

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

City Hall – Conference Room #6

12:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 10, 2025

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Walter Burns, Chair
Anneliese Miller, Vice Chair
Doug Harro
Shannon Sardell
Stephen Shepperd
Rick Shaffer (on Teams)
Sandy Emerson

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Hilary Patterson, Community Planning Director
Traci Clark, Admin. Assistant

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON:

Kiki Miller, Council Liaison (On Teams)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Dan McCracken
(note, there is one vacancy on the commission)

12:00 P.M CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Burns at 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES:

Motion by Commissioner Sardell, seconded by Commissioner Miller, to approve November 12, 2025 Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(Kathi Kinsel attended but didn't make comments)

Jennifer DeRose introduced herself. She stated that she owns a business, is an archaeologist, and is obtaining her architecture in history credentials. She said she wanted to provide a kind of critique of the demolition review process. She lives on Walnut Avenue. A demolition is currently in effect. It's a 0.28-acre lot. There's a 1908 building that's positioned on the east half of the lot and a pole building that is in the center of the lot. On Veterans Day, she and her neighbors were upset about the demolition of the home and the tree that fell onto the pole building. There's kind of a nuisance aspect of it. But more importantly, she said her concern was if the demolition of the historic building was even legitimate. She had to familiarize herself with what the city was doing, and she realized there's a demolition review process and there's code, and I read through that. She said she reviewed the commission's determination memo approving the demolition. Her first question was how many permit applications does the city receive and review for buildings pre-1960?

Ms. Patterson replied in 2025 there were about 20 to 25 demolition applications.

Ms. DeRose replied, sure, that's not too bad. She was thinking it could potentially be higher. Her next question is if there any other documentation that gets generated through the review process aside from the demolition permit application and the memo.

Chairman Burns stated, not at this time, no. There are things that we have discussed, like implementation to help educate people who want to tear things down.

Ms. DeRose responded, "Okay. I guess my concern is that 1908 building is gone. We have a building that's adjacent to that, that is actually historic. It is, at least I would think, in the sense of what the city would consider significant. If we implement the NRHP criteria, it would qualify for a person and potentially an event. It's the Ed Pulaski house. I guess what I'm wondering is, what if this building that they're tearing down was the Ed Pulaski house that could have been potentially built at the end of his life and he died in it? Because I know he's buried just over in a corner of the cemetery. Would that make the building any more significant?"

Ms. Patterson responded that she didn't send Ms. DeRose information on kind of ordinance and how it differs from other communities and other states. In Coeur d'Alene, we have no teeth. Even if something's already listed in the National Register, we can't prevent demolition. We do have this review process that it goes through, but that is really important to note that it doesn't protect against demolition. Ms. Sardell and Chairman Burns both serve on this subcommittee that review these demolition permits. Ms. Sardell meets the Secretary of the Interior Criteria. We had another commission member whose term has lapsed that also participated in reviewing those, but they go through a review process. Ms. Sardell can speak regarding that, but that area has not been reviewed as a possible district. I don't believe the Pulaski House is listed in the National Register. It's not on our list. It may have significance, and it could potentially be listed in the future. There are no hypotheticals in our review process. It's just kind of cut and dry from the perspective of the ordinance that City Council adopted.

Chairman Burns stated, putting together the ordinance, we had to deal with the realities of living in northern Idaho, which is, property rights focused. We're walking a fine line. What we wanted to do is, at least initially here, implement something where we have an opportunity to look at what's being done and, look at what's going to replace it because we're looking at the overall character of the neighborhoods to some extent. And in cases where we feel it is applicable, we can sit down with the owner/developer and talk about historic significance we've been able to determine. We have Commissioner Shepperd here who is a researcher over at the museum. Deb Mitchell also does that, and they look at things for us. But this is what we have and what we can do today.

Ms. Patterson stated we encourage salvaging if there's something significant.

Ms. DeRose said, "I'm just wanting short responses because I do want to comment. I guess I'm asking these questions because they're very relevant. The way that I feel from a standpoint is if the city is using the NRHP criteria as a backbone, then it's technically, the process, it would follow that. The process in which folks are making recommendations for things might entail the need for reporting to be able to substantiate the importance of the building and to make a determination. And I'm not quite sure what's going on here because what I've noticed in the actual language that, the commission has set apart to recognize the welfare of the public, City of Coeur d'Alene through the identification evaluation designation of criteria. I've noticed the word documentation is omitted, which would be the opportunity for an outsider to provide a recommendation in which the city can then evaluate and designate, which would be the city's role in making the final determination. I guess what my point is, is I just don't feel good about, with not seeing a developer, anybody who wants to demolish an old building. I would like to know the history of that building. I would like to know what its role is and its significance. And for folks to be able to apply NRHP criteria, there is also a component to that criteria of evaluation, which that SHPO would require individuals, a document to substantiate a review for the city to make a determination. And I realize you mentioned that you're working toward a pathway. But for me, when looking through the actual language, the code language, I find I stop at number one because the rest of the process is not, I'm losing sight on what the delivery is here. What the language is setting apart is you're looking for landmark buildings, and you're excluding the rest of the built environment, which is really 90% of Coeur d'Alene. And in order to be able to consider contributing to something, the city would actually need the HPOZ layer. They would need something more substantial. You're missing components to being able to adequately assess and make a determination."

