

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

May 2, 2023

Members Present: Steve Hinick, Mitzi Rossillon, Bobbi Stauffer, John Weitzel, John Riordan, and Jennifer Petersen

Excused Absence: Tracy Miller

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, John Riordan seconded.
- iv. **Public Comment – Items on Agenda:** None
- v. **Basin Creek Caretaker’s House Project Update**

Ms. McCourt (HPO) told the Commission that over the weekend, two brand new windows were broken at the Caretaker’s House. There will be a meeting next week with the Directors of Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Community Development and the project contractor, Jon Snider. We will discuss the next steps for protecting the house, now a Butte-Silver Bow (BSB) asset, together. Mr. Snider’s next step is to rent a lift (like a Genie) to get up to the second floor exterior and complete the trim and caulking. As for the National Register nomination, the HPO was wrong about when it was due, and so she will be contributing one part, the architectural description. SHPO has kindly put up the money to contract the rest of it out to the prior HPO, Mary McCormick. Mr. Hinick said that the window destruction was extra painful because the double-paned windows will have to be re-glazed, more than likely by the manufacturer.

vi. Staff/Member Report

-The National Affordable Housing Network received a federal Community Development Block Grant for the Phoenix Building. They will be developing the unused upper floors into housing; the HPO has consulted with the SHPO on the plans, and there are some exterior façade changes in the plans, so this project will likely be coming before the HPC.

- There will be field trips planned for 735 and 739 South Main Street, where two buildings are in danger, one due to neglect and the other due to neglect and a fire.

-Robin Jordan from The Butte Weekly watched our last meeting and featured it on the cover of her newspaper last week.

-HPO is working with Joe McGrath who owns 137 East Park St. When BSB took down 135 E. Park St., they exposed an opening where the roof had been built up on an angle, presumably for drainage on the flat roof. This framed second roof had been built after 135 was already there, so its exterior wall sheltered the open area. 137 E. Park St., as it turns out, is the oldest building on the block, pre-dating 135. The HPO is helping Mr. McGrath figure out how to cover the space, as right now it is covered in tarps. The HPO showed the Commission images of the building as it looks today, with a very clear differentiation of brick where the space between the original structure and the building built behind it was enclosed to create space for a saloon ca. 1900. At that point, the building next door had been built very close to 137, so the bricks were stacked from the inside. As a result, the brick used was of very poor quality, never having been intended to be exposed to the elements. The bricks are softer than the average historic soft brick in Butte.

Mr. Hinick asked if the UpTop building is going to go right up against 137 E. Park when it is built, because, if so, it is a moot point. The HPO said that we don't yet know how close the UpTop building is planned to be to this building, but Mr. McGrath would like to have some space in between.

-Yesterday the HPO and URA staff went to 75 and 65 East Park Streets to review their progress. HPO showed photos of the basement with new steel columns for bracing, new poured concrete piers, sistered floor joists, and a filled-in swimming pool. She also showed photos of the first floor, with a corner with tin ceiling tiles, where they are removing the plaster from the bricks, which they would like to keep exposed. They have trouble in one corner where the rubble stone foundation faces the alley, and there is not adequate drainage to keep an ice dam from happening in the winter. The brick wall deteriorated badly in that corner as well. She showed a picture of the upper floors through a staircase opening, saying that is still just framed in, but it is progress. She then showed images of 65 East Park St. (Rudolph's.) While the staff were there, they were pouring concrete into the basement creating the floor. The buildings are barren but clean and ready to build the wall configuration inside them. The workers uncovered interesting alley windows that are now covered over. The Ensitio Design team comes to Butte once a month, and the owners come quarterly from Texas. Mr. Hinick asked what the plans will be for these buildings. Ms. McCourt said that in all cases, the first floor (and old YMCA as well) will be commercial spaces, and the upper floors will be residential units. She was surprised to learn that the Rudolph's space is two buildings; the number of units of a decent size is astounding.

vii. New/Old Business:

