

FINAL HEARINGS:

1. Theobald Building Renovation, Landmarking and Variance Request (MM) PC#2008058; 101 South Main Street Mr. Mosher presented a proposal to completely restore the original façade of the Theobald Building (based on historic photographs), lower the interior floor (no changes to the exterior) in order to meet handicap access standards, rehabilitate and restore the north elevation to facilitate a viable retail experience between the Riverwalk and Main Street, replace the historic shed addition with a new facade as a stand-alone retail space behind the main building. No changes were proposed to the non-historic building (Pup’s Glide Shop) that exists at the west property edge. The north sidewalk in the public right of way will be heated to eliminate the ice dangers.

Changes since the Last Submittal

1. Elevations and plans of the relocated shed have been included.
2. The applicants have submitted a letter and photos addressing some of the concerns expressed during the last hearing regarding the proposed architecture.

Besides the request for the variance, the proposal met the intent of the remaining policies of the Handbook of Design Standards for the Historic and Conservation Districts and the Design Standards for the Historic District Character Area #6: Core Commercial. Staff believed that this project will add to the viability and “heartbeat” of the Commercial Core and enhance the connection to the Riverwalk while respecting the design goals of the Town’s historic standards. Mr. Mosher read from the staff report from the Rounds Building which had a similar corner orientation. Staff had two Questions for the Commission:

1. Did the Commission believe that the intent of Policy 3/A, regarding the reallocation of the “free” basement density, has been met and was therefore irrelevant to the development and required no variance?
2. Did the Commission believe that the additional Ski Hill Road façade was in general compliance with the related policies of the Handbook of Design Standards for the Historic and Conservation Districts regarding the settlement patterns (Priority Policy 4), Priority Policy 96 (Use a ratio of solid to void that is similar to those found on historic and supporting structures), Priority Policy 210 (Develop building fronts that reinforce the pedestrian-friendly character of the area. Avoid large blank wall surfaces that diminish pedestrian interest)?

Staff welcomed any additional questions or comments. Staff also requested three motions associated with the approval of this project:

1. Staff asked the Commission to recommend to the Town Council that they adopt an ordinance to Landmark the historic structure based on proposed restoration efforts and the fulfillment of criteria for architectural significance as stated in Section 9-11-4 of the Landmarking Ordinance.
2. Staff recommended the Commission endorse the attached Point Analysis for the Theobald Building Renovation, Landmarking and Variance Request (PC# 2008058) reflecting a passing score of positive four (+4) points.
3. Lastly, staff recommended approval of Theobald Building Renovation, Landmarking and Variance Request (PC# 2008058) along with the attached Findings and Conditions.

Randy Hodges, Architect: Will actually be heating about 1,000 square foot of sidewalk not about 750 as stated in the Staff report. Since clearing some of the basement space, we now realize that only 1,200 square feet of basement will be finished, less than initially reported. How many nationally rated structures are in town? (Mr. Grosshuesch, pointed out that about 3 or 4 buildings are eligible individually for the National Register. None are actually on the list individually.) During the winter, the public sidewalk is nearly impassable. Four feet of ice existed on the north side of the building in May 2008.

Mr. Theobald, Owner: Historically, Abby Hall was not the corner building, but another building was to the south which had window on the corner side. Looking at historic photos, the historic use of the building determined the number of lower level windows and their location. He showed several photos of historic buildings from Breckenridge, Leadville and Georgetown with side windows to the Commission.

Wayne Brown, Attorney, West, Brown, Huntley and Thompson: Page 69 of the Findings and Conditions 23-D: Suggested adding that the existing conditions are site specific as this is a corner building now. This is a building that wasn't originally built as a corner building.

Mr. Khavari opened the Public Hearing.

Mark Hogan, Baker+Hogan+Houx, Architects: Great application, appreciated what the applicant is doing with this property.

With no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Questions/Comments:

Mr. Bertaux: Final Comments: Great application for a very visible building in Town which has been long awaiting these improvements. Allowing the basement density protects the integrity of the building by placing the utilities and storage underground. Supported adding three additional positive points (+3) for circulation safety for a total of positive six (+6) points. Also supported the variance request because it's a unique building in that the town added the street after the building's construction.

Mr. Allen: Agreed that more points should be assigned to public benefit of the sidewalk than reducing any negative points for energy conservation.

Final Comments: This is the gateway to Main Street and improving the north wall will be great. Pointed out that this building was not always on the corner and therefore supported the variance.

Mr. Pringle: Sought clarification regarding historic rating criteria. (Staff pointed out it was their clarification that the building was historic and may drop a rating; not based on state review.) Asked staff about the possibility of a reduced rating as opposed to a more neutral rating with out the variance. (Mr. Mosher read the definition of "Contributing" and the "Contributing with Qualifications" categories. Staff believed that a variance would be more controlling and more site specific.) Asked if there was any distinction between a corner lot and an inside lot as far as what can occur architecturally. Would like to find a way to not lose ratings rather than grant a variance. All in support for what the applicant is trying to do. Had issue with granting a variance that detracts a historic building. Would like to find a way to not do a variance. (The Town Attorney believed that the variance would be more restrictive and more site specific, whereas not lowering the rating for the additions would open the book for a looser interpretation on all future applications. The Town Attorney suggested a variance is the best way to NOT create precedence.)

