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**HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD AGENDA
CITY HALL AUDITORIUM, 250 NORTH 5TH STREET
TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2022 - 4:00 PM**

Call to Order/Announcements

Approval of Minutes

1. Approve Minutes of the April 5, 2022 Meeting

Discussion Items

1. 2022 Nomination to Colorado Most Endangered Places List - Teller Institute

Updates

Other Business/Public Comment

Adjournment



Grand Junction Planning Commission

Regular Session

Item #1.

Meeting Date: August 2, 2022

Presented By:

Department: Community Development

Submitted By:

Information

SUBJECT:

Approve Minutes of the April 5, 2022 Meeting

RECOMMENDATION:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Attachments

1. Historic Preservation Board Minutes - 2022 - April 5

Historic Preservation Board Meeting

Minutes – April 5, 2022

Board Members Present: Priscilla Mangnall, Troy Reynolds, Vida Jaber, Sidney Wood and Dave Fishell

Board Members Not Present: Ron Parron and Mikhail Blosser

Others in Attendance: David Thornton, Principal Planner (covering for Kristen Ashbeck); Randall Reitz, City Council Liaison; Arlo Dicristina, Elysium Studios

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The meeting was virtually called to order at 4:05 pm by Chairman Troy Reynolds.

Priscilla announce a reminder for the History Fair on April 16th and the Redlands Community Club.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Randall Reitz moved to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2022 meeting with the deletion of the word “virtual” in the call to order paragraph. Dave Fishell seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Historic Preservation Day

The Board discussed Historic Preservation Day which will be held at 535 North 7th Street (former First Church of Christ, Scientist) from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The owner of the church building, Arlo Dicristina was in attendance. Kristen Ashbeck had provided the Board with a schedule to review and a list of items to be discussed to finalize logistics for the day.

- Schedule: Randall and Troy will cover set-up and morning, Sidney, Priscilla, Vida and Arlo will cover afternoon and take-down
- Only on-site sign-up for the tours. Tour 1 with Dave Fishell/Sidney, Tour 2 with Priscilla Mangnall/Troy. Dave is willing to do a second tour if there is demand
- Historic Preservation Awards – Tope Elementary Second Graders and First Church of Christ, Scientist
- DJ Will play 11:30-1:30
- Family/Children Activities
- Free Ice Cream and Water will be handed out
- Troy and Arlo will go at space and suggest a layout of tables, games, etc.
- Sidney and Vida will work on a flyer and include suggestion for parking at Lowell School, maybe Baptist Church

- Vid will host a Museum booth – oral history

Kristen will coordinate a press release of all events for Historic Preservation Month

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 PM.



Grand Junction Planning Commission

Regular Session

Item #1.

Meeting Date: August 2, 2022

Presented By:

Department: Community Development

Submitted By:

Information

SUBJECT:

2022 Nomination to Colorado Most Endangered Places List - Teller Institute

RECOMMENDATION:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Historic Preservation Board nominated the Teller Institute to the Colorado Most Endangered Places list in 2019. The nomination was well done and received high marks—the main reason it wasn't selected in 2019 was because the Southern Ute boarding school was nominated at the same time, and it was a little more historically intact. However, CPI believed the Teller Institute site is very significant and important and encouraged the Board to nominate the property again and suggested the nomination be strengthened with more information if possible to: 1) provide more information regarding the significance AFTER the school as the State Home for Mental Defectives since there are more buildings remaining on the site from that era; and 2) update to include in the nomination what may have changed about the status of the site since then. One important change is the awareness of the impact of the boarding school era on the national consciousness since that time (including the appointment of the first Indigenous Secretary of the Interior) and the efforts they have undertaken with regard to these sites—including any new role History Colorado may play there.

The original nomination is attached. **The deadline for the nomination is Monday, August 22nd at 4pm.**

At the August 2, 2022 meeting, the Board needs to decide:

- 1) Do you want to re-nominate the site?