• **Demolition/Design Review COA: 423 North Jackson Street**

The Butte Historic Trust is rehabilitating a historic house on North Jackson Street. Though much work has been done to this house, the intention of this project is to demolish the extant, very flimsy covered back porch, and build a new, uncovered porch in its place. Showing the architect-designed drawings, Ms. McCourt said that the new porch has a side-facing staircase for egress and looks to be uncovered. Representing the project are Mary McCormick, Jason Silvernale, and Maisie Sulser, all members of Butte Historic Trust. Ms. McCormick spoke about the project first, saying that the current porch has no egress from the second story balcony. Therefore, they would need to

add a staircase, and wanted the new porch to be wider, and therefore opted to omit the roof, making it more like a deck. Ms. Sulser, an architect, designed the new porch. Mr. Hinick asked about the dimensions. It will run the length of the house, like the current porch, but it will be eight feet deep, with an additional four feet for the staircase. The deck will be cedar. Mr. Hinick asked if they were using beams with joists, to which the answer was yes. He then asked if the stairs would be “seven and eleven”. Ms. Sulser answered yes. Mr. Hinick moved that the Commission approve the COA as written. John Riordan seconded. Motion carried.

- **Design Review COA: 925 California Avenue**

Ms. McCourt told the Commission that the owner of the house, Lori Patrick, is not in the room, so she will speak to the straightforward project. The owners are replacing two windows, on the north and south sides of the building. She showed pictures of the south side-by-side sliding window but could not get a photo of the single-hung north window because the house is too close to its neighbor. The two windows will be replaced by Andersen Series 100 fibrex windows, with the same configuration as the existing, in white. Ms. Rossillon made a motion to approve the COA, saying that the Patricks have done several of these projects, and the Commission has approved them all, because they know what they are doing. Mr. Riordan commented that the house is identical to its neighboring house, also owned by the Patricks, and projects have already been completed on that one. Ms. Stauffer seconded Ms. Rossillon’s motion. Motion carried.

- **Design Review COA: 716 Maryland Avenue**

The HPO called Vince Roubitcheck on speakerphone. Ms. McCourt said that she finds the building to be interesting with the pediment over the parapet. Mr. Roubitcheck said that there are three apartments in the building. The building is documented to have been built around 1901. The largest part of the project involves brickwork; areas need repointing. There are issues with the sills, some of which are wood and some, possibly, formed concrete. Bricks are deteriorating at the ground level. Mr. Roubitcheck would like to seal the failing brick with a concrete scratchcoat (parging). Ms. McCourt has spoken to Mr. Roubitcheck about using the correct lime-based mortar, Type O, but said that if they want to use pre-mixed Type N that is fine, as long as they add the proper ratio of lime and sand. The building owner would like to remove the wood and concrete sills and make them all uniform, with rowlock bricks. The HPO recommends approval of the project, but not without some thought. The Secretary of the Interior’s standards state that if a historic material is not replaced with a like material, due to economic or other reasons, a compatible substitute would be okay. She determined that a rowlock brick sill would complement a brick building, if the historic material has to be removed. Mr. Roubitcheck added that he would like to replace the sills permanently, so as to not have to deal with rotting or chipping wood, and brick seems to be the best bet for longevity and to prevent further deterioration.

Mr. Hinick said he sees this project as a no-brainer, that brick should go onto the sills, and asked about parging on the top of the sills, over the brick. The owner said that the plan is to set and tuck the brick; then he intends on painting the brick sills, adding another layer of protection. The whole building will eventually get painted, and he hasn’t decided on the color. Mr. Hinick commented that using the wood for sills was a cost-cutter when the building was built, because most of the sills in

Butte are masonry. He said that they also deteriorate, because the parging eats away at the mortar. But now they have silicon sealer that would make that viable. Mr. Hinick moved that they approve the project COA as written. Mr. Riordan had a question about the asbestos siding that is visible in one of the photos (a later addition clad in shingles.) He said that he is not familiar with code, and if someone is refurbishing a building, he wants to know how they deal with asbestos shingles. Ms. McCourt responded that this project is not dealing with the back addition of the building just now, so the shingles will stay until they do. She said that she will check with the Planning Dept. about the codes dealing with asbestos. Mr. Roubitcheck added that the inspector told him that the shingles contained asbestos, but that it is in good condition, and it is stable. The removal of the shingles is what would release it into the air and be problematic. But they will figure it out when the time comes; it is not a priority.

