



**GILPIN COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

October 15, 2020

The Gilpin County Historic Preservation Commission convened virtually Zoom Meeting; no physical meeting was held.

**Call to Order:** Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

**Quorum Call:**

- Present: Chair Bret Johnson, Vice Chair B. Travis Wright, Jack Hidahl and Susan Meade
- Absent: Scott Danfeler
- Staff Present: Tami Archer, Secretary/Liaison; Brad Benning, County Attorney; Deon Wolfenbarger, Historic Preservation Consultant
- Additional Attendees:
  - Hon. Gary Jackson – Zephyr View Cabin owner
  - James Hesterley – Zephyr View Cabin
  - Mike Juda – Phyllis Wheatley Cabin property manager

**Agenda Review:** Chair Johnson reviewed the agenda. Secretary Archer suggested moving the Moffat Work Cabins status update to the beginning of the agenda, and also requested to add an update on the Redtail Cabins to the end of the agenda.

**New Business: None**

**Old Business:**

**A. Moffat Cabins Status update – County Attorney Brad Benning**

County Attorney Benning provided an update on the status of negotiations with Union Pacific regarding obtaining ownership of the work cabins. He noted that if the County decides to participate, any work would not take place until spring after the snow melts. Union Pacific estimates total remediation costs of the cabins is \$100K-\$115K. Union Pacific is proposing the County's share of that be 25%. County Attorney Benning indicate he has requested Union Pacific to firm up these numbers, because they have a remediation contractor they regularly use. Additionally, Union Pacific is requiring the County to provide a licensed building inspector to inspect the cabins to ensure they are structurally safe and won't collapse. That would be an additional cost to the County. Union Pacific proposes to demolish cabins that are determined not to be structurally sound. He also noted that Union Pacific wishes to obligate the County of the roof abatement on the cabins. It appears that Union Pacific is trying to look like they are the "good guys" in the scenario.

Chair Johnson noted that he had reached out to several structural engineering firms for estimates to do an historic structure assessment, and the range was between \$2500 and \$5000. There was some discussion regarding the asbestos abatement, and he noted that it is likely most of the asbestos will be in the shingles. He also questioned how Union Pacific derived the numbers they presented. There was additional discussion on how to obtain cooperation from Union Pacific. It was noted that tearing the cabins down would be bad public relations for them, and we could use that to our benefit in the negotiations. It was also noted that Union Pacific has indicated they would allow the county to take care of the roof abatement if the negotiations move forward.

There was also some discussion regarding the original lease between the Forest Service and Union Pacific, including if the cabins were actually sold to Union Pacific and if they even have title to them. County Attorney Benning indicated that Union Pacific is aware of the Endangered Places designation. Historic Preservation Consultant Wolfenbarger noted the implications from Section 10-6, and also mentioned that Angela Gee from the Forest Service has indicated they would likely intervene in the event Union Pacific tried to demolish the cabins.

**Minutes:** The minutes from the September 17, 2020 meeting were discussed. Vice Chair Wright moved to approve the minutes as presented. He was seconded by Commissioner Hidahl. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment:** None

**New Business:**

**A. Zephyr View Cabin**

Historic Preservation Consultant Wolfenbarger presented the staff report, noting that the applicant, Hon. Gary Jackson, was in attendance. She discussed the application for designation, for the proposed addition, and also discussed levels of integrity. Chair Johnson suggested the first discussion cover the landmark designation application. There was some discussion regarding eligibility, and Consultant Wolfenbarger indicated that she felt the cabin meets eligibility requirements. Hon. Jackson thanked Consultant Wolfenbarger for an excellent job documenting the history and significance of the cabin.

There was additional discussion regarding the significance of William Pitts making his mark in Lincoln Hills that was intertwined with the importance of his family history. Consultant Wolfenbarger mentioned the book written by the family matriarch – “Precious Memories” – and how it helped tell the family history as well. Hon. Jackson discussed the repairs needing to be done to the cabin. Consultant Wolfenbarger noted that the alterations that have been done to the cabin over the years are historic in their own right, and noted that those alterations do not hide the original cabin.

Chair Johnson turned the discussion to eligibility. Commissioner Hidahl noted that he felt the cabin meets eligibility requirements, and suggested restoring the original entrances. Vice Chair Wright agreed, and also noted that the report done by Consultant Wolfenbarger was phenomenal and demonstrated the importance of this cabin to Gilpin County history. Commissioner Meade noted that the family has done a good job of keeping the original appearance, and Chair Johnson also noted the excellence of the report. He noted that the Jackson family contributions to Gilpin County history are incredible. It was also noted that the small addition to the cabin was also done during the period of significance, and that the history of the site outweighs any negative impact of the existing alterations.

Chair Johnson asked if the item was ready for a motion. Consultant Wolfenbarger outlined the possible motions. Chair Johnson moved that he Gilpin County Historic Preservation Commission finds that the property at 31 Pitts Place is eligible for landmark designation based on 2.a.i.2 for exemplifying the cultural, political, economic, or ethnic heritage of the County in the areas of recreation and African American heritage. It is also eligible under 2.a.iii.2 as a rare example of the work of building William Pitts Jr. It retains sufficient integrity for designation in the areas noted in Section 3.3 of Ordinance #19-01. Chair Johnson also noted that he feels very strongly that Gilpin County recognize the importance of the Zephyr View, which is why he made the motion. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Wright, and it passed unanimously.



