

Missoula City Council Land Use and Planning Appointments Subcommittee Minutes

January 28, 2020

2:00 pm

Development Services--1st Floor Conference Room

435 Ryman St.

Missoula, MT 59802

Members present: Jordan Hess (chair), Bryan von Lossberg, Gwen Jones

Others present: Peter Pollock - University of Montana student; Emy Scherrer - Development Services

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

1.1 Roll Call

1.2 Approval of the Minutes

2. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

3.1 Appointments to the Historic Preservation Commission

Chairman Jordan Hess welcomed the first candidate - Paul Filicetti.

First Candidate - Paul Filicetti

1.) What useful experience, knowledge, or perspective would you bring to the Commission?

I've been on Historic Preservation Commission since 2017, for about three years. I'm a licensed historic preservation architect at A&E Architects. Most projects I work on are related to historic preservation. The perspective I'd bring to the committee is there have been many changes for the positive, getting overlay ordinance established - I've looked at by-laws, demolition permit, reorganized it. Took proactive approach to what the commission should be doing. We established a good foundation, and now, what is the preservation plan and what's it to do for the City of Missoula.

2.) What is the purpose of historic preservation? How can the Historic Preservation Commission contribute to our city?

The contribution to city is I live historic preservation every day from writing grants to fielding questions related to materials and usage. Historic preservation is important as we are as a society and the generations before and how we interpret that for future - we are caretakers in the interim for future generations. Historic preservation is big tourism attraction. It's important to consider as we look to what the HPC does. I would like to look at more of a vision for the HPC. For instance, where do we want to go? How do we see all that working in the community as a whole?

3.) How do you see the relationship between historic preservation and economic development?

They go hand-in-hand. It creates/impacts cultural tourism, neighborhood redevelopment. I've worked with an owner of a property in the Hip Strip area and there is a potential to push preservation and it is forward-thinking in their roll in historic preservation. I support that. The Commission is working with a revised HPP permitting process.

Mr. Hess asked about historic preservation and adaptive reuse/affordability. In talking about housing, it is different, but related to affordability and rent space and support a business in downtown is something to be considered. I'm not sure that historic preservation perspective can do much, but working with clients and those who come to the HPC, the Commission is there to assist - and those improvements increase taxes and there are tax abatements available, Missoula is not real active with abatements, but might help supplement some of that, there are 25% tax credits available.

Bryan vonLossberg asked if they are state and federal. Mr. Filicetti stated yes.

Mr. Hess stated housing affordability is top-of-mind, and when community values can be competing, how do we evaluate that?

Mr. Filicetti answered that the idea of afford housing is a priority for any community especially one like Missoula and that providing or maintaining some level of affordable housing makes a community better. Integrating that with historic preservation is good and something that needs to be addressed in the city's historic preservation plan.

Mr. vonLossberg - Is that what you're looking at is the difference between the meat and potatoes work and I take to be some of the ordinance changes and to then approach the community with what do we do more strategically?

Mr. Filicetti: Bring in the community to do strategic planning. Some organizations can come in and consult on a historic preservation strategic plan. Neighborhoods and Hip Strip and downtown, and how important is it to apply certain rules in certain areas. A historic preservation plan would account for that; it looks at all the elements. What is contributing? What is not? Does it mean we need to update the districts to include properties on National Register of Historic Places? We need to look at it all in terms of our community.

4.) What is your understanding of the role the National Register of Historic Places plays on the local level? Is this adequate? What role should it play?

The idea of adaptable overlay and having local listing of historic places in a great idea; it would open doors to development. What developers can and can't do...seeing that from the architect side. It does open doors to more, better approach to preservation and how architects and developers can use a historic building. Often codes aren't sympathetic to that. To have a local listing of nominated National Register-listed properties is great idea.