Ms. Rossillon said that she has no objection to the rowlock sills, so long as smooth brick is used -- no wire-struck brick. What she would prefer is that they use Abatron, and epoxy consolidant, on the wood itself rather than replace. It will make an impenetrable surface on the wood. By pulling the sill out there is risk of disturbing the adjacent brick.

A couple of things about the brickwork are concerning to her. In one of the images there is a serious crack visible. She is worried about its location between and upper and lower window, and she could not determine the solution. She wondered if the mason was planning on pulling it together with bolts or by tearing it out and building it back up again. She also objects to the notion of making the wall smooth after repair by shaving the surface of the brick. Soft brick in Butte cannot be shaved and she will not approve that under any circumstances. It will start eroding immediately when the exterior coating is removed. She has questions about the parging and where it will be in relation to the ground. She is not a fan of parging, but will accept it if it is done in a professional manner with a smooth coat and colored to match the building (not left looking like concrete). The parging will occur on the north wall from the ground and a few feet up. The "scratch" that was there has separated from the building and will be removed, the brick sealed, and parged over again. She then asked Mr. Roubitcheck about the large crack again, saying that she fears a repair will not be sufficient to fix the crack because the trouble causing it is not being addressed. The owner responded that the plan is to "re-tie" the bricks to the building using metal ties, then push the brick in as best they can. They then plan to grind down the brick so that it is flush with the rest of the wall. Mr. Hinick suggested that they shave the back side of the brick, so that they don't damage the exterior face, and asked for clarification on the kind of ties that will be used. The building owner said that previous owners used spray foam to insulate the interior of the brick wall, and that might have to be removed to get the bricks to sit right. He said that they do not intend to disassemble the wall if they do not have to. Ms. Rossillon said that she can get behind everything in this project except for the grinding of the brick -- that she will not vote for. If that is still on the table, she will vote "no" on this project. Mr. Hinick asked again if he intended to paint the building again. Mr. Roubitcheck said that he is intending to. Mr. Hinick asked if he will or will not guarantee that he will not allow brick grinding. He said the brick mason told him that the cost of tearing out and rebuilding that wall would double the cost.

Mr. Hinick reminded the group that there is a motion on the floor, with the proviso that smooth brick is used on the sills, and the crack is repaired consciously, maintaining the historic value of the building. Mr. Weitzel seconded. Four members voted in favor, Ms. Rossillon was opposed, and Ms. Stauffer abstained from voting.

- **Design Review COA: 221 North Idaho Street**

Ms. McCourt introduced the project. The applicant was unable to attend. He intends on building a rear porch on a four-square cottage, where there was no porch before. The building was recently painted white from brick-red. A front porch was added recently, where there had been a porch before. The design of the rear porch is very similar to the one on the front. The west-facing rear of the building is facing a lot of brick deterioration. The applicant, Mr. Joyner, intends to slow that down with the addition of the covered porch. This would change the footprint of the building. The porch would be roofed in asphalt singles, and the main materials would be Douglas fir and treated hemlock. It will be painted. The HPO recommended approval for this project because it is reversible, it helps the brick, it is obscured from the road and will not be obvious, and it would increase value of the house and therefore the TIF district.

Ms. Stauffer asked if the porch would only be accessible from upstairs, and how far it would extend from the house. The roof of the porch might be attached to a piece of trim that sits just below the roof. It appears that the second-floor window to the south will be extended to create a door.

