

Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes

September 29, 2022

Held at the Rock Creek Resort in Red Lodge and via Zoom

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Review Board (Board) Members Present and via Zoom: Frank LaLiberty, Marcella Walter, Patti Casne, Jeff Shelden (Chair), Marv Keller, Dr. Riley Auge, Dr. Delia Hagen, Chris Averill, Nick Kujawa

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Staff: John Boughton, Kate Hampton, Laura Evilsizer, Chereese Gerhardt

Guests: Jon Axline, Joan Brownell, Lesley Gilmore, Sydney Bacon, Dan Hall, Jay Vest, Richard Gould, Jessica Fust, Chris Kukulski, Sam Carlson, Janene Caywood, Milo McLeod, Denese Lord, Greg Creasy, Jeremy Dewell, Bill Haynes, Benjamin Sanders, Roland Sauermann

Call to Order-8:00 a.m.: Jeff Shelden (Board Chair) called the meeting to order and read the State Historic Preservation Review Board mission statement.

Welcome/Introductions-8:05 a.m.: Mr. Shelden requested that the Review Board, SHPO personnel, and guests introduce themselves.

SHPO Preservation News-8:10 a.m.: John Boughton briefed the Board about several subjects including:

- 1) Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG):** Fourteen of 16 CLGs filed activity and financial reports with SHPO. Deerlodge and Miles City continue to operate on special projects under contracts extended to September 30.
- 2) Five-year Preservation Plan and Montana's Shared Heritage Reporting:** The five-year Preservation Plan nears completion. On August 9, Pete Brown met with the Lt. Governor, whose feedback will be incorporated into the final plan. Final submission of the Plan to the National Park Service is December 2022.

The Montana's Shared Heritage Report for 2020-2021 is completed and submitted to the Governor's Office. Appreciation to the Historic Preservation Review Board members and SHPO staff who worked on this report.

- 3) Grants, Documenting and Sharing Montana's African American Heritage project:** The African American Heritage project documentary production continues forward and nears completion. The premier will occur on October 7 in Helena. Kate Hampton serves as the driving force behind the production.

Dr. Delia Hagen participated in an African American-based field school in Virginia City in late May with students from Middle Tennessee State. In late August, Dr. Hagen and Ms. Hampton returned to Virginia City for follow up

work.

Dr. Hagen will present her *Black Montana's Heritage Places* Multiple Property Document and the Driver's Saloon NR nomination later this morning to the review board. Congratulations to Dr. Hagen who has worked long and hard on this project.

- 4) **Grants, Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage Project:** As noted at the May review board meeting, the Montana Hotel and WaterWorks Museum projects are fully complete and conservation easements filed with both.

Work at FM Mack Mercantile in Augusta, the IG Baker House in Fort Benton, the Dion Block in Glendive, and Fort Assinniboine is completed and these projects will officially meet all terms of their contract by filing a conservation easement in the coming months.

SHPO extended the Basin Creek Caretaker's House and Roundup Central School projects through August 15, 2023. Roundup Central School remains delayed due to material and labor delays, though some work was slated to commence in September.

- 5) **Grants, part II: Underrepresented Communities Grant:** SHPO was awarded a second Underrepresented Communities Grant in June. This grant will focus on the Chinese experience in Montana and will include a Multiple Property Document and associated National Register nomination.
- 6) **Other:** SHPO contracted with Lost Horse Archaeology in May to survey Montana's high elevation stone alignments and develop and answer research questions about the alignments in consultation with tribal nations.
- 7) **Office changes:** The Grants Administrator vacancy at SHPO was filled by Cherese Gerhardt in June. Ms. Gerhardt was born and raised in Helena and has two daughters. Ms. Gerhardt attended MSU and received her BS in psychology, prior to which she worked in the accounting field for over 14 years.

Properties Listed in the National Register Since September 2021

River View Dairy Barn, Cut Bank

Thompson Falls Hydroelectric Dam Historic District (Boundary Increase/Decrease and Addendum), Sanders County

Beavertown Historic District, Jefferson County

Shenango Work Center, Custer Gallatin NF

Ford Schoolhouse, Flathead County

Poker Jim Butte Fire Lookout, Rosebud County

Potential Upcoming Nominations

Sacajawea/Miles Park in Livingston

Bratz Block in Great Falls

The Deerlodge Cemetery

Consideration of National Register nominations-1:20 p.m.

Swanson Homestead (Mineral County)

John Boughton, National Register Coordinator and nomination 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:

- Any plans for additional restoration in the future? [Yes.]
- Does the homestead acreage exist beyond the National Register boundary? [Yes, a representative amount of acreage was included in the nomination to provide setting and feeling.]
- Extend period of significance to 1972.

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the property. The owner stood and spoke of his property. Mr. Keller moved and Ms. Casne seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Morelli Bridge (Helena)

Jon Axline, historian with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and author, presented the nomination to the review board via Zoom. Poor internet reception prevented Mr. Axline from finishing his presentation. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- What percent of bridge deck is original? [Likely none.]
- What Italian bridge is the Morelli Bridge design based on? [Rumors suggest the Morelli Bridge is based on an Italian bridge; however, identification of the exact bridge remains unknown.]
- Mention that the Morelli Bridge also provides access to Hawthorne Street in Helena.
- Mention that the bridge was originally constructed as a wagon bridge but now functions to ferry automobiles across the drainage.

