

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

**March 3rd, 2020**

**Members Present:** Mitzi Rossillon, Butch Gerbrandt, Russell O’Leary, Jennifer Petersen, Bobbi Stauffer, and John Weitzel.

**Excused Absence:** Steve Hinick

**Staff:** Mary McCormick, HPO  
Annie Boyd, Secretary  
Erin Oswald, Secretary

- I. **Call to Order:** The Historic Preservation Commission meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Vice Chair Mitzi Rossillon requested the roll call; Chair Steve Hinick was noted as absent due to a conflict in his schedule. The roll call established a quorum.
- III. **Reading/Approval of Minutes:** Mr. O’Leary motioned to approve the minutes for the February 4, 2020 meeting of the HPC; Mr. Weitzel seconded the motion. The voice vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.
- IV. **Public Comment – Items on Agenda:** None
- V. **New/Old Business:**
  - A. **Determination of Eligibility: 2519 Moulton Street**

Ms. McCormick summarized the historic property inventory form prepared for 2519 Moulton Street, a previously unrecorded residence on the Flats. The house was constructed in the Craftsman Style in ca. 1917. It has been remodeled extensively and no longer retains any of its original Craftsman design details or materials. Ms. McCormick recommended the property not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to a lack of integrity and significance. The property owner, Lucy Hansen, is seeking a permit to demolish the house, which suffered fire damage last January. The inventory form prepared for 2519 Moulton is attached and made part of the minutes.

Mr. O’Leary moved to concur with the recommendation of not eligible; Mr. Gerbrandt seconded the motion. The voice vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

## **B. Design Review COA: 15 S. Montana**

Ms. McCormick gave a presentation on a rehabilitation project proposed for 15 S. Montana Street. Constructed in 1907, this two-story commercial building originally housed a funeral home and later the Eagles Lodge. Ms. McCormick reported that the owners, Matt and Jennifer DeLong, Josh Stearns, and Missy Okrusch, have been awarded a SARTA grant for removal of the fake stone veneer from the original brick at the storefront. Selensky Masonry has been retained to remove the false stone and repair the original brick. Ms. McCormick noted that the owners plan to seek a URA grant to assist with window work, door work, and some painting in the near future. The HPC is only considering the SARTA grant project tonight. Ms. McCormick highly recommended project approval. The Design Review COA prepared for the project is attached and made part of the minutes.

Mr. Gerbrandt commented that it is a good example of when owners can be directed to restore a building in a manner that is appropriate for the historic district. He is in favor of this project.

Mr. O'Leary moved to approve the project; Mr. Gerbrandt seconded the motion. The voice vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

## **VI. Staff/Member Reports**

Ms. McCormick provided an update on the Montana Historic Preservation grant prepared by BSB for installing a fire suppression and alarm system in the Mother Lode Theatre. The grant was submitted to the Montana Department of Commerce on February 28, 2020. BSB's grant writer, Shelly Cleverly, spearheaded that effort.

Ms. McCormick reported that the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) advanced BSB's grant application for rehabilitation of the Basin Creek Caretaker's House to the second round or Part 2 of the application process. Our Part 1 application asked for \$100,000 in grant funds. SHPO responded that it would consider awarding up to \$75,000 for exterior work on the Caretaker's House. Ms. McCormick is working on the Part 2 application, which is due April 7<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. McCormick also reported plans to submit a grant to DNRC for more work at the mine yards. Shelly Cleverly and Julia Crain will be helping with that grant application.

## **VII. Announcements**

Ms. McCormick announced that Butte CPR has scheduled a meeting regarding the 1772 grant they received. Potential stakeholders have been invited to the meeting, which will be at the Archives on March 5, 2020.

Ms. Rossillon further explained that 1772 grants are for studying the feasibility and establishing revolving fund programs for historic preservation projects. Funds go toward purchasing buildings and making improvements. The buildings that are usually targeted are dilapidated. Dilapidated buildings are essentially brought back so that they continue to contribute to the tax rolls and to enhance the community. For years, Butte CPR has been interested in starting a revolving fund program. Ms. Rossillon said the grant from the 1772 organization will allow CPR to prepare a feasibility study for that. The study will provide a road map to how a revolving fund will look for Butte going forward. This first meeting on Thursday at 4 is for people who would be interested in the revolving fund. It will be a facilitated meeting.

