

**Great Falls – Cascade County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission  
Minutes from the July 10, 2024 meeting, held at the Great Falls Portage Overlook and the PCD  
Conference Room at the Civic Center**

**Members Present:** Channing Harteluis, Megan Sanford, Chris Christaens, Ken Sievert, Suzanne Warding, Ken Robison, David Erdmann, Jeanne Price

**Members Absent:** Stephanie Erdmann

**Staff Present:** Samantha Long

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

**The meeting was called to order by Channing Harteluis at 12:00 PM.**

**1. Portage Overlook Site Visit**

- The group toured the overlook and discussed the history of the site and potential impacts from the proposed development.

**2. Highland Development/Portage NHL Section 106**

- HPAC discussed the draft Memorandum of Agreement generated by the Section 106 process for the proposed Highland Development, and provided the following comments to forward to the working group:
  - How will people access the park outlined in the plan? Is parking available?
  - In the viewshed study, projections were made using 15' single-story models and 25' foot two-story models. The proposed development standards specify height limits of 21', 35', and 45'. Did the impacts considered in the study adequately account for the potential impact of the development standards?
  - Exhibit 2: Master Plan (Alternative 2) includes a 120' protected viewshed travelling east-west through the development. This does not appear to be reflected in the mitigation measures in the MOA.
  - HPAC has concerns about the vague nature of IV.A.16 and questions whether it provides achievable goals.
    - HPAC suggested cooperation with MDT to secure directional signage from 10th Ave S to direct visitors to the overlook.
- Chris Christiaens moved that HPAC express to City and County government the importance of the Portage Landmark and all our local historic resources, and the importance of protecting them for the future.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 12, 2024**

- Ken R. noted two corrections: In item 3, the minutes were approved as corrected, not as written. In item 9, the date of Ellen Baumler's celebration of life was held on July 13.
- Ken Robison moved to approve the minutes as corrected. David Erdmann seconded, and the motion carried.

**4. HPO Report**

- A group of local organizations including the Lewis & Clark Trail Portage Chapter, Big Sky Country National Heritage Area, Great Falls Tourism, and the local Historic Preservation Office met with Jon Axline from the Montana Department of Transportation to discuss the possibility of installing signs notifying travelers of the four National Historic Landmarks in the local area.
- Due to the temporary closure of the History Museum's archives, Sam is pushing the timeline of the Saint Peter's Mission signs out to next summer, which will allow her to make use of the archives for research and will allow more time for consultation with stakeholders.

- Activities by NorthWestern energy on the north side of Great Falls have resulted in the need for an archaeological excavation in the area of the former River Bank community, and a report of findings was submitted to Sam's office. The archaeologist has offered to present these findings to HPAC at a later meeting.

**5. Boston and Montana Barn Report**

- The meeting which had been planned for July 8 was cancelled due to conflicts in Park & Recreation's schedule. Sam will reschedule as soon as is convenient.

**6. Vinegar Jones Cabin Committee Report**

- Ken Sievert and Sam are in conversation with Park & Recreation about the logistics of coating the roof of the cabin. The traditional boiled linseed oil is not preferred by Parks because of its toxicity, and Ken is attempting to find an appropriate alternative product.
- Ken Robison reported that the cabin has been open during concert nights at the park, and visitation before the concert begins has been good.

**7. Reports from Commissioners**

- Channing reported that on July 13 in Three Forks the Missouri Headwaters State Park will host a talk by Hasan Davis on the journey of York, the enslaved servant of William Clark and member of the Corps of Discovery.
- Suzanne Waring noted that KRTV did a great piece on the Brother Van House and the available tours, and attendance this summer has been good.
- Ken Robison reported that the program for the upcoming Montana History Conference has been published, and registration for the event is open.
- Megan reported that progress on the archive remodel at the History Museum is good, and they hope to be open ahead of schedule.

**8. Public Comment**

- There was no public comment.

**Channing Hartelius adjourned the meeting at 1:16 P.M.**

- 1 2008 Civic Center
- 2 2009 Vinegar Jones Cabin
- 3 2010 Great Northern Depot
- 4 2011 Ursaline Centre
- 5 2012 Great Falls High School
- 6 2013 Paris Gibson Square
- 7 2014 Masonic Temple
- 8 2015 CMR Cabin
- 9 2016 Courthouse
- 10 2017 Fort Shaw
- 11 2018 Belt Theater
- 12 2019 Milwaukee Depot
- 13 2020 10th Street Bridge
- 14 2021 Black Eagle Dam
- 15 2022 Gibson Park
- 16 2023 CMR High School