

Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2023

The Butte-Silver Bow Public Library

May 21, 2023

Review Board (Board) Members: Frank LaLiberty, Patti Casne, Marv Keller, Dr. Delia Hagen, Jeff Shelden (chair), Chris Averill, Marcella Walter

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Staff: John Boughton, Kate Hampton, Lindsay Tran, Samantha Gilk

Guests: Dr. Karen Byrnes, Jon Axline

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

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

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

Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG)

Several months ago, SHPO notified the Miles City and Lewistown CLGs that their respective cities' inactivity will result in probation. Miles City is now on probation, however, a new Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) will soon assume the position in Lewistown. The current historic preservation officer in Harden, Mary Slattery, is stepping down so a new yet-to-be-named HPO will assume her role.

Montana's Chinese American MPD

Dr. Delia Hagen continues work on the preparation of a Multiple Property Document (MPD) on Chinese History in Montana. Funding for the effort derives from a National Park Service's Underrepresented Community Grant and also from a Cultural and Aesthetic Grant. The project consists of the preparation of an MPD and two associated nominations. Presentation of the MPD and nominations is slated for the May 2024 board meeting.

Resource Survey Manual

Dr. Hagen also received a contract from SHPO to prepare the "Montana Cultural Resource Survey Manual," a manual designed to provide guidance and guidelines to consultants for the identification and documentation of the history, architecture, and historic landscapes in Montana. SHPO file search funds will fund the preparation of the manual.

This manual is needed for professionals who work with the SHPO who undertake surveys that evaluate and prepare the documentation of historic properties in the state. It will provide thresholds of required documentation needed by SHPO from contractors for the SHPO database and the National Register (NR) program and supplement the existing Montana Consultation Guide.

Montana History Conference

The Montana History Conference begins September 28 in Helena with the host hotel the Marriot Delta Colonial on Colonial Drive. Numerous talks, presentations, and workshops will occur; SHPO is sponsoring the poster session that occurs in conjunction with the conference.

THPO Summit

On May 19, SHPO hosted a Tribal Historic Preservation Office summit in Helena. State Archaeologist Jessica Bush organized the meeting, which proved very successful with a gathering that included attendance by all seven THPOs and the Little Shell Cultural staff.

Visit to Sleeping Buffalo Rock

In July, Montana Department of Transportation historian Jon Axline, SHPO personnel Kate Hampton, John Boughton, and State Archaeologist Jessica Bush, travelled to the Malta area to visit with several Montana Tribes' Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and the Bureau of Land Management about the likely move of Sleeping Buffalo Rock from its present location on Highway 2 back to its original resting spot several miles to the north.

Youth Forest Monitoring Program

In the summer, SHPO participated in the Youth Forest Monitoring Program where several employees engaged with high school students interested in possible careers or education in outdoor fields. This year introduced an archaeological component into the curriculum. Laura Evilsizer, Laura Marsh, Melissa Munson, Damon Murdo, Jessica Bush, and John Boughton participated to varying degrees. Patrick Rennie of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, however, contributed the lion's share of assistance, over three weeks.

Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage Grants (RMRH)

The RMRH grant projects are complete with reporting on the progress of the grants occurring for several years. Communities that received funding include the Miles City Art Museum, Basin Creek Caretaker's House in Silver Bow County, the Dion Block in Glendive, the FM Mack Mercantile in Augusta, the I.G. Baker House in Ft. Benton, the Roundup Central School, and the Montana Hotel in Anaconda.

Tax Credit News

The latest project certified for tax credits is the Livingston Memorial Hospital. The Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the nomination in January of 2018, the same year it was listed in the National Register.

New Personnel

Two compliance officers departed SHPO over the last three months including Laura Marsh, who resigned to assume the Community Engagement Specialist position with the Montana Historical Society, and Laura Evilsizer, who began a new position with the Montana Department of Transportation as their archaeologist.

Jolene Keen returned to SHPO to assume the Cultural Records Assistant position. Ms. Keen worked for SHPO performing the same job three years ago.

Lindsay Tran began her employment at SHPO the beginning of summer as the Historic Architecture Specialist. Ms. Tran grew up in Montana and received her graduate degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Oregon.

Samantha Gilk assumed one of the open compliance officer positions in August. Ms. Gilk hails from Austin, but grew up in Montana, obtaining her graduate degree from the University of Texas in Historic Preservation.