Chair Johnson then turned the discussion to the currently proposed alterations. There was discussion regarding existing conditions of the foundation and siding, and regarding the impact the alterations would have. Mr. Hesterly discussed the proposed repairs to the siding and existing foundation. There was also some discussion regarding the windows.

The discussion moved to the proposed addition. Consultant Wolfenbarger discussed the Secretary of the Interior Standards, noting that the proposed breezeway connecting the existing cabin to the addition meets the Standards. She also noted the discerning differences that convey the addition is not historic. She noted that the addition is significant, and asked the commissioners to consider whether or not it is detrimental to the overriding intent. Commissioner Hidahl noted that the approach is creative, and allows for an observer to “read” the building. He also noted his agreement with the proposed foundation repairs. Mr. Hesterly provided details on the foundation repairs, noting that the cabin will be lifted by steel I-beams allowing for excavation and the addition of steel piers under the cabin. He explained the structural integrity of the proposed repairs. Commissioner Hidahl noted that this proposal appears to be economically feasible, will result in the continued use of the cabin, and will save the foundation. There was additional discussion regarding the placement of the addition in relation to current setbacks. Vice Chair Wright noted that the addition is thoughtful to the historic significance of the cabin, and turned the discussion to the windows on the north façade of the existing cabin. Chair Johnson also noted he was impressed with the design and roof lines, and noted that it is clear the addition is subservient to the existing cabin. He also commented he thought the approach to foundation repairs was appropriate.

Chair Johnson then asked for a motion on the proposed alterations, but then made the motion, moving that the Gilpin County Historic Preservation Commission finds that proposed alterations and addition for the property at 31 Pitts Place Way have no significant impact or potential detriment to the historic resource. He was seconded by Commissioner Meade and the motion passed unanimously.

Consultant Wolfenbarger noted that an additional motion was needed recommending Local Landmark Designation to the Board of County Commissioners. She pointed out the specific language in the proposed motion referring to the period of significance. There was some discussion regarding referencing the staff report as the basis of findings. Vice Chair Wright made a motion that the Gilpin County Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the Board of County Commissioners approval of the application for county historic designation for the property 31 Pitts Place. The HPC finds that the property is eligible for landmark designation based on 2.a.i.2 for exemplifying the cultural, political, economic, or ethnic heritage of the County in the areas of recreation and African American heritage. It is also eligible under 2.a.iii.2 as a rare example of the work of builder William Pitts Jr. It retains sufficient integrity for designation in the areas noted in Section 3.3 of Ordinance #19-01. The HPC further recommends that the property’s landmark name be “Zephyr View Cabin”, and was seconded by Commissioner Meade. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Johnson then thanked everyone for their work on the project, noting that the commission feels it is an important part of not only the Jackson family history, but the county history as well.

#### **B. Phyllis Wheatley House**

Consultant Wolfenbarger presented the staff report. She called attention to the early history of the building, noting it was originally associated with mining in the area before Lincoln Hills was developed. She also noted that the existing deck is not historic.

Chair Johnson asked for discussion regarding the potential eligibility of the structure. After some discussion, Vice Chair Wright moved that the Gilpin County Historic Preservation Commission finds that the property at 103 Phyllis Wheatley Way is eligible for landmark designation based on 2.a.i.2 for exemplifying the cultural, political, economic, or ethnic heritage of the County in the areas of mining, recreation and African American heritage. It is also eligible under 2.a.iii.1 as an example of a placer mining camp building. It retains good to high degree of integrity in all areas noted in Section 3.3 of Ordinance #19-01. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Meade. Vice Chair Wright noted the quality of the staff report, and the motion passes unanimously.

The discussion turned to the proposed alterations. Consultant Wolfenbarger noted that the window and door schedules provided are very good. She noted that the elements are good for restoring the historic façade, and that the proposed foundation repairs are not significant. She also noted that there were concerns with the proposed siding, which prompted discussion. Mike Juda, owners' representative, asked if the concerns were with the materials or aesthetics. There was additional discussion, with Commissioner Meade observing that the proposed siding alters the historic appearance. There was discussion regarding a possible stay on issuance of the building permit, and possible alternatives. Commissioner Hidahl felt that the application could be approved with the exception of the proposed siding, which prompted additional discussion regarding the scope of a stay. It was decided that a resubmittal was needed with appropriate modifications to the proposed siding, and Commissioner Meade moved to continue the application to November 19<sup>th</sup>. She was seconded by Vice Chair Wright and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Meade also asked for additional information regarding the intended use of the structure by the current owners.

**Old Business continued:**

**B. By Laws**

Secretary Archer noted that the Board of County Commissioners approved the proposed bylaws at their meeting on October 6, 2020 as presented.

**C. Redtail Cabins**

Secretary Archer shared that land surrounding the parcel that the Redtail Cabins are on had changed ownership and the new owner had expressed an interest providing some funding for their rehabilitation.

**D. Bates Hunter / Golden Gilpin Mill Tour Recap**

The tour of the complex on October 10<sup>th</sup> was discussed. Everyone agreed it was very interesting and informational.

Secretary Archer noted that there are currently no upcoming applications.

Chair Johnson noted that we have an applicant for the vacant position, and an interview is planned for November 19<sup>th</sup>.

Chair Johnson noted that there was no additional business to discuss and asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Adjourn:** Commissioner Hidahl moved to adjourn and was seconded by Commissioner Meade. The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bret Johnson  
Chair