

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

**October 3, 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.
- iii. **Reading/Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Hinick motioned to approve the September minutes, and Mr. Weitzel seconded.
- iv. **Public Comment – Items on Agenda:** None
- v. **Basin Creek Caretaker’s House Project Update**

Ms. McCourt put together a grant application for the funds that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) would like to put towards the project. It will be \$35,000-45,000, which is very generous but will not complete the project. The Community Development Department has determined that it will likely take \$150-200,000 to finish the house, and so the best thing to do with the grant is to put it towards the updating of the utilities. The State Historic Review Board meeting occurred in Butte during the last week of September; the HPO was not present at the meeting due to a prior commitment. Community Development Director Karen Byrnes attended to represent Butte-Silver Bow (BSB). John Boughton, National Register Coordinator with SHPO, gave the synopsis of the house and project history. The Board voted to send it forward to the Keeper of the National Register. Dori Skrukrud of the Community Development Department was able to let the Board inside the fence at the house so that they could walk around and get a feel for the scale of the project.

Mr. Riordan commented that internship programs dealing with the trades apprenticeships could be a good resource for possibly working on the house. He offered to check and see if they are still doing those kinds of programs for trades apprentices. He said that it would save on labor greatly.

**vi. Staff/Member Report**

- The HPO submitted a SARTA grant yesterday for the Jacobs House regarding the drainage issues that are occurring there. “The Jacobs House Stormwater Diversion Project” consists of a concrete swale and retaining wall to divert the water away from the building, and BSB asked for \$9,750 for the project with BSB employees doing some of the work as a match. Contractors will pour the concrete.
- On October 21<sup>st</sup>, the B’Nai Israel Cultural Center will host another Butte Historic Gathering Tour. In addition to the buildings featured last year, we will open the Elks Lodge, Silver Bow Club, Immaculate Conception Church, Carpenters Union Hall and Serbian Orthodox Church.
- HPO will be attending a National Park Service-hosted workshop at Yellowstone National Park, “Guiding Principles for Field-Based Historic Preservation.” These are technical workshops that the HPO will continue to attend – hopefully one for brick masonry next year.

**vii. New/Old Business:**

- **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. It was a familiar project, as the HPC reviewed a different phase just the month before. This application was for restoring the historic zinc windows. The HPO showed a close-up of the details of the windows, which feature a beveled diamond-like pane. Timothy Albon, who recently moved to Missoula, prepared a thorough estimate document that the HPO supplied to the Commissioners. Regina Gustafson, owner, added that Mr. Albon traveled to Butte to examine the windows and had a wealth of knowledge about this window type. There are six windows in need of restoration, three in one of the apartments and three in the foyer. All the glass is intact, though there had been storm windows that are now gone. Chairman Hinick agreed that Mr. Albon is well-versed in restoring these types of historic windows and moved that the body approve the COA as written. Ms. Stauffer seconded the motion and added her compliments on the paint job and enthusiasm that the windows will be repaired instead of replaced. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. McCourt asked if anyone else had a comment about the paint on the house, after last month’s meeting. Mr. Hinick said it was done very swiftly and turned out very well.

- **Design Review COA: 27 North Main Street (5518 Sign)**

Mr. Hinick invited Mr. Weitzel to talk about the sign project for 5518, because he is the artist who designed and built the sign. Mr. Weitzel said that the sign design mimics a look of signs in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when there were many round signs that must have been mass-produced. This was around the time when electricity first came to Butte, and many signs were lit up with early bulbs. Mr. Wick (business/building owner) really liked the idea of having that look for their sign. The lights will be white. Towards the base of the sign is the “5518” logo in neon. The sign will be eight feet tall, eighteen inches wide, and weigh about 100 pounds. Mr. Hinick asked about the bulbs, which will be LEDs in warm white. Mr. Hinick moved to approve the new 5518

sign, and Mr. Riordan seconded. Ms. Stauffer asked if the existing lighted sign would remain in place, and Mr. Weitzel said that it would, and that the store would be very well lit up. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Design Review COA: 34 East Galena Street (Collective Elevation Sign)**