Ms. Sardell stated, "You are probably right, but we are not Oregon or Washington, where I work as well, where we have surveys in place that go back to the 1960s and 1970s. The only part of Coeur d'Alene that has been surveyed at this point in time, where surveys cost \$20,000 to \$30,000 per segment, we didn't even get the whole downtown Coeur d'Alene surveyed in this concurrent one for survey and inventory

because we don't have any funding. We don't have any background. We don't have in Coeur d'Alene the tools that other states have and other cities and municipalities have to understand those resources. And it's really hard to put those in place citywide when we are trying to work piece by piece through our older neighborhoods to get to a younger neighborhood. And though this monument is considered an older monument in the neighborhood or a resource, that neighborhood and that district, so to speak, though we don't have districts in Coeur d'Alene either, is not set up or surveyed at this point in time. We have six days to produce a declaration. We have a very short timeline with which to do this process. This is somewhat out of our control and requested by our City Council. And, you know, that too makes it so that our small volunteer review board only has a certain number of days to work with the museum to pull together some sort of analysis for a building or for a neighborhood that has not yet been surveyed or inventoried. We don't have a bunch of tools that you might hope are in place to be able to make these comparisons and evaluations. That would come from the National Register, if you sort of place it."

Ms. DeRose stated, "Yes. Thank you. I agree, and I understand this as well. I'm hoping what I was trying to get at is that you have a wonderful mechanism, which is this review process. But the review process is, I don't understand what you're getting out of it, I guess, because, what I would be hoping for is that, like I mentioned, it would stop at number one, which the building department simply recommend to the developer, you have a building on the lot that is pre-1960, we would recommend to have a survey."

Ms. Patterson stated that would be very excessive.

Chairman Burns stated the City Council would shoot that down. We were able to get this through as Ms. Sardell spoke about it was a very short (sic) process. There was no process in place to begin with as demolition permits were issued over the counter, it was here today, gone tomorrow, really.

Ms. DeRose asked, the HPOZ, the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, does the city have resources that they could develop a GIS layer that basically tags every pre-1960 building and consider that something that could be a potential historic district?

Ms. Patterson stated no, we can't go through that process. We have flagged them currently for us just to make sure if there's any building permit we can see it. And then any demolition application, it says what year it was originally constructed. We then review it. We then verify that. In order to create a historic district, which we don't have our code, we talked about creating local historic districts, but that would require code amendment. We need to evaluate areas for that. Our next best option is the downtown area. We're having a reconnaissance level survey done now, and we've talked about maybe creating a local historic district. But I think what you're talking about, and while I think a lot of people would say that's great and would love to see that in the future, that's years out. That's not in the near term.

Chairman Burns stated it's also relevant to point out that this is a very new commission, we're not like many communities in the state and other states that have been around since the 80s. We've been around for five years; we are playing a lot of catch-up.

Ms. DeRose stated which is, I commend you for that.

Chairman Burns commented this is kind of trying to break the membrane and be able to say to people, okay, you need to look at this. We can look at this now. We can talk to people about what they're doing and the impact that will have on the neighborhood and specific property. Would we like it to be stronger? Of course/ And will we maybe someday try to? Probably so. We can expect a lot of pushbacks from certain interest groups.

Ms. DeRose stated her concern is just dealing with historic preservation regarding the demolition and disposal of asbestos sites. This is something it seems like should be in the demolition permit because I went on a little side trip to learn a little bit. It could be something, a mechanism that could be built in because it might maybe discourage some folks from the concept of demolition building and investing in it, rehabilitating it instead. These folks went through this process, and I don't believe they followed the county code for proper disposal.

Ms. Sardell stated, "That it would be more of a building department question, and that's something that our hands are somewhat tied by what we can do as a commission to look at historic resources. I've seen buildings come down in my neighborhood where there was no environmental control of the hazardous

materials within it. Enforcement comes down to a state level. Even if you make a complaint, it goes to a state office that may or may not return your call the same day. I don't know what mechanisms would be in place. I don't think that this commission is equipped to deal with that. And that might be more of a requirement."

Ms. Patterson stated I don't remember if I sent you that, but that's something that they were put on notice. They're supposed to comply. If they don't, you have the ability to file a complaint to the state about the contractor.