Final Comments: Great project that will enhance the town. Not sure about saying "free" density; suggested alternative verbiage. In the Findings and Conditions, spell out that this building was originally an interior building, not on a corner, therefore a variance makes sense. In favor of changing points to positive six (+6) for public safety benefit.

Mr. Mamula: Pointed out no rating appraisal was being done, but only an assessment by the staff. Regarding the negative points for energy conservation, he would like to find a way around the negative points assigned. (Mr. Neubecker pointed out a possible solution by adding more positive points to public safety, if the Commission finds that the heated sidewalk has more public benefit.) He felt a community benefit should warrant more positive points and not penalize an applicant. In other situations with less pedestrian traffic, would not support this many points. Felt it important to add to the application that this building was not always on the corner.

Final Comments: Often hears about this building needing improvement and therefore glad improvements will be made.

Mr. Khavari: Final Comments: Agreed with comments made. Agreed with positive 6 points for the heated sidewalk.

Mr. Mamula made a motion to change the Point Analysis under Policy 16/R Internal Circulation from positive three (+3) to positive six (+6) reflecting a new passing score of positive seven (+7) points for the Theobald Building Renovation, Landmarking and Variance Request (PC#2008058), 101 South Main Street. Mr. Bertaux seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Bertaux made a motion to recommend to the Town Council that they adopt an ordinance to Landmark the historic structure at 101 South Main Street based on proposed restoration efforts and the fulfillment of criteria for architectural significance as stated in Section 9-11-4 of the Landmarking Ordinance. Mr. Allen seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Pringle made a motion to approve the Theobald Building Renovation, Landmarking and Variance Request (PC#2008058), 101 South Main Street, along with the attached Findings and Conditions and expanding on Finding #24 Paragraph D that it be amended to include the language that the town attorney finds appropriate concerning the fact that this building was previously not a corner lot situation. Mr. Pringle seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

(Suggested language from Tim Berry, Town Attorney:

“D. The conditions upon which the request is based are unique to the property for which the relief is sought and are not applicable generally to other property.

Reason/Factual Basis for Finding: The historic building located on the Applicant’s property was not originally constructed as a corner property. At the time of the building’s construction, there was another building located immediately adjacent to and northerly of the Applicant’s property. That building was subsequently torn down, and Ski Hill Road was built as a public street by the Town. This resulted in the Applicant’s building becoming located at the southwesterly corner of South Main Street and Ski Hill Road. The change that resulted in the Applicant’s property becoming a corner property was not caused by the Applicant. Based on the historical evidence presented by the Applicant, the Planning Commission finds that had the Applicant’s building been originally constructed as a corner property, the northerly elevation of the building most probably would have been constructed with window features similar to those proposed by the Applicant in the Application. For these reasons, the Planning Commission concludes that the applicable conditions are site-specific to the Applicant’s property and do not exist generally within the Town’s Historic District or the land use district in which the Applicant’s property is located.”)

2. Buffalo Crossing (MGT) PC#2008052; 209 & 211 North Main Street

Mr. Thompson presented a proposal to add south facing solar panels to the roof of the approved residential structure of 2,080 sq. ft. with a 585 sq. ft. employee-housing unit. The Applicant also requested local Landmarking of 360 square foot historic cabin (to remain commercial), the addition of a 360 square foot basement under the historic cabin, the addition of a bronze buffalo statute as public art facing North Main Street, and the addition of two exterior areaway accesses to the employee housing unit and to the basement of the proposed commercial unit facing the alley.

Staff recommended the Planning Commission approve Buffalo Crossing, PC#2008052, Lot 67 and Lot 68, Bartlett & Shock, located at 209 and 211 North Main Street, with the attached Findings and Conditions.

Staff also requested that the Planning Commission give a recommendation to the Town Council to approve Local Landmark status to the historic cabin on the property. A separate motion would be required for this recommendation.

Commissioner Questions/Comments:

Mr. Bertaux: Sought clarification about the extension of time to review the solar panels. (Mr. Thompson explained if they didn’t complete them on time they would lose their positive (+3) three points under Policy 33/R Renewable Sources of Energy. Even if the applicant lost the positive three (+3) points for renewable sources of energy, the project would still pass with a point total of positive one (+1).) Recommended land marking this structure.

Final Comments: Appreciated the restoration work being completed.

