

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION Minutes - January 10, 2008

The Miles City Preservation Commission met at the Miles City Preservation Office at 907 B Main at 7 p.m. on Thursday, January 10, 2008. In attendance were Kathy Doeden, Deborah Wohlgenant, Denise Hartse, Doug Melton, Melissa Hartman and preservation officer Amorette Allison. Tom Mott and Susan Devlin were absent.

Vice chairman Kathy Doeden presided. The minutes from the previous meeting were approved as read. Denise Hartse gave the treasurer's report on the MCPC account.

Since the resignation of the previous chairman created a vacancy, elections were held for new officers. It was agreed that while Amorette Allison will continue to take minutes at the meeting, the treasurer will be designated as secretary-treasurer for official requirements. Denise Hartse was the sole nominee for that position and was elected unanimously. Deborah Wohlgenant was the sole nominee for vice chairman and was elected unanimously. Kathy Doeden was the sole nominee for chairman and was elected unanimously. The application for next year's funding from the state as part of the CLG program is due January 30, 2008. The difficulties in meeting training requirements was discussed. Doug Melton has to meet with SHPO in Helena in February and will try to arrange to attend the CLG training in Helena February 6-7 to meet this year's requirement.

Increasing the wage for the Historic Preservation Officer, which has been static since 2000, was discussed. Melissa Hartman moved and Deborah Wohlgenant seconded the motion that the MCPC would make up an increase of 75¢ an hour if the City does not agree to an increase. The motion passed unanimously. However, Melissa Hartman emphasized that the MCPC should make an especial effort during city budgeting later in the year to get the City to increase funding for the office. The HPO helped write mitigation documents and a National Historic Register form for the Holy Rosary/Cornerstone project that were a requirement of a grant and would have cost the city a good deal more than \$1,000 if a consultant had been hired.

The Scope of Work for the coming year was discussed. On-going educational activities including articles for the newspaper, programs for various organizations and the annual Ghost Tour will be included again. Administrative priorities include investigating a new location for the office that will be less expensive and allow better access and networking with other resources. Fundraising is an on-going issue and there is some overlap with educational priorities since the sale of the book containing articles from the newspaper is the primary funding source for the office expenses. The Ghost Tour is also a funding source. New methods of fundraising in conjunction with the Custer County Historical Society will also be considered by the Commission.

CLG requirements include new nominations to the National Historic Register. The Holy Rosary/Cornerstone nomination will go to the state review board late this month. This nomination, written in conjunction with Kate Hampton in the SHPO, was completed in less than six months in order to comply with a requirement of a grant to the Miles City Housing Authority.

Other possible nominees include the Elks Lodge and some private homes.

Creating an overlay zoning for the Main Street Historic District is a high priority so that design guidelines can be created and applied to this district. A rough draft of such guidelines is currently under review by the Commission.

Possible CTEP projects that will include the input of the Commission are new rest rooms for Riverside Park, which is a NHR listed site; historic style streetlights for Main Street; and trash receptacles that are compatible with the historic character of the downtown.

A "Cowboy Walk of Fame" for the Main Street sidewalks will also be explored further.

Efforts will begin again on a Preserve America application. The last application was sidelined when the Chamber of Commerce elected to drop the Heritage Days in conjunction with the anniversary of Wm. Clark's visit to this area. While successful from a historic and educational point of view, the new administration of the Chamber is uninterested in continuing the project.

Activities that might qualify for Preserve America include the Ghost Tour, the Bucking Horse Sale and Pioneer Days at the Range Riders Museum. It is also possible the Commission or the Custer County Historical Society will become sponsors of a Heritage Days type program.

A new fundraising activity was suggested by Kathy Doeden. When the State Historical Society meeting was held in Miles City about twenty years ago, a progressive dinner was held. A map was provided. The dinner began with appetizers provided by two historic bars. Dinner was held at the Eagles, which is a handicapped accessible listed building. Dessert was held at the Ursuline Convent and a door prize was given away. The event was very successful.

Kathy suggested the Custer County Historical Society sponsor a similar event. October, in conjunction with Fall Festival events, was selected as the best time since participants could walk to all the sites, weather permitting. Kathy will set up a committee that includes members of the MCPC and outside contributors. The goal will be to raise at least \$1,000 to \$2,500, making the effort worth the time. It is also hoped this will become an annual event and fundraiser. Progress will be reported on monthly.

The Art Walk held during the last Fall Festival was not particularly successful. A number of prints of Arlene Corbin's work remain. The sale of the prints will be emphasized, especially during the Bucking Horse Sale in May.

Other upcoming events include Archaeology Month in April. Doug Melton will be involved in an atlatl demonstration during April and suggestions are welcome for complimentary activities. In late June, the Caledonian Society will be celebrating their 100th anniversary and a historic tour will be provided by the Preservation Office.

There will be no meeting in February. The next meeting will be held at 5 p.m. on March 6. Members are to drop off any notes and comments they have on the draft design guidelines to the office prior to the meeting so Amorette can collect them for discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.