5.) Do you have any recommendations about Missoula's historic preservation ordinance? Do you have any suggestions regarding the duties, responsibilities, or structure of the Commission itself? None. We did good job going through that process in terms of the structure of the Commission. I do have one suggestion: it's not good to have five members to be replaced at one time. We should have staggered membership and having everyone off at one time could change the whole context of the Commission.

6.) The Historic Preservation Commission has two functions, which can seem at odds with one another: on one hand, the Commission promotes Missoula's historic resources and advocates for historic preservation; on the other hand, the Commission must objectively review demolition and development permit requests. Describe this tension. How (do/would) you approach these objectives? Do you feel you can be non-biased during a quasi-judicial process?

Historic preservation has two functions; I don't look at that as tension. The demolition permit and process was established to root that out better. In the past what was tension is now the process, the outline has alleviated that and we haven't gone through a test case, but I'd like to think that would be helpful. For instance, the zoning on Fourth Street...with that process, the real tension came because it was fast-tracked, information to Historic Preservation Commission was so late, and there was confusion over whether the Commission had a voice. This was a zoning question where the Commission didn't have governance.

Yes, we've done a good job of being unbiased. We haven't had a lot of different things that have come before the HPC that have been really hard. The National Register of properties for the hospital was a no-brainer. Maybe that hasn't been challenged, but having that active role and seeing how the board works and my experience on the board, I would be able to react appropriately with a level head.

7.) The Historic Preservation Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. The Commission has struggled with attendance in the past. Does your schedule generally accommodate this meeting time and allow for reviewing staff reports and other materials prior to the meeting?

Yes, my schedule generally accommodates those meeting times. I have missed a couple [meetings] and don't recall why, but I did report to Emy Scherrer [with Development Services] that I'd be missing. They knew in advance. The time/date is not a problem.

8.) The City offers board training twice a year. The training covers good governance, open meetings, public participation, and right-to-know, ethics, conflicts of interest, by-laws, minutes, and parliamentary procedures. The City Council feels it is very important that all board members attend this training. Have you attended/will you attend the training?

I did in 2018 and I'd do it again. I found it useful. The man who did it was good.

9.) Is there anything else you would like to add about your interest in the Historic Preservation Commission?

The Downtown Business Improvement District and the Mayor's Advisory Commission - they all deal with downtown. I'm the downtown representative, but I don't have lots of time to spend going to all these other meetings. Is there sufficient HPC representation at the DBID or the Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission meetings?

Mr. vonLossberg stated that the Mayor's Downtown Advisory is now quarterly. Gwen Jones sits on that and having an HPC representative be there might be good to have.

Mr. Hess stated that the Downtown Business Improvement District, due to its purpose, doesn't need an HPC representative to attend.

The master plan implementation would be a good idea. Emy Scherrer attends those already.

Mr. Filicetti stated he is a member of the city cemetery board, too.

Second Candidate - Cathy Bickenheuser

1.) What useful experience, knowledge, or perspective would you bring to the Commission?

I started in historic preservation thru architecture and was hired by state in Virginia City and worked in historic preservation there. I was lead of the historic preservation team. We are based in Missoula and work in Region 1 and other areas in the region. We are the only the historic preservation specialists in the Forest Service. We are the hands-on team that fixes stuff, from foundation walls doors windows, and we have a full workshop in Missoula. In the winter, we advise, write reports, plan. Everything related to repairing and historic preserving is my job.

2.) What is the purpose of historic preservation? How can the Historic Preservation Commission contribute to our city?

Many say it's just to hang on to old buildings. But we are here to represent why the buildings are important. The built environment represents our past - where are we going in future - our job is to guide that path, provide advice to city council, to property owners. It is lucky on the Historic Preservation Commission to have people from all backgrounds; we can call experts at moment's notice, not just hanging on to buildings.

3.) How do you see the relationship between historic preservation and economic development?

Times can be fractious, but we are all working to better relationships. Given information back and forth. Missoula is changing; it has to. We need to be able to house and feed residents. We don't have culture without the past, even tho we don't see eye-to-eye. We are to advise what's important. We have to work harder if rewriting city code or preservation amendments - we need to do that, also the job of having to be proactive and plan and listen like downtown planning stuff.

