

From: [Brian Rodine](#)
To: [Michelle Metteer](#); [Madison Harris](#)
Subject: Re: July 17th Work Session
Date: Tuesday, July 9, 2024 12:22:44 PM

Here are my thoughts and suggestions. This is too complicated of a topic to really do it justice in a short comment section at a meeting (typical), so I'd love this to get sent to all of council and PC prior to meeting, but if that's not possible, I could read it all into the record at once. I'll be on the East Coast so that won't be a very fun Zoom experience for anyone.

I see the HPC as a symptom of unclear building code and community plan priorities, just like speed limit signs are a symptom of poor street design. Ideally you don't need either. **However, the root of the current issues seems to be that a HPC designation is viewed as harmful to property owners. It should be beneficial.**

Why does it seem like historic "preservation" and downtown economic viability are currently opposed?

1. Residents are worried about large scale cookie cutter redevelopment of the downtown core, a valid concern that was spurred on by the acquisition of contiguous parcels by one developer (who, luckily, is now selling to individual, mostly local new owners) and needs to be addressed/prevented in updated code
2. Residents, in response to the last point, seem to be broadly in favor of a concept of "historical preservation" but don't really seem to know what that technically means or how it is currently approached by the committee/ town code. It seems like a short sighted attempt to fight high real estate values (leading to empty storefronts) and in reaction to a general fear of change. *Town should welcome change and guide it to benefit residents.*
3. Lack of clarity around nomination status and allowed use/development of property is impacting sale and redevelopment which is in danger of hollowing out the town core with closed/empty store fronts. *How can we make a historical designation something that property owners/potential buyers want and value?*

While many solutions to these problems don't specifically apply to the HPC, here are 3 ways how to address the above problems within the realm of the HPC and HP codes, followed by my notes on the staff balance options below.

1. "Ship of Theseus Provision"

Update the HPC code to acknowledge that historical value doesn't just mean the exact materials and physical make up of a structure; it includes use, memory, and tradition. If a building is designated, it should be allowable that the owner can present plans to scrape/rebuild with continuity of look/feel/community use in mind. Without this ability, I am opposed to historical "preservation" designations in general in our town - we aren't dealing with Roman masonry built to withstand centuries, our community sprung from the ground with sticks on fieldstone and was done as cheaply and quickly as possible.

2. Update code to disallow/discourage/add hurdles to multi-lot, PUD style downtown development but allow more creativity and flexibility in single lot decisions

This gets at the basic fact that Minturn has a certain quality, aliveness, heart, feel, that directly results from the overwhelming lack of large PUD Riverwalk Strip Mall development. Towns that have character have been built and evolved piece by piece throughout the years by different owners for different uses at different times resulting in a built environment that feels unique compared to typical post war suburban and resort America but is common to towns and cities built before the 1930's.

3. Alter scope of/rename HPC

In order to increase recognition and appreciation of its efforts, and move away from the focus on "Preservation", the HPC (rename to Historical Appreciation Committee?) could expand scope to be in charge of things like a local version of "<https://www.wearechaffee.org/>", wayfinding/signage/interpretive experiences for locals and guests, and continuing/building community traditions (barstool racing, 4th of

July costume float, snowmobile-joring, etc). They should act as town archivists, ensuring that Minturn's history and stories aren't lost as the older generations move on and serve as a resource for business and property owners who want to include and contribute to the community and our traditions.

My views on the options outlined by staff in yellow

Options for finding a harmonious balance between historic preservation and Downtown economic viability:

- **Option 1:** Eliminate the requirement for two sets of design review guidelines
 - Right now, the HPC follows the Secretary of the Interiors Design Review guidelines for historic structures. These guidelines total over 200+ pages of rules. Staff proposes to eliminate the use of these guidelines and only utilize Minturn's design guidelines.
 - This seems like a no brainer
- **Option 2:** Eliminate potentially redundant approval requirements
 - Examples of this would be to:
 - Allow alterations on the back portion of a historic structure without requiring HPC approvals (would still go through Planning Commission)
 - Allow demolitions on the back portion of a historic structure without requiring HPC approvals for remodeling and/or additions (would still go through Planning Commission)
 - As I noted in #1 above, I believe we should expand what is possible under a historical designation to reflect that you can pay homage to the spirit and use of a structure even if it's been torn down/rebuilt in modified format.
- **Option 3:** Allow for historically designated structures in the downtown corridor to have the immediate ability to function as short term rentals on all floors
 - I'd be in support of this combined with a moratorium on new STR licenses in other parts of town while we come up with a comprehensive plan, and providing they pass all the STR requirements (on site parking, property manager contact). I don't see this being a popular long term option on current 1 story structures due to high real estate values and the cost required to renovate these old structures to provide a high end STR experience.
- **Option 4:** Encourage historic preservation reinvestment as part of the Downtown Development Authority Operations Plan
 - I think there are better uses for this funding (public space improvements, wayfinding, etc) but if the DDA members decide that's the best way to spend funds, then that's their call at that point.
- **Option 5:** Require a minimum of two nominators for a structure to be nominated for historic designation
 - I am not understanding what is being addressed here - is it to prevent properties from being designated willy nilly? The goal should be that property owners are excited to get nominated for the benefits it brings. How can we accomplish that?
- **Option 6:** Create a process whereby property owners can determine if their structure would be historically designated without the property owner necessarily "supporting" such a designation
 - This seems like a good idea, an application to waive future designations - but I would much rather expand the options available under "historical designation" to encourage designations rather than discourage.
- **Option 7:** Allow residential in the Downtown Character Area on the back portion of the ground floor of historically designated commercial buildings to create live/work opportunities
 - Is this not allowed? That is surprising. We should be encouraging creative and beneficial uses of space in the downtown core that serve residents and business use as indicated above.
- **Option 8:** Waive construction use tax for all historically designated commercial buildings to support reinvestment
 - This would align with the aim of making a historical nomination beneficial to property

owners

Brian Rodine, Council Member
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I do my best to check this email account multiple times per week. Apologies for any delays in responding. If you need an urgent reply, please contact me via text message!

From: Michelle Metteer <manager@minturn.org>
Sent: Friday, June 28, 2024 2:57 PM
To: Madison Harris <planner1@minturn.org>
Subject: July 17th Work Session

Hello Minturn Town Council & Historic Preservation Commission,

We have a joint work session scheduled for July 17th in the Council Chambers at 4:30 pm. I want to ensure everyone is familiar with the process of a work session. Here is the basic outline:

- A light dinner of sandwiches or pizza will be served – please arrive early to plate up as we will start the work session promptly at 4:30 pm.
- The goal is for an organized discussion between the two boards and staff only (public can view the work session but does NOT participate).
- The public will have the opportunity to provide input during the Discussion/Direction portion of the Regular meeting.
- The outcome of a work session is to be prepared to make decisions and providing direction to staff during the public Discussion/Direction portion of the regular Council meeting.
- Once staff has direction (provided during public session only) we can come back with an Ordinance for consideration.

For the work session, staff will bring forward a series of options on possibilities for balancing historic preservation with economic viability in the Downtown 100-block. We are looking for win-win situations that result in increased vibrancy, utilized structures, and revenue generation while maintaining the Downtown's human-scale and historic characteristics. We need you all to come prepared for this discussion, so this email serves to provide extra time to think through the merits of the following options for finding the above-mentioned balance:

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Feel free to email me independently with questions or feedback.

Michelle Metteer
Town Manager
Minturn, Colorado