

State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting
September 19, 2015, the Montana Historical Society,
Helena, Montana
Minutes

September 19, 2015

Board Members Present: All – Dr. Tim Urbaniak, Carol Bronson, Milo McLeod, Lesley Gilmore, Zane Fulbright, Dr. Riley Auge, Jon Axline, Miki Wilde, Deb Hronek

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Staff: John Boughton, Kate Hampton, Mark Baumler

Guests: Leslie Schwab, Bill Bronson, Galen Hronek, Christine Brown, Jessie Nunn, Jessica Baird

Call to Order-8:30 a.m.: Mr. Fulbright called the meeting to order and read the board mission statement. Mr. Fulbright requested the board, SHPO personnel, and guests to introduce themselves.

SHPO Preservation News-8:35 a.m.: John Boughton briefed the Review Board about several subjects including:

- **Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG) program:** Kate Hampton travelled to Billings April 29 to check on the progress of the North Elevation Residential Historic District survey, funded in part by a SHPO CLG FY2014-2015 special projects grant.
- **MT Capitol Campus Inventory and NR Survey:** The SHPO and Department of Administration sponsored survey, inventory, and preparation of a National Register nomination of the State Capitol complex is nearing completion. The nomination is to be presented to the review board at this meeting by the author, Jessie Nunn.
- **Identifying Montana African American Heritage Places:** The project, sponsored by a National Park Service special grant, continues through FFY2016. Ms. Hampton serves as the lead. After limited solicitation of bids, Delia Hagen of WGM Group of Missoula was selected to conduct the field survey and inventory, and preparation of a Multiple Property Document and two NR nominations associated with African Americans in Helena. Former intern and Carroll College student Anthony Woods was also hired on a short-term basis through a matching Montana History Foundation grant; Mr. Woods is providing valuable historic research of families and properties associated with African-American experiences in other CLG communities.
- **HB154:** The bill that was to sunset the existing tax credits of all state agencies, including the state historic rehabilitation 5% tax credit, passed both the House and Senate, but was vetoed by the Governor.

- **Wolf Point Bridge:** A structural condition assessment of the bridge, a state heritage property owned by the Montana Historical Society, occurred in August. The results of the assessment will be completed this fall. Jessica Bush of SHPO is assisting Director Bruce Whittenberg in the consideration of the condition and disposition of the bridge, as recommended by the board in its biennial review of agency stewardship.
- **SHPO Moved:** As of the middle of September 2015, the State Historic Preservation Office began operations out of a new (old) building. The SHPO moved into the historic Board of Health Building located immediately behind the Capitol Building at 1301 E. Lockey Avenue. SHPO occupies the 2nd and 3rd floors of the 1919 building, the fourth building built on the Montana State Capitol Campus. The new location results in much-needed extra space.
- **New Faces:** Lisa Pocha was hired and started June 15 as the new SHPO Grants Contracts Coordinator. Lisa, who is from Helena, previously worked for the Historical Society from 1983-1989, in part for SHPO as administrative assistant and also for Administration as an accounting technician.

FY16-17 State Antiquities Database Upgrade: Following recommendations from internal and external studies, SHPO will embark in FFY2016 on a major upgrade of the State Antiquities Database, which houses information on all recorded historic and archaeological properties (N > 56,000 sites) and all reports of survey/inventory/treatment (N > 35,000 documents) in the state. Working with the state Information Technology Services Division, the database will be reorganized and reformatted to be more map-oriented and web-based. Existing data will be edited and backlog information added to the system. The project will last about two years and cost between \$150,000-200,000. Funding, about half of which has been secured, comes from a portion of SHPO's federal funding, revenue from database fees, and cost-sharing grant funds from the Bureau of Land Management Data Sharing Project.

Properties NR-listed since January 2015 Review Board Meeting:

- ❖ First Peoples Buffalo Jump NHL near Ulm (NHL status)
- ❖ The Gardiner Jail in Gardiner
- ❖ Swan River Bridge in Bigfork
- ❖ Convict Grade east of Livingston
- ❖ McMullan Hall, Montana State University-Billings campus

Potential Upcoming nominations:

- ❖ Elkhorn Ranch Historic District near West Yellowstone
- ❖ Black Bear Coulee archaeological site, Powell County
- ❖ Rock Creek Ranger Station near Red Lodge
- ❖ Central High School Neighborhood Historic District in Great Falls

Approval of May Minutes-9:00 a.m.

Ms. Gilmore motioned to approve the September minutes. Mr. Axline seconded the motion. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Consideration of National Register nominations-9:01 a.m.

1) First National Bank of Ekalaka/Rickard Hardware Store (Carter County)

John Boughton of the SHPO wrote and presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- The use of the word "symmetrical" in the building's description isn't appropriate for this building. Please remove.
- Provide additional discussion of "Vitrolite" As a material used in architecture.
- Add a sentence in the "Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph" to explain the end date (less than 50 years) of the period of significance of the building.

Ms. Gilmore motioned for the nomination, with the discussed edits, be forwarded to the Keeper. Mr. Urbaniak seconded the motion. The Review Board unanimously concurred and the motion passed.

2) Ervin Homestead/Gist Bottom Historic District (Missouri Breaks)

Christine Brown, the co-author, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under Criterion A.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- What were the requirements for patents associated with the Desert Land Act? [A short background was provided.]
- Has any of the surrounding sandstone been examined for rock art? [Some investigation has occurred with limited results.]
- Could the property also be eligible under Criteria D as a historic archaeological site? [Possibly, but no actual subsurface testing has occurred at the property to confirm this.]
- Why was a 1980 end date for the Period of Significance selected? [It marks the transfer of the property from private to Bureau of Land Management control.]
- Was the original wood of the Ervin Cabin (Building 1), and the replacement lumber dimensional? [Yes.]

