

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

**September 5, 2023**

**Members Present:** Steve Hinick, Ayme Swartz, 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:** Six members present, quorum established.

Introduction of new member: HPO introduced Ayme Swartz to the Board. Ayme is the United States Forest Service's Forest Archaeologist and Program Manager for the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest. Prior to USFS work, Ayme worked for the University of Montana's Center for Integrated Research on the Environment. She holds a master's degree in Anthropology and bachelor's degrees in history and Anthropology and is an expert on federal cultural laws. She lives in Butte and helped encourage the HPO to come and work in Butte. Ayme added that she is originally from Philipsburg, and she moved to Butte in 2020. Chairman Hinick welcomed her and looks forward to her input.

- iii. **Reading/Approval of Minutes:** August 1<sup>st</sup> minutes: Mr. Hinick moved to accept them with no changes, John Riordan seconded. Motion carried.
- iv. **Public Comment – Items on Agenda:** None
- v. **Basin Creek Caretaker's House Project Update**

Ms. McCourt relayed that Pete Brown, Director of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), contacted her to let her know that the SHPO recently learned of a pot of money that resulted from Bed Tax collection that needs to be spent, and that SHPO would like to use some of it to help complete the Caretaker's House at Basin Creek, now that the Revitalizing Montana's Rural History grant has been closed out. Mr. Hinick asked how many square feet the interior comes to, and the HPO did not know. But he suggested using a "broad stroke" to come to the figure by saying, for example, the 250 square feet comes to "X" amount. The HPO said that that tactic would be

preferred, but she will start by looking over the original figures and adding a percentage for inflation.

Mr. Weitzel asked if there would be another caretaker living in the house. The answer is that we will place a Butte-Silver Bow (BSB) employee in the house once it is complete.

The Basin Creek Caretaker's House will be brought before the State Preservation Review Board to determine whether the nomination for the National Register of Historic Places should be moved forward to the Keeper of the National Register. Mr. Hinick asked about whether fiber optic cable could be used to get the occupant internet services. Ms. McCourt responded that surely the BSB Arborist who lives nearby has internet services so hopefully it would not be a problem to get the Caretaker's House outfitted with Wi-Fi as well.

**vi. Staff/Member Report**

- HPO reported that she has been asked to sit on the Board or Directors for the World Museum of Mining, an appointment which she has accepted.
- The HPO will be presenting at the Montana Association of Planners conference here in Butte in September. It will be a round table discussion with the HPO's from Billings, Bozeman, and Anaconda.

**vii. New/Old Business:**

**• Basin Creek Reservoir Park National Historic District nomination- Approval:**

Ms. McCourt said that, while she had intended to write the nomination, she was not aware of the deadline. So SHPO offered to donate funds to have the bulk of the research and writing done externally, and Mary McCormick, who initiated the project and received the grant funds before retiring, was the perfect person for the job. The HPO wrote the architectural description and Ms. McCormick wrote everything else. The HPO asked that the HPC concur with the approval of the nomination.

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the Basin Creek Reservoir Historic District nomination. Ms. Stauffer made the motion, stating that it is a thorough nomination, and the site is a community asset. Mr. Weitzel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**• Design Review COA: 401 West Granite Street**

Ms. McCourt introduced the project as a beautiful 1899 Victorian building that was once a one family home (John Leggatt, Butte businessman, then Dr. Murray) but has been divided into five apartments. The house will be painted, but the columns are also dry rotting at the bases. The contractors believed that the columns needed to be replaced entirely as a result. The HPO told them about Abatron, and they have agreed to repair the columns instead, with the exception of the southwestern-most column. That base is too far gone, and it will be replaced with a custom-made base that matches as best as possible. Where repairs need to be made, they can insert matching wood "dutchman" where wood is missing due to dry rot, then sand, then use Abatron consolidant to

harden, then sand again, and paint. The columns are solid wood and have an “alligator” look from years of painting, but the painter will sand and repaint. The HPO convinced the owner to not insist on stripping the paint entirely, as that is not recommended in the Standards. The porch roof itself will need new header boards above the columns on the interior, so the work will be done simultaneously. They will check the columns while the roof is jacked up to ensure that they are sound on the interiors. This method will save money in the long run and will save the columns for another 100 years and will hopefully convince the contractors that they can be craftsmen as well; rather than just replacing old features, they can repair them.

Mr. Hinick asked if the features will be accentuated with paint, as the house is currently all white with a black roof. Ms. Gustafson (owner, on the phone) said that they would like to use different colors. The dentils will be copper, and they will use black and copper to accent the dormers, columns, chimney and window headers and sills to match the roof. They will be in town next week to solidify the colors. Mr. Hinick hopes that it will follow an appropriate historic color palette.

Ms. Swartz asked about the downspout that is attached to the porch column: If that is what caused the problems with the concrete at the base of the columns to allow deterioration, what is being done to prevent further destruction? Ms. Gustafson said that they were recently replaced because water was, in fact, going where it should not go.

Chairman Hinick moved that we approve this project, adding that he wants to see what colors they plan to choose for the building. Mr. Riordan seconded. Ms. Stauffer clarified that HPC does not get to vote on color palettes. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Design/Demolition Review COA: 160 West Granite Street (Top Deck Medical)**

This building has seen much improvement in the last few years, as Ms. Decker is moving towards opening her Medical Spa facility. This project concerns the rear porches that are seen from the alley only. Both porches will be replaced, one entirely, and the other will keep the structure but receive new decking. Both will remain the same in design and form. Both porch decks will be Fiberon planking. Both railings will be replaced with simple, square black aluminum powder-coated railings.

Ms. Decker added that the east access is for patients and the west is for employees to access the business. Ms. Stauffer asked if the Fiberon planking is wood composite, or just synthetic. Ms. Decker replied that it is the same material that the HPC has approved before. Mr. Hinick was concerned about the width being to code on the east stairs, and Ms. Decker said that it will be 40 inches, so wider than the necessary three feet. She also said that they are adding a fourth support beneath the steps, where only three joists are required. Mr. Weitzel commented that the porches are likely from the 1970s, and so there is really nothing historical about them.

Mr. Hinick made a motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness as presented. Mr. Weitzel seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Election for new Vice-Chairperson of HPC**

Mr. Hinick noted that the only criteria would be knowledge of Robert's Rules and Montana open meeting laws. In the event that Mr. Hinick cannot make a meeting as Chair, HPC requires a Vice Chair to run the meeting. Nobody stepped up to volunteer to be Vice Chair, but Mr. Hinick nominated Ms. Stauffer. Mr. Riordan seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Bobbi Stauffer is the new Vice-Chairperson for the BSB Historic Preservation Commission.

**viii. Announcements**

Mr. Riordan mentioned the new mural on the corner of Utah and Front Streets, noted how well it was done, and asked the other Commissioners to take a look at it.

Mr. Riordan also brought up new Habitat for Humanity grants that have standards that will be addressed by HPC in the future.

Mr. Weitzel passed around a sign industry magazine to show the article about his Sláinte sign, which came in second place for Best Exterior Sign nationwide.

**ix. Public Comment not on the agenda**

None.

**Adjournment:** Mr. Hinick adjourned the meeting. 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted, Kate McCourt HPO