Ms. DeRose stated, "That's law enforcement. The reason I say that is it's something that would be built into the actual demolition permit."

Chairman Burns stated again, the issue is whether it falls within our purview or within another area. But, your point is very, very well taken. None of us likes to see old buildings come down. We know this kind of stuff that's in them sometimes. And environmentally, that's a bad idea. But, you know, there is a process. It's not necessarily a very good one. It's one that we don't have any power in.

Commissioner Emerson stated, "Thank you for your input. I think that's pertinent to what we've been working on and talking about. Your passion is appreciated. We've talked about the Government Way corridors. We can do more with ordinances and codes as we develop that historic district. It's not something we haven't talked about or couldn't be working on in a little stronger way in certain areas. I think when we did the Garden District, there was a lot of discussion about contributing properties. The ownership was part of that analysis and the history of it when we talked to the folks who were doing that work for us. Where is the Pulaski house located? I don't know that neighborhood."

Ms. DeRose replied it's on the street to the southwest on Walnut.

Commissioner Emerson said, "Thank you. I'm just curious about that. I'm a historian kind of amateur who looks into those things, and I know the Pulaski story and follow that a lot."

Commissioner Sardell commented, "I would encourage you, to talk to your neighborhood, and if you have things to say about the demolition in particular, please take it to one of our City Council meetings, and they have a forum for public comment in the two-minute segment, and that also provides that there's awareness that there are people that are upset in the community about certain things."

Ms. DeRose replied that the mayor asked her to come talk to the commission. You were my starting point.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Commissioner Emerson asked about the vacancy position.

Ms. Patterson stated they have had 1 person apply and she will reach out and see if that person is still interested in an interview.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Ms. Patterson stated there is an update on the CAMP training. She has locked in the training on Friday, May 22, 2026. We do not have an exact time. There will be a reception at the museum after the training along with a walking tour. We need to ask if Britt Thurman (Museum of North Idaho) can assist with the walking tour.

ONGOING PROJECTS:

Signage Program/Local Historic Register

Ms. Patterson introduced Jack Evans from Awards Etc. She said that staff reached out to Mr. Evans and asked him to bring samples of bronze plaques. She also noted that we need to spend the grant money by May 15th. We want to make sure to get it all closed out in time. She shared a PowerPoint presentation with photos of the signs that are on some of the historic buildings. There's a lot of existing signs already,

but some buildings don't have any signage. The ones that have it could be supplemented with a sign with additional details. Some buildings probably need a brand-new sign that has all the details and to note that they are listed in the National Register. We need to figure out what level of detail and what size and materials and style.

Chairman Burns stated we're looking at this as a pilot program that we would like to continue throughout the city, not just for National Register buildings, for buildings that are of interest and locations that are of interest historically to Coeur d'Alene. They would no longer be supplemental. They would contain whatever we want.

Mr. Evans introduced himself and said his business is in Post Falls. He stated that the beauty of plaques is the only thing that matters is size. They're the same cost. If you could break it down to square inch, you might be able to, but it would have to go in ranges. Basically, there's only two parameters that affect the cost, and that is in terms of what goes on the plaque. The company we work with is in Minnesota. It's basically the same company all the trophy shops work with. Their production is usually three to four weeks when it's busy, it can be two weeks when they're not busy. We do everything up to the final art proof. We do the layouts. From a time-line standpoint, I was talking to Ms. Clark this morning, backing into that May 15th deadline, really, the commission will need to decide where and how big and how many. It won't take us long to do the layouts. It won't take us long to go back and forth and refine the text.

Chairman Burns said that originally we were thinking we wanted some sort of standard plaque. We realized that that's not going to happen, number one, because there's plaques out there that already exist, and number two, that the different applications we're looking at. Some of these may be supplemental plaques, we may have some that would be larger plaques down the road, not for this group that we're working with on this grant, some that could be smaller as well. We're just trying to get our handle on that. What we want to make sure we do is have a cohesive look, and this is kind of the standard, dark background and the bronze lettering, and that's what most of the buildings Ms. Patterson researched, and thank you, Ms. Patterson. That's something we should have done ourselves as a commission, but we didn't, so we thank you for taking the time. Based upon the work that Ms. Patterson has done and what you've looked at, we need to sit down and put together and decide how large do they need to be. Ideally, we'd like to have a little plaque on every building downtown talking about a little bit of the history of that building, when it was built. We don't have the money to do that. We don't know where we're going to get it. We might involve the building owners. We have \$5,000 right now that we need to spend.

Mr. Evans commented unfortunately, there really isn't a way to work around the cost of the plaques. This is what we're stuck with. That's the reason they use these materials. That's the reason they're made the way they're made. It's not like a business sign that could go away in 10 years.

