

Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2023

via Zoom

January 2023

Review Board (Board) Members attending via Zoom: Frank LaLiberty, Marcella Walter (Acting Board Chair), Patti Casne, Marv Keller, Dr. Delia Hagen, Chris Averill, Nick Kujawa

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

Guests: Dr. Ellen Baumler, Dr. Tim Urbaniak, Desera Towle, Dan Vermillion, Chase Rose, Jennifer Severson, Mike Bergstrom

Call to Order-9:00 a.m.: Marcella Walter (Acting Board Chair) called the meeting to order and read the State Historic Preservation Review Board mission statement.

Welcome/Introductions-9:05 a.m.: Ms. Walter requested that the Review Board, SHPO personnel, and guests introduce themselves.

SHPO Preservation News-9:10 a.m.: John Boughton briefed the Review Board about several subjects including:

- 1) Local Preservation/Certified Local Government (CLG):** SHPO staff Kate Hampton and Cherese Gerhardt completed annual reporting to the National Park Service on CLG accomplishments, use of federal funds, and each CLG's ability to match those funds. Two CLGS, Miles City and Lewistown, have yet to complete their reporting.
- 2) Grants, Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage (RMRH) Project:** The contract with the F.M. Mack Mercantile in Augusta was extended to allow SHPO to provide additional program passthrough funding. The additional funds will pass through the Lewis and Clark County Historic Preservation Office and enable F.M. Mack to repair concrete stairs.

Managers of the I.G. Baker House consulted with SHPO on electrical upgrades to the territorial-era house. The I.G. Baker's RMRH-funded work was completed in Summer 2022, and this future work is subject to SHPO review under the 15-year RMRH-related preservation agreement.

- 3) Documenting and Sharing Montana's African American Heritage project:** Kate Hampton's African American Heritage project documentary, *Hidden Stories, Montana's Black Past*, premiered at the Myrna Loy Center in Helena on October 7. The documentary is exceptionally well done and was well received. Ms. Hampton worked many hours toward the success and completion of the documentary, which Montana PBS will air on February 13, 2023.

- 4) **Grants: Underrepresented Communities Grant, Montana's Chinese Heritage project:** SHPO awarded a contract to write a Multiple Property Document (MPD) on Chinese History in Montana to Dr. Delia Hagen. A National Register (NR) nomination for individual NR-listing for Butte's Mai Wah Building will accompany the MPD.
- 5) **Cooney Home Cemetery, Helena:** In October of 2022, several SHPO staff accompanied MDT personnel as MDT used their new ground penetrating radar to locate the cemetery site associated with the NR-listed Cooney Home in Helena. The cemetery lies about ¾ mile north of the Cooney Home in a vacant field. An addendum to the original National Register nomination will likely be prepared.
- 6) **Adios Old Board of Health Building:** To provide space in the Capital building for legislative meetings, the campus IT Department who operated from inside the Capital are being moved. The IT Department selected to relocate into the present offices of SHPO in the Old Board of Health Building with the result that SHP will move to another location near Helena Middle School the beginning of March. This March move by SHPO means SHPO will again move to the new Historical Society building upon its estimated completion in 2024 or early 2025. \
- 7) **Lost Faces:** Eric Newcombe, SHPO's Historic Architecture Specialist, resigned in October to assume a position with the Colorado SHPO. The Historic Architecture Specialist position has been offered. We have offered to a person in Oregon who can begin in June. State Historic Preservation Officer Pete Brown will cover the Historic Architecture Specialist until the new SHPO employee arrives.

Properties Listed in the National Register Since September 2021

Swanson Homestead, Mineral County

Como School, Ravalli County

Morelli Bridge, Helena

Black Montana's Heritage Places MPD documentation approved

Yellowstone Bighorn Research Association, Carbon County (listed at a National level of significance)

Potential Upcoming Nominations

West Fork Guard Station, Ravalli County

Gladstone Hotel, Circle (additional documentation)

Robworth Apartments, 625 Main Street, Deer Lodge

Wise River Ranger Station (Beaverhead County)

Consideration of National Register nominations-9:15 a.m.

Sacajawea/Miles Park Historic District (Livingston)

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

The evening before the Review Board (January 18) an e-mail with an attached letter arrived to the inbox of John Boughton from the Board of the 4 Ranges Community Recreation Foundation in Livingston. The e-mail was sent to Mr. Boughton and mistakenly to the Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees. Upon his arrival to the office the morning of the Review Board meeting (January 19), Mr. Boughton forwarded the e-mail and attached letter to the Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board, the desired recipients of the author of the e-mail.

The letter requested the Montana State Historic Preservation Review Board to table the nomination until May over concerns that listing the Armory/Civic Center as part of the proposed Sacajawea/Miles Park Historic District would jeopardize potential future funding for the construction of a new community wellness/sports center in the area of the Armory/Civic Center.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- Please color code the associated Sacajawea/Miles Park Historic District feature map to provide greater ease in discerning contributing and noncontributing resources within the district.

Public Comment:

- Discussion of the letter received by Mr. Boughton ensued. Mr. Vermillion of the 4 Ranges Community Recreation Foundation (4 Ranges) and Mr. Rose of the Bannack Group, both of Livingston, addressed the Review Board regarding their concerns with National Register listing of the district. Both said they support preservation and acknowledgment of the history of the Livingston area. Mr. Vermillion and Mr. Rose mentioned planning for a new wellness center is a multi-year project and its future construction is important to the town of Livingston, noting the present Armory/Civic Center is inadequate.

Mr. Vermillion acknowledged he spoke to both Mr. Boughton and Mr. Granger, the Livingston City Manager, in the weeks prior to the Review Board meeting about the implications of listing in the National Register.