Ms. McCourt apologized for looking up the wrong address for the building, “West Galena” instead of “East Galena,” and therefore thought that the building was not historic based on its outward appearance. It turns out that the building, though altered, was part of Butte’s Red-Light District, of which not many buildings remain. She called the owner, Matt Boyle, on the phone, and Mr. Weitzel again designed this sign for Collective Elevation, a marijuana dispensary, so he introduced it. He said that it is a sign type called a “pan-channel letter sign”. He said it is the opposite of what he did for the Sláinte sign, with a plastic face over it, with vinyl over that, and it will be illuminated with LED modules. The cabinet will be made from 22 or 24-gauge sheet metal. The inside will be painted white, and the outside will be painted matte black. The face of the sign will be bulletproof plastic, and the design will be made from high-performance vinyl that has a really nice glow to it. He used the same vinyl on the Knights of Columbus sign and some other illuminated signs around town. The sign will likely weigh 70 pounds when it is all done. He says that it will not be a large, intrusive sign for the area (how many square feet were inaudible). Mr. Hinick asked which of the two designs presented they would choose and said one shows the lettering nicely. Mr. Weitzel replied that they plan to use that one. He then discussed the design itself and said Mr. Boyle had received the very same bison head with a stained-glass appearance over a patinaed metal backing and originally wanted to use it for the business sign, but they determined it was too nice to be outside, so they replicated the same bison style and size for an exterior sign. Mr. Hinick thanked Mr. Weitzel and asked if anyone else had a question about the sign.

Ms. Swartz said that she had a comment. She said she thinks that the bison with the marijuana leaf is culturally inappropriate, particularly with the Native American Indian Alliance (NAIA) so nearby. She said that there is a difference between appreciation and appropriation of Native American culture, and while it is okay to wear bison earrings or hang a bison picture, since the sign is being used for marijuana cultural and for financial gain, she finds it inappropriate. Chairman Hinick said that while the HPC does not generally comment on imagery, it could be seen as inappropriate if the sacredness of a buffalo is being disturbed. He said that the Commission is there to discern whether the sign will detract from the historic quality of the building. He appreciated the comment. Mr. Riordan made a motion to approve the sign, and Mr. Hinick seconded it. Five supported the project, and Ms. Swartz opposed. Motion carried. Ms. McCourt asked Mr. Boyle if he had any comments. He thanked the Commission for passing the sign design and addressed the concerns, saying the business has been across from the NAIA for the last six years and they have had the logo since before opening a store in Butte. He said that in his six years, that is the first time he has heard that the logo might be an issue of appropriation. He said he has seen Native Americans take the sticker from his shop, and they have never raised a concern. He appreciated that the issue was brought up.

**viii. Announcements**

No Announcements.

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

Mitzi Rossillon, former HPC Vice-Chair, came forward to make a public comment. She came to speak about historic objects that might be in peril. BSB used to use the site of the Butte Reduction Works on South Montana Street as a storage area for granite curbs and granite street pavers. She passed around photographs of a pile of large rectangular blocks used to make curbs and an aerial photo of where the pile of pavers is located. When the remediation along Silver Bow Creek commences, she wants to ensure that the historic granite blocks do not wind up in the repository of waste materials. She would like to know BSB's intentions. Ms. McCourt said that the Poor Farm cemetery project (near the National Center for Appropriate Technology) intends to use granite blocks just like the ones pictured to outline the boundaries of the cemetery and asked Ms. Rossillon if she thinks such a project would be a good use for them. She commented it was fortuitous to see a pile being unused and presumably up for grabs. Ms. Rossillon responded that she thought it would be appropriate, as several years ago some of the very same curbs were brought to St. Patrick's Cemetery for use in a restoration project, and the HPC approved the project. Ms. Rossillon said that the pavers and curbs were salvaged from the streets of Butte when NorthWestern Energy was putting in new gas lines. Butte CPR was part of the salvage project and originally put them in the Kelley Mineyard, but then they were moved. Mr. Hinick agreed that it would be a worthy project to inventory and determine where the granite blocks will be taken. Much effort went into the creation of them, historically. Ms. Rossillon said it would be a tremendous loss to Butte to have them disappear.

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

Respectfully submitted, Kate McCourt HPO