Mr. Hinick moved to accept the proposal, and John Riordan seconded.

Ms. Rossillon then said that it is not so minimal of a change if he builds a porch, then cuts a door, then he'll need egress and will soon add a stair. She doesn't feel the application is thorough. She is also concerned about where the porch roof will be attached. She does not feel the drawing gives enough information. She doesn't believe that this will help the damaged brick. She complimented the front porch. Mr. Weitzel said that his past work is good. It would be nice to know the details of how the porch will be attached, but that would require an engineer or architect. Ms. Rossillon said that the lack of specificity in the proposal is unacceptable. Still, the motion was made and seconded, and all were in favor.

- **Design Input Discussion (no vote): Platinum and Wyoming Streets New Build (Fort & Home)**

Keegan Hall and Maisie Sulser returned to the podium to discuss the design of a new corner building proposed for Platinum and Wyoming Streets. The HPO provided the architects drawing to the Commission members. This building will sit next to 615 Wyoming Street, the brick four-plex with four dormers. The HPO explained that the inspiration has come from the Cannery District in Bozeman. It is a highly industrial look for this area. While we do have corrugated metal in the Uptown, it is really only seen in our mine yards. The HPO wanted to give Mr. Hall a chance to discuss the project, and for the Commission to have a chance to voice their collective opinion.

Mr. Hall gave a short presentation, providing a broader overview of the project. Fort & Home wants to bring some vibrancy and movement to the corner lot across from Butte High School. He explained the orientation of the lots, where buildings have been removed and Fort & Home is restoring another house nearby on Platinum Street. The Butte High School is across the street, and the Town Pump parking lot is nearby. He showed on a 1950s Sanborn map showing the 4-plex and the Platinum Street house were there, and another building behind the 4-plex. The lot in question

was at one point labeled a junkyard. It appears that it has always been empty or any structure on it was ephemeral enough to not have been noted by the Sanborn company.

The infill lot is zoned for commercial manufacturing, which is strange because of the residences in the area. He mentioned the brick warehouses heading east on Platinum Street. Mr. Hall said the idea is to build some “workshop spaces” that act as retail spaces and act as the commercial space as well. Small-scale retailer artisans might use the space, with potential to use the second floor as housing in the future, or additional seating or office space for commercial endeavors below.

In terms of materials and construction method, a pre-engineered steel building will be the most cost-effective option, but they would like to add improvements to the storefronts to make them look like quality commercial spaces rather than a metal shop. The goal is to create something that brings more activity to the neighborhood, that fits into the character of the Uptown but that stands out as new construction. A basic rendering of the concept was shown to the HPC. They are finalizing the details such as window types, and that is what they would like input on: design and material choices. There are multiple different options for steel siding.

Ms. Sulser also added that they have been talking about exterior materials a lot, because of the context of the neighborhood, but also the use, practicality, and durability of the building itself. She purposely made the windows of a scale that matched the 4-plex next door. With good signage and lighting, it will be an attractive anchor for that corner. She said that Fort & Home likes to use lots of black materials, but there are ways to bring in warmth even to metal siding, and many new metal options that even look like residential siding, like traditional lap siding. They would like to make this area of Butte more “live and work” being zoned as it is.

Commissioner Riordan thanked Mr. Hall and Ms. Sulser for taking on the project. He said that they have dealt with metal siding before, and he understands the warehouse district having grown up in that area. He said that once the HPC opens the door to accepting a metal-sided building, it would open the door for more metal in the Uptown. Only mine yard buildings and old outhouses were corrugated metal in the Uptown. He closed by saying that while the Commission might have to re-affirm the policy, they generally advise to stay away from metal in the Landmark District in Uptown Butte.

