1015W white used on the gazebo may emphasize the site's history.

Some aspect of the art installations into the fence may use the Caretakers House colors for integration.



This is a local example of accent color (maybe Roycroft Adobe) integrating the new fencing.



Using a red like Rembrandt Ruby may emphasize the connection to the fair Fairhaven Park.

Hopefully this report is of some use in selecting colors for the Caretakers House. There are so many wonderful color schemes, but at this point, I would recommend one of the green on green schemes with accents that integrate the new fence and/or the Fairhaven Park gateway. The next steps might be:

- Determining a color direction (red, yellow, green, light or dark trim/body) from the stakeholders
- Paint sampling some actual color selections on site, on poster board or the building
- Locating the selected colors on the architectural features using the Sherwin Williams Color Visualizer (www.sherwin-williams.com/visualizer) before painting

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance in this very exciting aspect of the Center for Local Self Reliance's care of the Caretakers House.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Carlene Marie Ramus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Carlene Marie Ramus

Partial Bibliography:

Duchscherer, Paul, *Beyond the bungalow: grand homes in the arts & crafts tradition*. Gibbs Smith, Publishers, 2005.

Powell, Jane and Linda Svendsen, *Bungalow Details: Exterior*. Gibbs Smith, Publishers, 2004.

Schweitzer, Robert, *Bungalow Colors: Exteriors*. Gibbs Smith, Publishers, 2002.