

Minutes of the Historic Preservation Commission

July 20, 2000

Members Present: Mitch Evans, Mac McGraw, Lyda Hardy, Dave Primus & Hazel Calkins

Guests Present: Joe Puchek, Beth Marcue, Ken & Jan Kenlon, Bonnie Pitblado, John & Eileen Kaser

Mitch Evans, chairman, officially opened the meeting. He went over the minutes, and asked if anyone had any corrections.

NEW BUSINESS:

Joe Puchek presented the information on the Smith Opera House. It is now just a shell with 2 floors. It will be used for office space when the renovation is finished. The main entrance will be on the south, off the parking lot. The Skyline Complex was torn down next to it for parking. The Gunnison City Council passed this on to the county back on June 23, 1998. There was nothing done with it before now. Beth Marcue, along with Karen & Gary Shondeck worked on the research of this building. Verbal information they found out was that it was turned into apartments (aka the Grand Hotel) in the 1940's – 50's. The research showed that back in 1886 – 1890, the upstairs was in apartments. It was built in 1882 – 1883, not in 1880 like the sign indicates. The addition on the back was put on about 4 years ago. Because it is tied on, it would destroy the building if taken off. Joe Puchek will be replacing all the windows with the exact same design, just energy efficient. He found old cornices, windows, framing, etc, and will re-use them to 'maintain the historic integrity'. He has worked on many older buildings, such as Savage Library, Blackstocks School, Arts Center & Tredway Building. After Joe's presentation, the board decided on a public hearing date of August 17, 2000 at 5:15 pm. Everyone thanked Joe and Beth for all the hard work on the research of the history and significance of this building.

Eileen Kaser presented her Rimrock School information. They are the new owners as of 2 weeks ago. This took 1½ years to get through the hoops of both Gunnison County and Montrose County, to acquire the property. They would like to turn it into a '2nd home' and/or bed & breakfast, etc. It was built around 1920, and it's been used as a community center recently. They don't know what to do with it, or how to add a bathroom, kitchen, etc, if they are to designate it as historic. They filled

out the State and National applications, and are due to be heard August 4 in Denver, in front of the Review Board. She is concerned that it may take a long time to go through the process, and then get all the necessary permits to do all the ‘improving’ they want to do. When Eileen asked if she was doing the right thing, Mitch responded that they should do what’s best for them. He said our concern would be if designated, to be able to keep it in tact, as historically as possible. She told us that the foundation was crumbling; the roof is corrugated which preserved much of the building; the windows (maybe not the glass) are original but some broken; the stage was removed, but the original floor is there. The heating source is gone; there are no kitchen appliances; and no plumbing, but there are 2 outhouses that need restoration. There is no wiring, and it needs insulation. The original lap siding is still there, but needs painting. Originally they thought they would add dormer windows and bedrooms upstairs, and a kitchen and bathroom downstairs, to be a second home. Next, they thought about it staying a community center for lots of various groups to use. She decided to hold off going on in this process, and see what comes from the State meeting. Mitch highly commended their efforts, and suggested they consider doing their improvements without intruding on the integrity of the building, but accomplish what can be useful to them. He said a small addition to the back of the building (‘out-of-sight’), without changing the view of the structure that is still original, is encouraged. The adding of dormers, major remodels and noticeable upgrades are usually not approved. Mitch also told of some of the funding money available, especially a commercial venture by a private individual that could help in paying for restoration. Someone explained that for the State and National designation, they would have to show historic significance. Mitch suggested that they still go through the process for County designation, and then if they want to withdraw from the register that’s ok. Also, Eileen was unsure about the process that would take place if they chose to change anything. It was explained that this information is in our guidelines, and they would have to come before this board for those. Mitch said other boards have looked at remodels, as if that is ‘historically appropriate’, and in a balance of the economic necessity to the historical integrity. He believes that’s what we are all about. Everyone expressed their appreciation to Eileen and John, for coming here and letting us know where they stand on this.

