



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

August 12, 2020, 5:45 P.M.

Meeting Held Virtually

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### MINUTES

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Zuckweiler called the meeting to order at 5:50 pm

1. Roll Call

Board members in attendance:

Jean Zuckweiler  
Ruth Brunner  
Alicia Ready

Absent:

Also in attendance:

Paul Hornbeck, Senior Planner  
Julie Cline, Town Board liaison  
Laura Browarny, Culture Supervisor

2. Review of Agenda by the Board and Addition of Items of New Business to the Agenda for Consideration by the Board.

There were no changes to the agenda.

#### **B. CONSENT CALENDAR**

No items

#### **C. BOARD ACTION**

**1. Public Hearing – Designation of the Halfway House – 33327 WCR 15 – as a Historic Landmark**

Ms. Ready moved to open the public hearing. Ms. Brunner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hornbeck presented the following information:

Ms. Laura Browarny, Culture Supervisor with the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Department, has submitted a nomination on behalf of the Town of Windsor to designate the Halfway House as a historic landmark. Located at 33327 Weld County Road 15 on what's now known as the Jacoby Farm, the Halfway House was originally built in 1873 by Leonard John Hilton. It's believed to be Windsor's oldest building, built nine years before the town was established. Called the Halfway House due to its location approximately halfway on the between Greeley and Laporte on the Overland Trail, the Halfway House served as an inn, saloon, and post office in its early years.

For additional background information and history please refer to enclosed materials.

Proposed Landmarks must be at least fifty (50) years old and meet one (1) or more of the criteria for architectural, social, or geographical/environmental significance hereinafter described. A landmark could be exempt from the age standard if it is found to be exceptionally important in other significant criteria.

### **Social**

- a. Exemplifies cultural, political, economic or social heritage of the community.

Staff Comment:

*The Halfway House exemplifies the cultural, economic, and social heritage of the community. As the first permanent structure built in what is now Windsor, the building is significant in demonstrating the history of westward expansion and the founding of Windsor. It survived the advent of agriculture in Windsor and housed farmers and their families for years and now serves as a reminder of Windsor's early days.*

- b. An association with a notable person or the work of a notable person.

Staff Comment:

*The Halfway House is associated with notable families that were critical to the early development of Windsor as an agricultural community. John Hilton was a Civil War veteran who appears to have first arrived in Colorado in 1869 and raised livestock. He was elected Justice of Peace for Weld County in 1871 and built the Halfway House in 1873, seeing the economic potential of serving travelers between Fort Collins and Greeley. He successfully petitioned to open the first post office in the Windsor area at the Halfway House, serving around 30 families in the surrounding area from 1873-1875. Hilton later sold the Halfway House and became a prominent attorney in Fort Collins.*

*Julius Weller was the first legal owner of the Halfway House, having been granted homesteading rights to the surrounding 160 acres of farmland in 1875. He continued to operate the Halfway House as an inn. His son, 16 year old Fred Weller, opened a mercantile business in 1884 that soon merged with a general store. Early customers included key historic figures Edward Hollister and Governor Benjamin Eaton. After Julius Weller's death in 1889, the Halfway House and farm was left to Fred Weller, who soon traded the farm to his business partner Robert S. Dickey. Fred went on to become a prominent business man in Windsor and Eaton, Colorado. Fred was one of the petitioners in 1890 to incorporate Windsor as a town, served as a trustee on the first Windsor Town Board, and was the Town Clerk from 1890 to May 1896.*

*Robert S. Dickey, in addition to being partners with Fred Weller in operating one of the early stores in Windsor, the Weller-Cobbs Merchandise Company, was a farmer, one of the first teachers in Windsor and later became the Superintendent of Schools.*

*Jacob Henry Jacoby, Sr. immigrated to Windsor in 1910 with his family. He worked for a time at the Great Western Sugar Company mill in Windsor, as did many other Volga Germans, and the Jacoby family was one of the immigrant families that the Dickey family hired to help them farm their land. Germans from Russia, or Volga Germans, originally came from Germany. During the eighteenth century, Catherine the Great and her grandson Alexander I invited Germans to settle rich farm lands along Russia's Volga River. Political turmoil in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century motivated thousands of Volga Germans*

*to immigrate to the United States, where they settled on the plains of Kansas, Colorado, and the Dakotas.*

**The physical integrity of the proposed landmarks will also be evaluated using the following criteria (a property need not meet all of the following criteria):**

- a. Shows character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the community, region, State or nation.

*Staff Comment:*

*The Halfway House is directly associated with development and heritage of the Windsor community and northern Colorado as outlined in sections above.*

- b. Retains original design features, materials and/or character.

*Staff Comment: The structure has retained many original design features and materials. Some original materials have been covered; however, removal of non-contributing materials will reveal the original character of the building.*

- c. Original location or same historic context after having being moved.

*Staff Comment: The Halfway House may have been moved a few hundred feet at some point in its history but it retains its historic context as halfway between Fort Collins and Greeley along the Overland Trail route.*

- d. Has been accurately reconstructed or restored based on documentation.

*Staff Comment: This section is not applicable at present. Work may be needed to restore the structure and will need to be done following the Secretary of Interiors Standards.*

**2. Recommendation to Town Board - Designation of the Halfway House – 33327 WCR 15 – as a Historic Landmark Communications from Town Board liaison**

Ms. Ready made a motion that Historic Preservation Commission forward to Town Board a recommendation of approval of the Designation of the Halfway House as a Local Landmark based on the finding of fact that the Halfway House meets the following criteria for designation:

1. Exemplifies the cultural, economic and social heritage of the community.
2. Is associated with various notable people.

Ms. Brunner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. Communications from the Historic Preservation Commission.**

Ms. Zuckweiler mentioned revisiting the plaque designation for buildings. History Colorado's website includes links to information about plaques.

Ms. Brunner mentioned examples of plaques.

Ms. Browarny said PRC would be interested in being part of the design of signs to ensure consistency with other projects. PRC does not currently have funding but could include in future budgets.

Ms. Zuckweiler suggested using previous historic surveys and sending letters to perhaps 10 property owners explaining designation process to gauge interest.

There was discussion if plaques should be customized to each property or generic. Ms. Browarny was in favor of including custom information about each building.

There was discussion about starting with homes or businesses.

It was asked if the DDA could partner with the Town on the project.

Different plaques could be used for homes and businesses, with plaques at homes being more simple.

Fort Collins uses sidewalk medallions to recognize properties.

Discussion about appropriate location for plaque on residences – on the building or sidewalk

2. **Communications from Town Board liaison** - Ms. Cline updated the HPC on Town Board activities, include the strategic plan.
3. **Communications from staff** – Future meetings will be held September 9, 2020 and October 14, 2020.

**E. ADJOURN**

Upon a motion duly made, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32p.m.



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Paul Hornbeck, Senior Planner