

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
Butte Silver Bow Council Chambers
5:30 P.M.**

February 7, 2023

Members Present: Steve Hinick, Mitzi Rossillon, Bobbi Stauffer, John Weitzel, John Riordan, and Tracy Miller

Excused Absence: Jennifer Petersen

Staff: Kate McCourt, HPO

- i. **Call to Order:** The Historic Preservation Commission Meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM
- ii. **Roll Call:** One member absent, and a quorum established.
- iii. **Reading/Approval of Minutes:** Minutes were approved unanimously. Mr. Hinick moved to accept them with no changes, Mr. Riordan seconded.
- iv. **Public Comment – Items on Agenda:** None
- v. **Basin Creek Caretakers House Project Update**

Ms. McCourt (HPO) showed current photographs of the house with new window and doors. She also showed the windows that will be restored by hand by the contractor, John Snider. Much of the surrounding trim is in place. The HPO is researching the Butte Water Company for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination at present.

Mr. Riordan asked the HPO if she is aware of upcoming grants to finish the project at this time. HPO answered that while they are keeping their eyes on certain known funding sources in the future, the top priority will be finishing this phase of the project. Having a subscription to the site HistoricFunding.com will be very helpful when that time comes. Mr. Riordan thanked the HPO for her efforts with getting the controversial project moving along. HPO said that she is moving the project along as it was already planned.

vi. Staff/Member Report

The HPO told the Commission that, regarding the West Side Soils Cultural Survey addressed in last month's meeting, Commissioner Rossillon gave the HPO a list of questions to forward to the EPA contact, Mr. Greene, who is in close contact with the contracting Cultural Resource Management agency. The HPO provided Commissioner Rossillon the full email response, but read the top paragraph of the response to the full Commission, stating the following:

“We will discuss the manganese mining history with the cultural resources subcontractor and determine the best path forward for furthering the historic context. The Bluebird Mill was included in the statement of work and should have been included in this evaluation but was inadvertently left out. The subcontractor will be evaluating the site when the snow melts, and updating the site form that was prepared previously by GCM from 1989.”

Other updates include the Mothballing Committee meeting regularly, and the Land Sales Committee meets next week.

The Certified Local Government (CLG) grant from the State Historic Preservation Office is due next week, and the HPO sent the Commission the Scope of Work for their approval and comments. She has received some comments back and is addressing those accordingly but is hopeful that the Board can approve the HPO moving forward on the grant application at this meeting, despite not being an agenda item. Chairman Hinick stated that the grant looks fairly standard, and while not a huge amount of money, is important to keep us within the CLG program for the good of the community and ability to receive other grants. Chairman Hinick moved that he be allowed to sign the document to move the process forward, and Tracy Miller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

vii. New/Old Business:

- **Design Review COA: 225 South Idaho St (Old St. James Hospital)**

Ms. McCourt explained that this project at the Old St. James Hospital is interesting because rather than replace the large number of windows, the applicant is requesting a URA reimbursement grant to restore every one, a large undertaking. The windows are all original, with wood sashes. A close-up view shows a curved detail at the base of the sashes, indicating a little extra craftsmanship. The owner, Cameron Moylan, brought in an example of a completed window frame for reference. The craftsman who will restore the windows has worked at Butte Glass and is a talented window glazer, according to Mr. Moylan.

Mr. Moylan said that the first phase involves the basement and first floor windows. The next phase will be the upper floors. The contractor is named Keith Gallagher. Mr. Gallagher will work with a carpenter in Anaconda on rebuilding the few window sashes that were destroyed by vandals. The example that was brought into the meeting is from the newer section of the building, from 1942. Mr. Moylan said that most of the windows are in similar shape. He said the oldest part of the hospital was built in 1883, with arched windows facing Silver Street. Mr. Hinick asked if the windows would be single pane, to which the answer was yes. Mr. Moylan said that the windows are of good quality, and that no expense was spared on hospitals and schools. Storm windows might be considered in the future. Mr. Hinick asked if the windows have counterweights, and if they do, will they be reused, to which Mr. Moylan said yes.

Ms. Rossillon complimented Mr. Moylan on the project and his attention to detail and asked if the windows will be primed as well, as that step was left off the bid. Mr. Moylan said that each window will be sanded down, primed, painted, and glazed. Mr. Hinick asked about plans for the building.