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

Monture Guard Station (Powell County)

Jay Vest of Western Cultural, co-nomination author, presented the nomination via Zoom. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Differentiate between a ranger station and a guard station.

- The Ranger’s Cabin now serves as a rental cabin? [Yes.]
- How was the dynamite used? [Mostly to clear trails.]
- Stay consistent with either the use of “Walt” or “Walter.”
- Why is the cistern considered a noncontributing resource? [The original cistern was removed and replaced.]
- Add a sentence in the summary paragraph about the number of contributing and noncontributing resources.
- Nice nomination.

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

Break-9:09 a.m.

Resumption of meeting-9:19 a.m.

Black Montana’s Heritage Places Multiple Property Document (MPD) [statewide] and Driver’s Saloon and Café (Anaconda)

Dr. Delia Hagen, historian and author of the MPD and nomination, presented both. Driver’s Saloon and Café was presented as significant under criteria A and C. The Driver’s Saloon and Cafe is already listed as a contributing resource of the Butte-Anaconda Historic District. An individual listing under the MPD will acknowledge the African-American history of the property.

Black Montana’s Heritage Places Multiple Property Document
Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- The MPD stands as one of the best researched contexts presented to the review board.
- What exactly is a “Sundown Town?” [A community where African Americans weren’t allowed on the streets after sundown.]
- Were Sundown Towns established by ordinances? [Sometimes, yes. Sometimes the language appeared in administrative rules.]
- Are Green River ordinances and Sundown laws the same? [No, Green River ordinances generally relate to vagrancy or solicitation.]
- What degree of racism factored into Montana losing much of its African American population? [The African American population as a whole in Montana decreased beginning in the 1920. It is highly likely that racism contributed to the decline.]
- Please define “buffalo soldier.”

- Please clarify the language that reads, "...work at their own pace," on pg. 7. [The phrase indicates a desire to work. It is not related to the pace or speed of work.]

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the MPD. None was given. Dr. Auge moved and Ms. Casne seconded support of the multiple property document with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Driver's Saloon and Café

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Any evidence Driver's Saloon was targeted to drive Mr. Driver from town? [No direct evidence exists though less overt harassment occurred toward Mr. Driver. Much of this harassment occurred prior to Mr. Driver opening the Driver's Saloon and Café, hence, it is not mentioned in the nomination.]

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

Yellowstone Bighorn Research Association Camp (Carbon County)

Joan Brownell, historian and author of the nomination, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C at a National Level of Significance. Many of the Review Board toured the property the previous afternoon.

The Review Board offered no comments regarding the property but individual board members provided Mr. Boughton with their edits.

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the property. Mr. Averill moved and Dr. Hagen seconded that the nomination with submitted edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Como Schoolhouse (Ravalli County)

Janene Caywood, historian and author of the nomination, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- "Right" and "left" often relate to gender. Is it known which door was used by boys and which door used by girls? Was the seating also segregated by gender? [Boys entered the school using the door on the left and girls via the door on the right. Yes, seating was separated by gender.]
- Do we know that the teacherage was actually employed for that use? [Yes, oral tradition and the presence of a heater in the building indicates such use. Oral history also indicates that some teachers opted to stay in the teacherage while others floated between families.]

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the property. Sam Carlson of the Como Schoolhouse Corporation addressed the board, providing information on the teacherage and the rotation of instructors amongst community members to house and feed them. Ms. Walter moved and Dr. Auge seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

The James F. Battin Federal Building (Billings)

Lesley Gilmore, historic architect and author of the nomination, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Add that the precast panels were made by a local Billings contractor.
- This is a great building! Nominations like this help in the broader cultural embrace of Modernism.
- Change the level of significance to “State.”
- The period of significance only extends to 1972. Why not longer? [Essentially, the 50-year rule that states a building’s end period of significance terminates 50 years before present, except in the case of exceptional circumstances.]
- The walls were originally all movable? [Yes, the building was designed with movable walls for flexibility of interior use.]
- Add James F. Battin was a US representative, not a state legislator.
- Convincing and passionate presentation and argument by the presenter.

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the property. Jessica Foose, the building manager for the city of Billings provided a few words to the review board, stating the city is quite proud of this building and she personally is excited to be involved in the project. Mr. Keller then moved and Ms. Walter seconded to move the nomination forward with discussed edits to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Public Comment-12:00 p.m.

Mr. Sheldon asked for any additional public comment. None given.

New Business-12:01 p.m.

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

Approval of May Review Board meeting minutes. Ms. Walter moved and Dr. Auge seconded to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously concurred.

Selection of time and place of January 2023 Review Board meeting: The next Review Board meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2023. The meeting will be held via Zoom format for all board members.

Election of Historic Preservation Review Board Chairperson: Jeff Shelden was nominated for a second term of Chairperson. Mr. Keller moved to accept the motion and Dr. Hagen seconded the motion. The Board unanimously concurred.

Adjourn-12:30 p.m.

Ms. Casne moved and Ms. Walter seconded for adjournment of the meeting. The Review Board unanimously concurred.