4.) What is your understanding of the role the National Register of Historic Places plays on the local level? Is this adequate? What role should it play?

No, the National Register of Historic Places puts the emphasis on buildings that have been nominated to it. The laws go behind it. The act that guides that gives use guidance at the federal level, at local level, we have to able to work with ordinance in concert with that. It plays out to communities similar to us, we play with it and under it. It allows money and grants, we use their website, it's a tool like any other law, guidance. We can always go to the people who work with that even more. If you want to go to sleep I can quote parts of it.

5.) Do you have any recommendations about Missoula's historic preservation ordinance? Do you have any suggestions regarding the duties, responsibilities, or structure of the Commission itself?

We are lucky to have Emy Scherrer. The ordinance needs to be stronger. We take care of buildings and contributing structures, and need to be able to highlight what we have to get money/grants. In recognition of that, to have eligible structures, great, but our buildings none exist in vacuum. When you have neighborhoods, when you have eligible structures, the contributing structures don't get any protection. As far as working on the HPC, we're seeing changes in Missoula and will have differing opinions. We want to have ability to get to Council and want bigger say.

6.) The Historic Preservation Commission has two functions, which can seem at odds with one another: on one hand, the Commission promotes Missoula's historic resources and advocates for historic preservation; on the other hand, the Commission must objectively review demolition and development permit requests. Describe this tension. How (do/would) you approach these objectives? Do you feel you can be non-biased during a quasi-judicial process?

It doesn't have to be at odds. Just because we all know what we face and there's balance, we're going to advocate for the historic preservation part. We have a passion for that. We recognize that Missoula has growing pains. Planning thing for downtown is very important, but by same token, we recognize the monetary value in doing historic preservation; we face that every day. So you do have to look at somethings to do a complete renovation here and what can we do to represent that? If you pick up a historic preservation building and move it, that doesn't preserve it. You've lost all it's context. You cant just randomly hang on to old parts - it loses its history. There is not tension, but more working through the decision. We're all going to approach it from background and knowledge, and as Commission, come to a consensus. We need to find balance with everything. As far as being non-biased, i have to be. We all have inherent bias, but I will always speak for the building; I feel strongly about that. We've approved things that needed to be done. Look at the public schools.

7.) The Historic Preservation Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. The Commission has struggled with attendance in the past. Does your schedule generally accommodate this meeting time and allow for reviewing staff reports and other materials prior to the meeting?

For my work schedule, we go to job sites. Generally that runs through May and until November. That's the work schedule. If i can fit in the summer ones, I will. The 6:00 PM time works. Regarding the struggling with attendance, we are all professionals. We love it. The 6:00 PM time definitely helps.

8.) The City offers board training twice a year. The training covers good governance, open meetings, public participation, and right-to-know, ethics, conflicts of interest, by-laws, minutes, and parliamentary procedures. The City Council feels it is very important that all board members attend this training. Have you attended/will you attend the training?

I went a year ago; I enjoyed it.

9.) Is there anything else you would like to add about your interest in the Historic Preservation Commission?

Not only does it give me an opportunity to volunteer or help saving buildings, I've learned a lot. It's a whole different set of preservation with what I normally work with. It has helped my job. I can bring my job experience to HPC. I enjoy it.

Third Candidate - Kent Watson

1.) What useful experience, knowledge, or perspective would you bring to the Commission?

I am a landscape architect and historian. Out of my graduate thesis, I produced a booklet on the first master plan on the UC Berkley campus. The other thing, I'm the Historic American Landscapes Survey liaison for the State of Montana.

2.) What is the purpose of historic preservation? How can the Historic Preservation Commission contribute to our city?