#### **VIII. Public Comment- Items Not on The Agenda**

Lucy Hansen, residing at 217 Lyndale Lane, Butte addressed the HPC regarding the demolition permit request for 2519 Moulton.

Ms. Hansen commented:

Thank you for signing off on that, and Mary thank you for all of your work. You guys are doing some good things around town. The reason why I am here tonight is to address the process of getting a demolition permit. Basically, this is because of the circumstances I have encountered this past month.

The property caught on fire January 13, 2020. From January 13<sup>th</sup> to February 4<sup>th</sup> I was owned by insurance. For three weeks I couldn't move a single thing on my property. We had multiple adjusters and a fire investigator. It was determined that our insurance policy would be paid out in full due to the extensive damage from the fire. The cost to repair it was so significant that it would be cheaper to demo and rebuild the house.

I contacted Mary on February 5, 2020. She informed me on the process and that I would have to wait until March 3, 2020 before we would be allowed to proceed. Before that time, Mary verbally confirmed that it probably wouldn't be historic, but she was going to visit physically. On February 6, 2020 I visited Mary's office to further discuss the matter only because I was going to be held up for an entire month which was going to be costing me money.

I should tell you I work for Butte-Silver Bow in the budget office, so numbers are sort of my thing. I was not down there to ask Mary for a favor because I am a Butte-Silver Bow employee. I really was down there as a private citizen following the rules. Please remember I did do the right thing that I did call before I demoed.

On February 19, 2020 Mary had confirmed by email that the property had no historical significance and that she would recommend that to you guys tonight. I guess my

concern with your process is that the property caught on fire. It was a loss and a safety hazard. They suggested to board up the windows and doors, that it would be fine. However, there is a massive hole in the roof. There is significant fire and water damage throughout. If someone were to get on the roof and fall in or collapse into the neighbor's house, it is still going to be my insurance problem.

I waited an entire month and here I am playing by the rules, but waiting a month has hindered my progress and has left a safety hazard. Like I said, it has cost me money to wait a month. I had to keep insurance on the property. I won't be able to receive prorated or reduced property taxes until this demo permit is approved and my husband has been out of work for a month. When all is said and done, we are out about \$3,000. We had a contractor lined up and ready to work February 4<sup>th</sup> when we were released by insurance. We have had to further delay them until now.

I have asked Mary if there are circumstances that she reaches out to you guys during the interim being you only meet once a month. She said no. Today, I thought a quick email could have addressed my issue easily. I'm not asking for any grant funding; I'm only asking for a demo permit for a property that needs to be mowed over at this point. One of you is probably going to tell me there is ways around this, that I could have the building official or fire marshal state that it is a safety hazard. I have reached out to both. The result, or what I was told, was that neither are structural engineers and are unwilling to put the safety exclusion into writing because it makes them liable.

At that point it leaves all the power right here. I understand that many people apply for demo permits and never follow through. That is not my case; I was ready to go as soon as I was released from insurance. As we found out tonight, it's not an historic district. It's not historic at all and it's destroyed by fire. That picture doesn't do it justice. There is a massive hole in the roof and there is about three feet of ash.

Here I am a month later, sitting on a property that I haven't been able to demo in an acceptable time frame. It's my property, the property I pay taxes on, but Butte-Silver Bow and this board has been able to dictate what can and can't be done. The process deters people from calling before they demo. I really think it is something that should have gone through three weeks ago. The money that it has cost me and the progress that it has hindered, I would have been better off for taking the fine and not getting a demo permit. You guys are for historical significance in this town, which is great, but roadblocks like this gives a bad reputation. I understand what you are trying to do, but the process needs to be streamlined. The hold-up on my non-historical property was unnecessary. Thank you for taking the time to listen to me this evening. My hope is that the board and Mary work to implement a better process for the next person.

Ms. Rossillon thanked Ms. Hansen for her comments. She noted for clarification, because it is not on the agenda, that the commission could not discuss this issue at this time. The commission can, however, request that this topic be on the next agenda.

**IX. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.