Ms. Wilde motioned for the nomination, with discussed edits, be forwarded to the Keeper. Mr. Axline seconded the motion. The Review Board unanimously concurred and the motion passed. Mr. Fulbright (who is employed by the Bureau of Land Management and assisted in preparing the nomination) abstained from voting.

Break-9:50 a.m.

Resumption of Nominations-10:15 a.m.

3) University Area Historic District Addendum III: Patterson Building

Mr. Fulbright welcomed Leslie Schwab, the historic preservation officer for Missoula, who wrote and presented the nomination on behalf of the owners of the building. The nomination was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- In the presentation to the review board, an integrity discussion of the building indicates the integrity of materials and workmanship is only "moderate". Why? [Some loss of integrity occurred during the removal of the lower-level store fronts in the past.]
- When was the Mansard roof erected on the building? [After the period of significance.]
- When was the wagon wheel mural on the side of the building painted? [It is unknown.]
- Are the tin ceilings original? [Yes.]
- Please review the dates provided in the nomination for accuracy and consistency.
- Please provide clarification regarding the origin and function of the barrel vault ceiling.

Ms. Gilmore motioned for the nomination, with the discussed edits, be forwarded to the Keeper. Ms. Wilde seconded the motion. The Review Board unanimously concurred and the motion passed.

4) Montana State Capitol Campus Historic District

Mr. Fulbright introduced Jessie Nunn, the author and presenter of the nomination. Ms. Nunn is an architectural historian consultant out of Livingston contracted through joint funding from the SHPO and Montana Department of Administration to prepare the nomination. The nomination was presented as significant under criteria A and C.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Extremely well-organized and a very good history.
- Need to double-check dates for consistency.
- O. C. Simonds is not mentioned in the landscape discussion. Was nothing found? [Research failed to yield any information on Simonds. It may exist, but it never came to light during the research of the property.]
- Should the period of significance be broken into multiple periods, reflecting the different episodes of construction? [No, the government continued to operate from the Capitol campus during the defined period of significance provided in the nomination.]

- Should the boundary be expanded to include the parcel of land and houses used by state government northwest of the present boundary? [No, the buildings included in the nomination encapsulate those that were purpose-built to serve in a government capacity, not buildings constructed for another purpose but later purchased by the government for use.]
- Clarify boundary to explain if it runs down the center of streets or if it occurs just on the near (inside) edge of streets closest the district.
- Are additions to buildings counted as a separate resource from the earlier building? [No, additions are counted as part of the original building. In the case of two separately constructed buildings connected by some type of covered walkway, such as a breezeway, they would be counted separately.]
- Should parking lots be counted as individual resources? [No. They are discussed in the nomination in broader terms as a component of the surrounding landscape.]
- Discussion ensued about the contributing and non-contributing objects included in the nomination. The board requested that SHPO confer with the National Register reviewer for Montana in Washington DC (Paul Lusignan) regarding dealing with the counting and description of objects within districts in National Register nominations, as guidance for future district nominations.
- Discussion ensued regarding the selection of 1982 as the end date for the period of significance. Some board members questioned the late date and wondered if it would be better to use an earlier end date, which would also result in a reduction in the size of the proposed campus district. With an earlier end date, those post-1970 resources on the far east side (east side of Sanders Street) of the proposed district would be excluded from the present nomination but could be included in the future by the preparation of a district boundary increase.

The nomination's author and SHPO staff explained that the end date was selected to include events of exceptional significance to the state of Montana, specifically passage of the transformative Executive Reorganization Act in 1971 and the adoption of a new state constitution in 1972. Long-range Capitol Campus planning was also solidified in 1972 with the publication of *Montana State Capitol Complex: A Planning Study* and its accompanying "long-range development plan," which called for the construction of the new buildings and resources on the east side of the campus. The end date of 1982 reflects the last construction associated with the 1972 master plan.

Following the discussion, Mr. Fulbright asked the board if it wished to advance the nomination in its present form, with only minor editorial and typographical changes, leaving the proposed district boundary and the end date for the period of significance as written (1982). Dr. Urbaniak motioned for this position; seconded by Mr. Axline. During discussion of the motion, Dr. Urbaniak explained that while some board members may not feel many of the later-constructed buildings on the far east edge of the proposed

district merit architectural recognition at this time, there is no denying their absolute importance in terms of their service to the citizens of Montana under Criterion A and their association with the Executive Reorganization Act of 1971, the adoption of the 1972 constitution, and the associated long range development plan. Six of the Review Board concurred with the motion to forward the nomination as written (with editing), including Dr. Urbaniak, Ms. Bronson, Mr. McLeod, Dr. Auge, Mr. Axline, and Ms. Wilde. Mr. Fulbright, Ms. Gilmore and Ms. Hronek did not concur. The motion passed.

Public Comment and New Business-12:10 a.m. Mr. Fulbright called for public comment; none occurred.

New Business:

January 22 and 23, 2016 Meeting: The review board decided to hold the January review board meeting in Helena on January 22 and 23.

Mike Wilde Last Meeting: The review board recognized Mike Wilde for eight years of service. The time and effort Ms. Wilde put toward the board was greatly appreciated by all.

Election of Chairperson: Ms. Hronek motioned for the reappointment of Zane Fulbright to serve as chairperson for the upcoming year. Mr. Axline seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn-12:20 p.m.

Mr. Axline motioned for adjournment of the meeting. Dr. Urbaniak seconded the motion. The Review Board unanimously concurred. Motion passed.