

Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2021

The Seeley Lake Historical Society and via Zoom

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Review Board (Board) Members Present (in-person or via Zoom): Carol Bronson, Marcella Walter (Chair), Patti Casne, Jeff Shelden, KellyAnne Terry, Nick Kujawa, Marv Keller, Dr. Riley Auge

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Staff: Peter Brown, John Boughton, Kate Hampton

Guests (in-person or via Zoom): Pat Donich, Joan Brownell, Lois Walker, Jon Axline, Tressa Smith, Janet Leigh

Call to Order-12:30 p.m.: Marcella Walter (Board Chair) called the meeting to order and read the State Historic Preservation Review Board mission statement.

Welcome/Introductions-12:35 p.m.: Ms. Walter requested that the Review Board, SHPO personnel, and guests introduce themselves.

SHPO Preservation News-12:40 p.m.: John Boughton briefed the Board about several subjects including:

- 1. Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG):** The Lewistown CLG remains on probation and did not receive funding from the SHPO office.

Additional CLG funds have been directed to the Miles City and Lewis and Clark County CLGs for feasibility studies on the Miles City Depot and the Montana Club in Helena.

2. School House Survey

This year, Preserve Montana, formerly Montana Preservation Alliance, received a grant from SHPO to assist with their ongoing schoolhouse inventory. SHPO's grant serves as match for other grants Preserve Montana received. The survey for this year focuses on schoolhouses in seven counties and includes students from Middle Tennessee State University.

3. Bannack Chinese Artifact Analysis

SHPO entered into a contract with a UM-Anthropology student to analyze Chinese-affiliated artifacts from Bannack several months ago. A lack of information obtained from the research resulted in SHPO terminating the contract.

4. Five-year Preservation Plan

As discussed at the last meeting, the Department of the Interior's National Park Service (NPS), which funds SHPO operations, requires SHPOs to update their preservation plan every five years. This cycle's plan is due December 2021. To

this end, SHPO embarked on public outreach with members of the field and the public that included an on-line survey, and an insert attached to the poster mailing. The results of this outreach will be incorporated into the final document.

The later part of this meeting was devoted to the Five-Year plan discussion.

5. SHPO's Beavertown Field Work

SHPO partook of a second field visit to Beavertown, a former stagecoach stop between Boulder and Helena. Fieldwork consisted of test probe excavations to determine the presence of buried deposits. The probes yielded both precontact and historic artifacts.

6. Website migration

SHPO migrated existing website content to a new web hosting-service in mid-June. This migration was required of all state agencies. Revision of the individual webpages will also occur. The content migration resulted in the breakage of innumerable website links, which are currently being repaired.

7. Grants

Documenting and Sharing Montana's African American Heritage project:

Ms. Hampton continues to work on the African American Heritage Project with plans that include a documentary production and original creative content about historic African American experiences in Montana. SHPO contracted with Anthony Wood, a former SHPO intern, to assist Ms. Hampton with an African American Documentary now in progress. The preparation of a statewide African American MPD, and National Register nomination is currently being prepared by Dr. Delia Hagen. Ms. Hampton is also working with the Vernacular Architectural Forum to develop possible African America-related field schools in Montana in the next few years.

Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage Project: The eight projects under the Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage (RMRH) grant continue toward completion and are managed by Eric Newcombe, SHPO's architectural specialist. Two projects, The Montana Hotel in Anaconda and the WaterWorks Museum in Miles City, are finished. The other six projects received extensions to allow completion of their scope of work within the next year.

SHPO awarded the Ft. Assinniboine Preservation Association (FAPA) \$60,720 in RMRH funds to preserve the fort's Amusement Building. This funding requires that the association match RMRH funds with \$40,480.

8. Properties Listed in the National Register Since January 2019

- Shaw's Best Factory, Helena
- Billings Communal Mausoleum
- Butte-Anaconda Historic District (Additional Documentation for the Finlan Hotel)

9. Potential Upcoming Nominations

- African American state-wide MPD and nomination—Drivers Saloon in Anaconda
- The Dell Flight Strip near Dell
- The Malta Mercantile, Malta
- The River View Dairy Barn, near Cut Bank

Consideration of National Register nominations-1:00 p.m.