There will be apartments in the upper floors and commercial offices on the first floor and basement, per Mr. Moylan.

Ms. Stauffer pointed out that the application states that the first phase of the project will be the basement, first, *and second* floors. Mr. Moylan agreed that he misspoke. He said they are currently focusing on those first two floors because come spring, they will need a scaffold to reach the second floor. Mr. Weitzel asked how the roof was doing. Mr. Moylan said that it was redone in 2007. Mr. Hinick asked if the windows would be white, to which the answer was yes.

Ms. Rossillon made a motion to accept the Design COA as written, and Mr. Weitzel seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Determination of Eligibility: 3500 Wilson Avenue (Bartoletti House)**

Ms. McCourt said that, not having completed a Determination of Eligibility for BSB yet, she used the Montana Historic Structure Record form that was found in the previous HPO's files. She gave background on the project: The owners of Bert Mooney Airport purchased the property and have let it sit now for several years, since the previous occupants have passed away. The house, being on airport property, is not legally allowed to be occupied, yet vagrants have illegally broken in and squatted over the years. Now the Airport is looking to expand the runway, and the property will need to be demolished. The children of the owners sold the property with full understanding that the house would be demolished eventually, so the location of the house was not an issue until airport expansion plans have made it so.

Mr. Hinick said that this style of house is common around the Country Club neighborhood, and it was part of a particular era of development around the current Country Club location, where a lake was located previously. He said that he remembers when the issue was raised, after the death of Mrs. Bartoletti, that the house would have to be moved or demolished because it is near an approach way for airport expansion. Mr. Weitzel added that he knows several additions have been put on the house as the family expanded. The HPO said that she does not believe that any of the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) applies to it, but Ms. Rossillon believed that the occupant, "Doc" Bartoletti, was a popular and beloved Butte figure, on the local level, and deserved to be acknowledged as such. She took it upon herself to write a few paragraphs about the dentist and his life. The HPO will gladly add this to the Statement of Significance page, although this likely would not be enough significance to encourage the Keeper of the NRHP to add the house to the Register.

Ms. Stauffer asked if it were possible to move the house, or if the plan is determined to be demolition. HPO said the plan is to demolish it. Moving it is not encouraged. Rick Ryan, Assistant Manager of the Bert Mooney Airport, approached the podium to say that there is no chance of moving this property. Mr. Ryan said that the FAA restricts living in the flight path and that there is a very critical "glide slope for I.L.S.," a road south of the parcel boundary, that has very sensitive navigational equipment, very near to the home. He also explained that vagrants have destroyed the interior of the home, stripping out all of the copper wiring, breaking down walls, and starting fires,

and vagrants have been arrested there on two occasions. The airport will not take on the fiscal responsibility of moving the structure.

Chairman Hinick moved that the report on “Doc” be included in the determination, as he was an outstanding citizen in Butte. He agreed that the house does not meet the criteria to be listed on the NRHP. Mr. Riordan seconded. When asked for further discussion, Mr. Weitzel brought up the idea of using the house for fire training for the Butte Fire Department. Mr. Ryan said that they have offered the house to the BSB S.W.A.T. Team for trainings and exercises, like forcible entry training, but they cannot do a live burn on the structure. They will follow up with the police department prior to demolition.

Ms. Rossillon said that she intends to vote it ineligible, however, she did not come to the decision lightly. She did not find the Criteria C determination (architectural merit) thorough enough, and did not determine that the building had changed much based on the 1959 “orange card” that identified the original appearance of the building. There is no context for 1950s architecture in Butte at this time. As more properties (especially in the Country Club area) will likely come up from this era, this should be considered. The local significance under Criterion B (people of importance) is difficult to make an argument for listing in a national context. Moving forward, the HPC needs to think about creating a context for 1950s architecture, now 70-plus years old. Mr. Riordan clarified that the agenda item was only for (or against) determination of eligibility for NRHP, and that once the building is determined ineligible, the HPC is no longer involved in the process. Once clarified, the motion that building is deemed ineligible for the NRHP carried unanimously.

viii. Announcements

None.

ix. Public Comment not on the agenda

None.

Adjournment: Mr. Hinick adjourned the meeting. 6:00 PM

Respectfully submitted, Kate McCourt HPO