Chairman Burns commented that we would like to have the subcommittee members available to work with Mr. Evans and put all that together.

Ms. Patterson stated one thing we need to figure out either with a subcommittee or staff is to figure out the sign size of the existing ones. And then, as you had pointed out, there are different materials. So, while she thinks we want to use bronze primarily, there might be other signs that exist in a different material. Mr. Evans had suggested before the meeting we should match them. She thinks they should be the same size.

Chairman Burns stated the first thing we need to pin down specifically what exact buildings we're going to do, whether it's supplemental or whether it's more than that. What kind of size we have, and then we need to come with you not only to decide on the look, etc., but also to get your cost for them so that we can determine how many of these we can do. That's probably a good amount of work for our little subcommittee that we're going to appoint.

Commissioner Miller suggested notifying the building owners about getting their permission.

Commissioner Sardell stated yes, that could take some time to get permission from the building owners. She also said we will need to determine the process for selecting the buildings and how many signs we can make with the grant funds. She said she cannot find the grant documentation that she wrote to say if

there was a specific way we were going to select or do the process of which buildings, and but she knows it has to do with the National Register.

Ms. Patterson stated there's seven buildings listed in National Register for Historic Places and Coeur d'Alene's Historic Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods that are needed in historic signage. In the grant application, we said there are seven downtown buildings plus four buildings located in Fort Sherman and the North Idaho College campus that are also listed and have been identified for the first phase of the Historic Signage Program. The goal would be to start with signage on the buildings in these locations to provide necessary recognition.

Commissioner Sardell stated if we go with those first 11 buildings and ask permission, as we're talking about now, that will give us an idea if we need to slip or move things in terms of numbers and if we can add additional ones like part of the Heart of History award winners or something.

Chairman Burns stated a subcommittee needs to be formed. He would be willing to take on some of the efforts, along with Commissioner Sardell and Commissioner Miller who volunteered. They will be communicating with Mr. Evans regarding measuring signs and templates and document material.

2026 Retreat:

Chairman Burns and the commission decided to have the retreat on January 28, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in conference room 6 at City Hall.

Demolition Review Subcommittee:

Commissioner Sardell suggested having a new commissioner on the demolition review subcommittee because Commissioner Anderson is no longer on the commission.

Commissioner Miller volunteered along with Commissioner Shepperd.

Commissioner Sardell commented when she looks at the property there is usually a drive-by of the property. She relies on Chairman Burns to do that part. She will look at Google Maps at the building proposed for demolition and the nearby buildings. She always tries to put the lens of the National Register because that's the only documentation we really have to evaluate something. I think our process still is more of a fact-finding mission in terms of what kinds of resources we are losing and why we are losing them. It's good to have it documented like this recent one, but it's really not in a livable condition and it's demolition by neglect.

America 250 Grant & Courthouse 100 Anniversary

Ms. Patterson stated that she will be bringing forward a request to City Council next week to ask for their approval so we can apply for the funds. She will give them little background, why this is happening, why the funds are available, how much is available, that they encourage joint applications and that we're wanting to apply with the County's Historic Preservation Commission. She will also share what's been discussed with the County's HPC and their suggestions for the city. The thought on the city side was possibly a stone marker for the new time capsule. Again, I don't know the cost of that. It might be expensive. Closing off the roadways for the event. Chairman Burns had said that maybe that could be something and that the cost of traffic control or whatnot audiovisual support, video production of the event, and/or advertising. Maybe a commemorative giveaway, such as coins.

Downtown Reconnaissance Survey Update

Ms. Patterson stated that Ms. Painter submitted her third invoice. She has done a bunch of work. It looks like at this point she said there's 113 properties in the survey area of those 16 are non-contributing due to age. She has identified a smaller area that she would recommend as a local district. She has accomplished labeling the photos from the field survey, developed a preliminary boundary for potential

districts, wrote architectural descriptions for 113 properties, and historical profiles for those properties. The evaluations and follow-up field checking on photos have not been completed. She will schedule a follow up meeting with her and SHPO in December.

Commissioner Shepperd stated that Ms. Painter contacted him, and he sent some photos and information over to her. Ms. Painter stated he would be credited for that information and the photos needed to be credited to the Museum of North Idaho since they hold historical value.

Government Way Focus Group Update

Commissioner Emerson said he spoke with Scott Cranston. The focus group decided to wait until after the first of the year to have the meeting. He also spoke with Ken Roberg and he is eager to move forward. He has found the old postmaster, who delivered papers there. He is excited and wants to be of the group as well. Pat and Lisa Fehling are willing to chair the committee on behalf of the neighborhood.

TRACKING TIME:

Chairman Burns reminded the commission to track their time.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Commissioner Shepperd, seconded by Commissioner Emerson, to adjourn. Motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

Submitted by Traci Clark, Administrative Assistant