

## Historic Preservation Board Regular Meeting

Minutes – July 1, 2014

Present: Jody Motz, Jon Schler, Michael Menard, Scott Wolford and Chris Endreson

Not Present: Jodi Coleman-Niernberg, Kevin Reimer and David Bailey

Also Present: Kristen Ashbeck, City Community Development; Bennett Boeschstein, City Council; and Harry Weiss, Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

**Avalon Theater Tour.** The Board convened at 3:15 pm at the Avalon Theater for a tour led by City Project Engineer, Lee Cooper

The meeting reconvened at City Hall at 4:15 pm.

**Minutes of June 3, 2014 Meeting.** Jon Schler made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2014 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously (6-0) on a second by Chris Endreson.

**Discussion of Old Jail.** The Board continued its discussion concerning the old jail with Harry Weiss, Executive Director Downtown Development Authority. The County Administrator, Tom Fisher, had asked City Manager Rich Englehart for ideas on the reuse of the building. Harry stated that he initially looked at it for the potential use as the DDA offices but they are now looking to combine space with the CMU Art Department in a building on Colorado Avenue instead.

Harry stated that he would suggest to the County that the building be offered as non-profit office space. It is best if occupied by a private use rather than public to alleviate the requirement for an elevator to the second floor. The second floor has the opportunity for assembly space but a second exit from the floor may be required but a staircase on the outside of the building may meet that requirement. Portions of the first floor are still used or were recently used by the County for IT training/storage area.

The first step would be to pursue a \$10,000 grant for a Historic Structure Assessment (HSA) from the State Historical Fund. Jon Schler stated that these grants are non-competitive, can be submitted any time and do not require a cash match so there would be no cost to the County to have the study completed. The HSA would include a structural and systems assessment and look at options for spatial use (e.g. office/mercantile/assembly mix), cost estimates and identify a phasing plan. Once the HSA was completed, other grants could be pursued for the actual restoration work.

The Board would like to outline a preservation/reuse plan and present the ideas to Mesa County. Harry suggested getting support from Mesa County staff and/or Historic Preservation Board so that the ideas are coming forth from a group rather than just the City Historic Preservation Board. Kristen will follow up with Kaye Simonson with Mesa County Planning about how to solicit County support and how to best approach the Mesa County Commissioners with these ideas.

Other thoughts on future steps would be to invite History Colorado and Colorado Preservation Inc. staff to visit the building and help support the initial grant application. Harry also suggested

the County could lease the building at a nominal cost to the DDA and it would assume the responsibility of finding tenants for the building. Designation by the City, County and/or State could be pursued at a later date in order for the building to be eligible for future grants. The building does not have to be designated to pursue the HSA grant.

**Other.** City Council member Bennett Boeschstein brought up several topics for the Board's information as well as potential projects for its involvement.

- The D&RGW Railroad Depot is on the real estate market again. The current owner is leasing the baggage wing of the building to a zip line company. The building was open for people to look at on the afternoon of National Train Day on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Sally Crum, a local historian, has a contact for someone in Arizona with a company restoring several Fred Harvey buildings along railroad lines to see if they might be interested in the Grand Junction Depot. Bennett has been keeping in contact with Colorado Preservation, Inc. and the Great American Station Foundation for continued discussion on restoration/reuse of the Depot.
- Historic building identification marker program – Bennett would like to see something adopted for Grand Junction. Fruita has had a program for many years. Harry mentioned that the DDA has an adopted way-finding plan and that any signage in the downtown area should be compatible with that plan. There are also several identification signs already in place on homes in the 7<sup>th</sup> Street district. Kristen will research the topic with other communities, review the way-finding plan and bring ideas to the Board at its next meeting.
- For the opening of the Avalon Theater on September 20<sup>th</sup> – provide a table of information, photos, old programs, the old projector, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.