Mr. Allen: Where did the positive three (+3) for access circulation come from? (Staff explained the east / west circulation was the primary benefit.) Regarding the conflict with pedestrians and cars, he’s not anticipating many cars here. (Staff pointed out there wouldn’t be many cars other than those residing on site.) Positive three (+3) points really warranted because of the east / west connection from Main Street to future Riverwalk.

Final Comments: Ok.

Mr. Pringle: Is the land dedicated to the town? (Staff explained that the applicant will grant a pedestrian access easement prior to Certificate of Occupancy.) He felt staff made the right decision awarding points for the easement.

Final Comments: Looks fine; all discussed in the past.

Mr. Mamula: Did the Public Art Commission review the public art being proposed? (Staff stated the public art application was taken to the Breckenridge Arts Commission. The Arts Commission asked the applicant to consider a more abstract buffalo statue, the applicant has agreed to a less generic buffalo bronze statue.) Was there a safety issue with cars and pedestrians? (Staff pointed out different materials would be used creating an obvious visual impact.) Fine with the limited conflict as long as there are separate materials.

Final Comments: Hard to comment since he hasn't been a part of the application from its inception.

Mr. Khavari: Agreed with the other Commissioners comments.

Final Comments: Thought this was a good project.

Mr. Pringle made a motion to recommend to the Town Council that they adopt an ordinance to Landmark the historic cabin at 209 North Main Street based on the fulfillment of criteria for architectural significance as stated in Section 9-11-4 of the Landmarking Ordinance. Mr. Bertaux seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Pringle made a motion to approve the Buffalo Crossing (PC#2008052), 209-211 North Main Street, along with the attached Findings and Conditions adding # 36 to read: "If the applicant does not have the proposed solar panels installed and connected the electrical system for the building at the time of the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the residential building in the southwest corner of the lot, the final point analysis for the project will be modified, with the removal of positive three (+3) points under policy 33/R-Energy Conservation." Mr. Mamula seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

WORKSESSIONS:

1. Planning Commission Field Trip Topics

Mr. Neubecker presented a memo requesting the Commission think about topics and dates for a fall 2008 field trip. Staff was thinking that we could again focus on Ski Area Base development, considering the large redevelopment and master planning of the gondola parking lots. This area is also a de-facto base area, and is one of the largest and most important pieces of land anticipated for development in Breckenridge over the next 5-10 years. Other topics that should be considered are historic preservation, capacity issues, home sizes and affordable housing developments.

The trip has traditionally taken place in September or October of each year.

Commissioner Questions/Comments:

Mr. Bertaux: Suggested energy efficiency vs. historic integrity. Scrape offs and density issues afterwards.

Mr. Allen: Suggested base area development. Suggested visiting Banff or Mountain Village. Iconic hotels would be great to visit.

Mr. Pringle: Suggested Whitefish which has major development. Also consider Banff and/or Canmore.

Mr. Mamula: Also consider scrape-offs, home size.

Mr. Khavari: Redevelopment tops his list.

2. Historic Period of Significance

Mr. Neubecker presented a memo updating the Commission on the Historic Period of Significance. At the meeting on June 3, 2008, staff reiterated the idea of changing our Period of Significance from pre-1942 to "50 years or older". This was based on a suggestion from the Town Council to reconsider our Period of Significance. Since we did not have time at the last meeting to show photographs, we would like to take some time to show you some photos of existing buildings that would soon fall under the 50-year rules.

Currently, "historic" structures in Breckenridge are those that were built prior to 1943, which was the end of gold dredge mining in Breckenridge. However, many communities, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Department of the Interior, use a 50-year rule: properties 50 years and older are eligible for historic designation.

The idea behind this change is that many structures associated with the dawn of skiing in Breckenridge would become eligible for “historic” designation and would therefore garner greater protection from demolition or significant alteration.

Staff presented the slide show, and pointed out that many of the buildings have been significantly altered over time, including complete exterior remodels and major additions that have significantly altered the character of the homes. Staff requested the Commission consider the architectural character of those homes, and indicate if they found there was an architectural character or theme than we need to protect.

Mr. Grosshuesch suggested that Commission consider a relative policy as an incentive.

Commissioner Questions/Comments:

Mr. Bertaux: 1943 is a good limit. Would like to see why a particular building is significant.

Mr. Allen: Didn't think much will be torn down due to loss of density if already over density. Separating residential from commercial may lead to unintended consequences. Allow property owners to opt-in, don't require participation.

Mr. Pringle: Was Aspen successful with a similar issue as this? (Staff will look into Aspen's period of significance.) Did not see any single family homes outside Conservation District that are worth saving. Have not yet formed opinion.

Mr. Mamula: Pointed out the Salt Creek remodel, where they gutted the interior just to keep density. Any single family outside of the district would be irrelevant. Suggested a movable 50 year period with options for the owner. Preferred to not saddle anyone. Recommended basements to address decreased density. Suggested an incentive to opt in.

Mr. Khavari: Identify which structures are being talked about.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55p.m.

Mike Khavari, Chair