Missoula has historic downtown, so the purpose is first identifying those properties that should be preserved and enhanced for active use. I know historic preservation can be controversial, but there is an opportunity for the HPC to be an integral part in development in positive way, and our historic downtown is attractive to tourism and investment to make the town what it is.

3.) How do you see the relationship between historic preservation and economic development?

First, there has to be a relationship, it's important. The vote late last night [at city council] is obviously an example where the two can't come together. I don't know outcome going forward. As a railroad buff, those houses are historic background for the whole city. How much time/investment is it to move/save those? It's important that historic preservation and economic development try to work together early in process. As a landscape architect, I want to be involved in the beginning. Coming in later to fix isn't effective. Whatever economic development is being proposed in the historic district, come in early with the HPC and staff.

4.) What is your understanding of the role the National Register of Historic Places plays on the local level? Is this adequate? What role should it play?

It's a wonderful designation. It is good information but it has no legal standing in thwarting development. If people involved get on board understanding what's there related to registered designation, work it into the design. If you can't, then have a good reason as to why. I'm still learning - the legal status the HPC has to stop a development is limited. The designation often is what makes a difference. If you can get people on board to save history and get nice development, so much the better.

5.) Do you have any recommendations about Missoula's historic preservation ordinance? Do you have any suggestions regarding the duties, responsibilities, or structure of the Commission itself?

I really don't. I have to admit I didn't go through it with a fine-tooth comb. I want to learn, listen, and comment where appropriate. I don't want to come with ideas for changes right now.

6.) The Historic Preservation Commission has two functions, which can seem at odds with one another: on one hand, the Commission promotes Missoula's historic resources and advocates for historic preservation; on the other hand, the Commission must objectively review demolition and development permit requests. Describe this tension. How (do/would) you approach these objectives? Do you feel you can be non-biased during a quasi-judicial process?

Yes to the last question - has it to do with my experience with the development process. The sooner players are in the same room talking, the better. In my previous experience I had to develop along the shoreline of San Francisco Bay - I had to take a great idea and ensure it's well thought out and brought in in timely fashion. It's important to review those permits properly. I hope they come in soon enough. To have a plan to develop, you must appreciate the timeline to get it done.

7.) The Historic Preservation Commission meets on the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM in the City Council Chambers. The Commission has struggled with attendance in the past. Does your schedule generally accommodate this meeting time and allow for reviewing staff reports and other materials prior to the meeting?

Yes, Thursdays are good.

8.) The City offers board training twice a year. The training covers good governance, open meetings, public participation, and right-to-know, ethics, conflicts of interest, by-laws, minutes, and parliamentary procedures. The City Council feels it is very important that all board members attend this training. Have you attended/will you attend the training?

Yes, I would definitely do that

9.) Is there anything else you would like to add about your interest in the Historic Preservation Commission?

I used to be on the Downtown Association board for nine years and was part of the North River Parks and Trails sub-committee for the master plan. This is the kind of thing to keep me engaged, I have been here 25 years; Missoula is a special place. To have the opportunity to serve the city as public citizen is important for residents to participate. I hope to be helpful to the city to be on the Commission.

Mr. Hess reminded each candidate that during the Land Use & Planning committee meeting, they would give the recommendations for candidates, and that would be voted on during the City Council meeting on Monday, February 3, 2020.

Appoint ___ At Large, ___ At Large, ___ Professional, ___ Downtown, ___ and ___ Alternate 1 position for the terms beginning January 1, 2020 and ending on December 31, 2022.

3.2 Appointments to the Missoula Planning Board

Appoint two regular members and one alternate ____, ____, ___ to the Missoula Planning Board for the terms commencing January 1, 2020 and ending December 30, 2021.

3.3 Appointments to the Design Review Board

Appoint four members ___(graphic artist) , ___(at large), ___(alternate), and ___ for the terms beginning January 1, 2020 and ending on December 31, 2022, and appoint one

vacant alternate position to finish the term beginning immediately and ending on December 31, 2020.

4. ADJOURNMENT