Properties listed since the May 2023 Historic Preservation Review Board meeting

West Fork Ranger Station near Darby
Robworth Apartments in Deer Lodge
Lavina School in Lavina
Meyers Creek Work Center in the Custer Gallatin National Forest

Potential Upcoming nominations

Donaldson Hall—Havre
Gallatin Gateway School
The Baatz Block—Great Falls
Head Chief/Young Mule Fight Site—Lame Deer
Harding Way—Silver Bow/Jefferson Counties

Consideration of National Register nominations-1:04 p.m.

Ruffatto School (south of Brockton)

John Boughton, co-author, presented the nomination to the review board. The property was presented as significant under Criterion A at a local level of significance.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Comment from the board: Susie Ruffatto appears in two of the historic images, quite interesting.
- What does the future of the school hold? [The present owners hope to renovate the building allowing it's use for meetings and local gatherings.]
- Not eligible under Criterion C? [With the many physical changes to the school over time, the strongest argument falls under Criterion A.]
- Can the beginning of the period of significance occur when the school was originally constructed and when it sat in its first location? [No, the beginning date of a period of significance can only begin based on the physical presence of a resource where it presently sits, unless a property is listed under Criterion C for its architecture.]
- Where did the teacherage sit? [North of the school a few feet.]

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

Gladstone Hotel (Additional Documentation) [Circle]

Jon Axline of the Montana Department of Transportation wrote and presented the Additional Documentation. The property remains significant under criteria A and C at a local level of significance.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- What does the architectural term, “No Style,” mean? [The use of the term “No Style” has been accepted by the National Register, falling under the category of “Other,” in the table for Section 7 for architectural styles in National Register Bulletin 16a. Although the term itself is nondescriptive, a building’s presentation is always provided in Section 7 of the NR form.]
- Correct the sentence that reads, “Despite the railroad’s failure to materialize...” on page 9 of the nomination to reflect that indeed, the railroad did arrive in Circle.
- Was the typical pattern of small town development generally one that after the arrival of the railroad, construction of numerous buildings occurred, many owned for only a short period of time before changing hands, illustrating a speculative nature? [Yes.]

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

Basin Creek Park Historic District (Silver Bow County)

John Boughton, co-author, presented the nomination. The property was presented as significant under criteria A and C at a local level of significance.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- No comments from the board.

Mr. Sheldon asked for any public comment on the property. Karen Byrnes, Community Development Director for Butte-Silver Bow, discussed the project with the Historic Preservation Review Board and mentioned how important the restoration of the caretaker’s house at Basin Creek Park is to the community. Ms. Byrnes expressed her appreciation for the grants received by Butte-Silver Bow toward the project and the efforts to list the property in the National Register. The windows and door of the caretaker’s house are presently boarded over to protect the structure from the winter elements and potential vandalism.

Ms. Byrnes stated that Jon Snyder performed most of the restoration work and Historic Preservation Officer Kate McCourt oversaw the project. Ms. Byrnes

also noted that the ultimate goal is to employ an individual to occupy the house and care for the property.

Mr. Keller moved and Ms. Casne seconded that the nomination be forwarded to the Keeper. The Review Board unanimously concurred.

Break-1:50 p.m.

Resumption of meeting-2:10 p.m.

Orange Street Underpass (Additional Documentation) [Missoula]

Jon Axline of the Montana Department of Transportation wrote and presented the Additional Documentation. The property remains significant under criteria A and C at local and state levels of significance.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- The underpass also served as a social delineator of the separation of the north and south sides of Missoula. Such a delineation represented a physical marker highlighting the inequity between the two areas.
- The terminology of the structure is being changed by the Montana Department of Transportation from an “underpass” to a “tunnel”? [The length of the structure renders the reclassification of use.]
- Do most MDT projects endeavor to remove at-grade issues at roadways? [Yes.]
- Eighty-six lights are employed in the tunnel. Will future work replace all of these lights? [No.]
- Does the City of Missoula have any say in future work on the structure? [Some, but MDT decides most issues.]

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

Public Comment-2:37 p.m.

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

New Business-2:38 p.m.

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

Approval of May 2023 Review Board meeting minutes: Mr. Averill moved and Mr. LaLiberty seconded to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously concurred.

Selection of time and place of January 2024 Review Board meeting: The next Review Board meeting is scheduled for the morning of January 25, 2024. The meeting will occur via Zoom with the option to attend in person for those who wish.

Section of New Chairperson: Marv Keller was selected as the chairperson of the Historic Preservation Review Board with his first term ending October 1, 2024.

Montana State-Owned Heritage Properties: The board was briefed on the upcoming Montana State-Owned Heritage Property reporting cycle set to begin in Spring of 2024. A subcommittee of the board is generally selected to assist SHPO with the review responsibilities of state agency reporting on properties under their jurisdiction.

Adjourn-3:08 p.m.

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