St. Regis Airway Beacon (Mineral County)

Jon Axline, Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Historian, presented the nomination to the review board. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Appreciation expressed to Mr. Axline for another interesting nomination.
- How many beacons are still under MDT ownership? [All but two have transferred out of MDT ownership.]
- Who acquired the other beacons no longer under MDT ownership? [An Idaho aviation group interested in aviation history owns several of the beacons and the rest are owned privately.]

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. No additional comment was given. Mr. Kujawa moved and Mr. Keller seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Billy Kruse Cabin (Flathead County)

Lois Walker, the local North Fork historian and author, presented the nomination to the review board. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Does it matter that part of the foundation was replaced in the past? [SHPO responded “no”.]
- Can the location of the town of Polebridge be shown on the map in the nomination? [Not at the current scale of the map.]
- Were many logs replaced during the cabin’s restoration? [No, the single row of large 16-inch sill and spandrel logs on the east and south sides of the cabin were replaced in the 1980s and a single lower wall log replaced.]
- Change the distance stated in the nomination of the Billy Kruse Cabin to the Canadian border from two and a half miles to four miles.

- Were any charges brought against the person that killed Billy Kruse? [No.]
- Add a few more interior photographs.

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. None was given. Ms. Terry moved and Ms. Casne seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Hall Bungalow (Jefferson County)

Joan Brownell, historian and author, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under Criterion C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Where is the 3:12 pitch? [The front and back of the main roof alignment.]
- On page 14 of Section 8, the text reads, “practical.” Should the word be “practicing?” [The quote where the word appears uses the word, “practical.”]
- Was a longer period of significance considered? [Because the nomination is only being forwarded under Criterion C, the period of significance is restricted to a single year, the year of construction.]
- No information found on the builder or architect? [No. It is possible the basic design derived from a pattern book and was massaged to the original owner’s taste. Research failed to uncover either the architect or the builder.]

Ms. Walter asked for any public comment on the property. None was given. Mr. Sheldon moved and Dr. Auge seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Break-2:00 p.m.

Resumption of meeting-2:25 p.m.

Public Comment-2:25 p.m.

Ms. Walter asked for any additional public comment. None was given.

New Business-2:25 p.m.

Review Board Match: The Review Board was reminded to submit their donated hours forms to SHPO.

Approval of May 2021 minutes: Ms. Walter called for the approval of the May 2021 Review Board meeting minutes. Dr. Auge moved and Ms. Bronson seconded to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously concurred.

Selection of time and place of January 2022 Review Board meeting: The next Review Board meeting was scheduled for January 20, a Thursday. The meeting will likely occur using a Zoom format due to the increasing number of cases of COVID.

The Montana Historic Preservation Plan, 2023-2027

Pete Brown, Montana State Historic Preservation Officer provided background on the five-year plan required by the National Park Service, which is due December 2022.

Mr. Brown explained how SHPO garnered public input for the plan with public solicitation in the form of a short on-line survey provided to every interested party who routinely consults or contacts the SHPO office. The survey link was also attached to the bottom of all SHPO staff e-mails to further encourage participation. SHPO staff also engaged three or more contacts to complete a second more intensive survey. The results of both surveys will be incorporated into the final five-year plan.

Mr. Brown asked what the review board felt were priority issues. These issues could be either new or those stated in earlier plans. Issues agreed upon by the review board include:

- Need for greater support, awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the purpose, benefits, and implications of historic preservation;
- Incomplete survey, inventory, and evaluation of historic and precontact properties;
- Underfunded preservation efforts (administrative, physical repair, outreach);
- A need to cultivate the next generation of preservationists;
- The need to integrate environmental challenges (fires, floods, drought, pandemics) into preservation planning;
- The need for diversity and inclusion in preservation.

Along with determining issues important to the review board, objectives associated with each issue were considered. Input from SHPO, the public, and the review board's discussion will be incorporated into the final five-year Montana Historic Preservation Plan due December 2022.

Adjourn-5:00 p.m.

Mr. Keller moved and Ms. Bronson seconded for adjournment of the meeting. The Review Board unanimously concurred.