Mr. Hinick reminded Mr. Riordan that there is no policy against metal siding, and there are no official policies at all. He pointed out the New Deal Bar, where metal siding was used on the back side, and it turned out well and complements the brick. He brought up the Demolay building and the objection to metal siding on the elevator, reminding the board that they objected due to “corten plates with no articulation at all” that looked like rusted metal. Mr. Hinick said that he likes the composition of the building, with the windows and the storefronts creating an incubator for new businesses in the Uptown. He said that there is a lot of corrugated siding going on buildings in Montana these days, in some upbeat towns and cities. The problem that he has with the rendering is, on a pre-manufactured building is the 8-inch purlins around the building, “side struts,” and horizontal siding is pretty hard to do, so you typically go with vertical siding. He points out that despite the difference to the 4-plex next door, he doesn’t find it objectionable.

John Weitzel mentioned several new construction buildings around Butte, one near Three Bears that is too industrial and belongs in a mine yard, one on Montana Tech campus that looks like they used “whatever was on sale” for all the different materials used. He commented that he would like to see some brick pilasters on the building, or something that would tie it in with the rest of the

neighborhood. It is a nice-looking building, but blasé as it is, and he would like to see a nice cornice around the top, and more of a more structured appearance.

Ms. Petersen pointed out that to the west of this infill is the Town Pump Corporate offices, and in comparison to that building, the infill is an improvement to the neighborhood.

Ms. Rossillon said that we are in a National Historic Landmark, and that is what should guide us. What they do elsewhere is not our concern; our priority is honoring our own Landmark. She said that she will under no circumstance approve corrugated metal siding – even as an accent. She pointed out that she likes the single shop to the south of the 4-plex (in the rendering) that has a visible parapet. She also appreciates the double-hung windows in the primary infill building being discussed. She sees no way in which it would be appropriate, pointing out that it was a residential neighborhood that is now zoned for commercial. The Town Pump has already razed all the houses in the adjacent lot, and by putting such a building there that little resembles the character that was there will put a bigger hole in the neighborhood. Ms. Rossillon said that Mr. Weitzel's idea of adding a cornice piece might make a difference, but if there is corrugated metal on it, she will not vote for it.

Mr. Hall responded saying that he has seen successful infill in cities such as London that have been able to use more modern materials and still look like they fit in, and that there are different philosophies regarding preservation and infill. He asked Ms. Rossillon if there was a metal siding that she would support, and what other siding options would be preferred. Ms. Rossillon said that she can't answer that question clearly because she doesn't know what some modern materials look like. She would like to see, in person, what materials look like when they decide what they might want to use. Lap siding is preferable, but she understands the difficulties with it. Metal is not out of the question; she would like to see some other metal options. And she would definitely like to see a cornice.

Ms. Sulser said that it is important to realize that this building is not a house; it is a shop or commercial building, so they do not want to just slap residential material on it to make it fit in; they want to honor the context of the buildings. Putting lap siding on a building that would never have lap siding does not make sense to her. She said that she appreciated all the feedback; it was important moving forward to work together to realize the goal of getting the building built.

Mr. Hinick said that the HPC's suggestions do not have to be taken if they are not looking for URA money. He further stated that he wants to see their vision taken to a further degree, and they will have to convince the Commission that it is the right vision for that area. In fact, he intends on using metal for an Uptown elevator project that he is designing, and he does not wish to see metal ruled out as a siding material as a rule.

At the HPO's suggestion of incorporating brick veneer around the base like wainscoting, on par with the pilaster idea, Ms. Sulser said that she doesn't want the building to resemble a plain box and welcomes the incorporation of ideas to come up with something that pleases everyone. Mr.

Riordan said that this is a chance to be creative, and he looks forward to the other ideas that they bring back to the Commission. Mr. Hinick said that every building can't have a cornice. We have to enter the 21st century and think a little differently.

viii. Announcements

Mr. Riordan said that the windows are now placed in the “sister buildings” on South Main Street that BMY is restoring. He recommended that the members of the Commission come take a look because they look great.

VII. Public Comment not on the agenda

None.

Adjournment: Mr. Hinick adjourned the meeting. 7:05 PM

Respectfully submitted, Kate McCourt HPO