Bonnie Pitblado presented her information on Chance Gulch site. It is an archeological site, located 2 ½ miles SE of Gunnison. She is teaching at WSC, as an Archeologist. Bonnie has been in touch with Mark Stiger for a long time, regarding the Paleo-Indian archeology in the Rocky Mountains. She wants to excavate sites that give us lots of history in the mountain areas. Her tests show this site to be a large and very important one. She has sent charcoal samples they found to get dated. Also, she is wanting to get this designated, so she can try for funding to continue the

research at this site. She also believes this site needs State and National designation. Then she told us that the Paleo-Indian sites are very rare. She thinks this is a very significant site. In her words, “this re-creates a pattern of pre-history, and lets us better understand pre-history”. Mac asked some questions about the site, and then she told of her previous work with a National designated district. She will be having a tour in conjunction with the Colorado Archeological Society meeting, on Sunday, July 30. Everyone is to meet at Quigley Hall, room 127, at 8:00 am. After Bonnie’s presentation, the board decided to have the public hearing also on August 17, at 5:15 pm. Dave thanked her for coming to share this with us.

The next item discussed was HP week ideas. The consensus to set the date is for the 3rd week of September. Lyda reminded us that Colleen had some great ideas, including the Alley Tours and Yard Signs. Someone else told us that the City wants to kick off their Historic District Survey that week. After much discussion, we decided to put together a ‘Variety Night’ in Gunnison. We could include the lady from the National Trust - Barbara Pahl with her Colorado Buildings slide show; Mac’s Storytelling, and this Archeologist, Bonnie Pitblado. We could have refreshments in the middle of these. It was suggested to tour the Smith Opera House, and maybe the Arts Center. We could co-sponsor with the Arts Center also. If we worked on using the Arts Center, and had some of their people show up in costume as George Sibley or Sylvester Richardson, they could be greeters. Dave will check on that. Mac talked about how people are turning out for the new car barn at the museum. It was suggested to have an open house at the Railroad Exhibit, before the evening’s activities started, from 6:00 – 6:45 pm. Hazel will talk to CJ Miller about that. This could be on Thursday, September 21 at 7:00 pm. We could publicize it very well, to get all walks of life. Crested Butte still wants to do a progressive dinner. Kathy will check on bids for the poster design.

Then, we discussed about the budget information due on August 4. We talked about the signage money, and the grant writing money. Kathy will ask the Finance Office some questions first. We will need to be able to rollover some of these funds if we don’t use them all this year. Dave, Lyda and Kathy will get together to be able to turn this in on time.

Next, we talked about the brochures that Mac put together. Kathy took care of talking to B&B about printing them, as soon as she got approval from the County Manager. They should be letting us know soon when they are ready. Lyda then showed us what she put together for the Outhouses brochure. Mac will help her with pictures. She has put together some great captions. Mac told a story that we might want to be included. Dave will work on railroads.

Kathy went over the rest of the mail. Mitch had to leave early, so Dave closed the meeting.

BIN ITEMS:

The next regular meeting will be August 17, 2000.

Note: So far, I have received no public comments for the Public Hearings. I do have proof of publication, but ask if the applicants posted the properties. After the 2 Public Hearings, there will be a new presentation on an archeological site on top of W Mountain, by Mark Stiger. He will be bringing all the copies to hand out. He needs this to be a 'push through quickly' nomination, because of his time-pressured deadline of October 2nd for the funding application. I told him we could try on our end, but I will do a lot of talking to get it on the BOCC agenda quickly.

Mac set up Joe Glaze to come with information on the Parlin Store. Joe may or may not be here. Also, Kathy spoke with Eileen Kaser. And she said the State designated the Rimrock School as an historic site. She will be sending us the pass-through nomination form, to get it to the BOCC for County designation.

Molly is not available to be here to discuss HP Week, but Colleen will be here.

The other item to discuss is where we are going to place our brochures, when we get them. They are to be printed the week of August 21. The museum treasurer informed me that placing them in the brochure displays you see around town, costs money!

AGENDA ITEMS FOR AUGUST 17 MEETING:

1. Public Hearing for Smith Opera House
2. Public Hearing for Chance Gulch Site
3. Mark Stiger – W Mtn site presentation
4. Joe Glaze – Parlin Store
5. HP Week information
6. Go over mail