Mr. Rose noted the wellness/sports center would be good for Livingston and is an important project. He hoped to be more informed of the process. Mr. Rose also noted he chatted with Mr. Granger prior to the Review Board meeting. Mr. Rose asked if the Review Board would table the nomination until more discussion occurred between 4 Ranges and the city to voice their concerns. Mr. Rose, who noted he is not a developer, recognized the good work of the state but believed insufficient time passed for the sport/wellness proponents to discuss the property and the future location of the center with the city. Failing that, could the swimming pool area and Armory/Civic Center be cut out of the National Register boundary?

SHPO Compliance Officer Laura Evilsizer addressed the Review Board and public. Ms. Evilsizer provided a short explanation of the Section 106

process of the National Historic Preservation Act. Ms. Evilsizer noted that before Federal agencies embark on any project or when Federal monies will be involved in a project, an agency is required to identify historic properties that could be potentially affected by the project. In the case of the Sacajawea/Miles Park Historic District, resources in the district would have been found eligible for listing in the NR, including the Armory/Civic Center, when the agency undertook their inventory. Hence, the Armory/Civic Center would have been identified sooner or later as eligible for listing. A determination of “eligibility” (or NR listing) triggers the consultation process.

The Preservation Review Board:

- The Review Board certainly doesn’t wish to impede building construction. How does the City of Livingston feel about the NR nomination? [Both the City Commission of Livingston and Livingston Historical Preservation Commission concurred with listing the property. Prior to the Review Board meeting, the Livingston Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) touched base with the Livingston City Manger; both continue to support the nomination.]
- Did the public have an opportunity to comment on the nomination? [Yes, the nomination was heard by both the Livingston Historical Preservation Commission and the Livingston City Commission, both public meetings]
- Who could request a postponement? [only the city as they own the property.]
- How would listing affect obtaining Federal funding [Compliance Officer Laura Evilsizer addressed this question and the Section 106 process—see above.]
- Is the Armory/Civic Center condemned? [Mr. Boughton replied that during research for the nomination he never read of the building’s condemnation. The Livingston HPO wasn’t aware of the building’s condemnation either and noted that the building continues to be used.]
- How does a condemnation of the Armory impact integrity? [Mr. Boughton explained the difference between the meaning and use of the words “condition” and “integrity” (when “integrity is used in the sense of the National Register). The two words are not synonymous in their use by the National Register.]
- A board member reiterated that “eligible” properties to the NR are treated the same way as NR-listed properties. Listing the district now, including the Armory/Civic Center, in fact, speeds up the required review process necessary for the granting of Federal monies. A recognition of the eligibility of the property will assist the sport/wellness center proponents during the Section 106 process.
- A board member noted that future decisions regarding the property have no bearing on if the property is eligible for listing in the National Register. The property’s eligibility is the focus of the meeting based on the National

Register criteria. Does the nomination documentation support listing the property in the National Register—yes or no? The nomination has been in preparation for close to two years.

- Board member observed that the City of Livingston owns the property and also serves as the proponent for listing it in the NR. The city already approved the nomination to move forward. Because the city already approved it moving forward and because the property is eligible, the Review Board “should not stand in the way.”
- Board member noted the Historic Preservation Review Board mandate differs from that of 4 Ranges and the Bannack Group. The board member thanked the public for their participation and speaking of their concerns.
- Mr. Boughton addressed the idea of excluding the swimming pool and Armory/Civic Center from the nomination (as proffered by Mr. Rose). Mr. Boughton noted that excluding the resources from within the proposed NR boundary would provide no benefit toward the completion of the new wellness/sports center; any request by 4 Ranges, or any organization seeking Federal funding (via grants or other avenues) to assist with the construction of the wellness/sports center would automatically trigger a cultural inventory of the proposed project area by the Federal agency with the result that National Register eligibility (which is the same as National Register listing in terms of Section 106 review) would be noted at that time. Listing the property now, including the Armory/Civic Center, actually puts future development within the historic district ahead in the process.

Ms. Walter asked for any additional public comment on the property. None provided. Dr. Hagen moved and Ms. Terry seconded that the nomination with discussed edits be forwarded to the Keeper. Six Review Board members voted to move the nomination forward and two voted to postpone.

Break-10:00 a.m.

Resumption of meeting-10:15 a.m.

Hillcrest Cemetery (Deer Lodge)

Dr. Ellen Baumler, 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:

- Could you tell one ghost story for the cemetery? [Dr. Baumler related an odd experience that occurred several years ago when somebody broke into the Marony Mausoleum.]
- Change “local” significance to “statewide” significance for the cemetery’s numerous under-represented communities.
- Enjoyed the nomination.

- Over 7000 graves have been catalogued at the cemetery.

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

Meyers Creek Work Center (Stillwater County)

Dr. Tim Urbaniak, historian and author, presented the nomination via Zoom. The property was presented as significant under Criterion A.

Questions and Comments from the Review Board:

- The Review Board loved the 3-D imagery Dr. Urbaniak shared of the property.
- Good nomination. How many Ranger Stations listed in the National Register in Montana? [40 Forest Service properties are listed in the National Register, ninety have been determined eligible for listing, and 43 determined ineligible.]

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

Public Comment-11:00 a.m.

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

New Business-11:01 a.m.

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

Approval of September Review Board meeting minutes. Mr. Averill moved and Dr. Hagen seconded to approve the minutes. The Board unanimously concurred.

Selection of time and place of May 2023 Review Board meeting: The next Review Board meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2023 in Helena. The meeting will occur in the morning and be followed by the biennial Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony.

Adjourn-11:30 a.m.

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