- 2) If so, identify member(s) that can work with staff to revise the information
- 3) Identify member(s) that will contact others to provide new letters of support

BACKGROUND OR DETAILED INFORMATION:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

Attachments

1. Teller Insitute-Grand Junction Regional Center

Kim Grant

From: JotForm <noreply@jotform.com>
Sent: Friday, August 16, 2019 4:22 PM
To: Jennifer Orrigo Charles; Kim Grant
Subject: New submission: Endangered Places Nominations - 2020



Endangered Places Nominations - 2020

Historic/Current Site Name Teller Institute/Grand Junction Regional Center

Property Address 2800 Riverside Parkway
Grand Junction

County (click all that apply) Mesa

Is the site Publicly Owned

Is the property owned by multiple individuals/organizations? N/A
If yes, please list and explain.

Owner State of Colorado

Address Street Address: 2800 Riverside Parkway
City: Grand Junction
State / Province: CO
Postal / Zip Code: 81501
Country: United States

Phone Number 9702452100

Email trudy.ramos@state.co.us

Is the Owner(s) aware of this Nomination? No

If yes, does the owner(s) endorse this application? Unknown

Who is nominating the site? Organization

Nominator Landon Hawes

Organization (if applicable) Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board

Address	Street Address: 250 North 5th Street City: Grand Junction State / Province: CO Postal / Zip Code: 81501 Country: United States
Phone Number	970-244-1435
Email	landonh@gjcity.org
Is the site historically designated (click all that apply)?	Not Designated
What themes are associated with this site? For example, transportation, homesteading, mining, etc.	The buildings on this site are associated with and of significance to the broad federal programs of the 1880s and 1890s to resettle Native Americans from western Colorado onto Reservation. The Teller Institute was created in an effort to provide residential schools for the transition of Indian children from their traditional culture to a more "acceptable" white culture. Children were expected to learn English and abandon their native languages. They were taught the fundamentals as well as useful trade skills. These off-reservation schools were closed by federal mandate in 1911. It is known that a cemetery existed on the site but, to date, it has not been precisely located. The remaining buildings are characteristic of the residential and utility types of buildings that were popular during this period. After the Indian School was used it has been occupied by a number of other programs: State Home and Training School for Mental Defectives around 1939; State Home and Training School circa 1957 to 1964; and currently the Grand Junction Regional Center.
To the best of your knowledge, has the site received financial or tax assistance (for example grant funding, foundation support, governmental funding, etc)? If yes, please list.	Being a State-owned property, it certainly receives financial assistance from the State and perhaps Federal governments. However, it is likely only basic operations and maintenance funding rather than preservation-oriented funding. We are unaware of any preservation-specific funding being expended on the site/structures.
Has the site been previously nominated to the Endangered Places Program?	Unknown
How would listing benefit the site?	Listing on the Most Endangered Places Program would raise public awareness of the facility and its buildings and, perhaps more importantly, raise

awareness of its past functions, especially that of the Teller Institute for Indian youth. It represents a unique segment of history as well as an underrepresented population – Native Americans. Listing could also help bring more resources to creating plans for the future use of the property that includes preservation of some of the original structures.

How would listing benefit CPI's Endangered Places Program? For example, why should CPI get involved with this project - considerations may include what lessons could be learned by listing, what partnerships could be gained, what can the site contribute to the story of Colorado's development and heritage, etc.

Listing of this property on the Most Endangered List would benefit CPI as further illustration of the broad historic resources that exist in Colorado, particularly those that represent Native American populations. The latter are somewhat underrepresented in the current CPI list as well as overall attention throughout the State.

Please describe the history of the site.

The buildings at this site were constructed from the late 1880s through the 1980s. This nomination is most interested in the remaining buildings from the 1880s through the 1930s.

The Teller Institute (Indian School) was established in 1886 as an "off-reservation school" for Native American boys. The goal of the school was to move Native American children off the reservation and introduce them to the "white" way of life. The students were expected to work in the fields that provided food for the school, and they were often hired out to local farms and orchards. There was also an emphasis on music and sports, which brought the students into contact with the community of Grand Junction. By 1908, the school housed over 200 boys and girls and had twelve buildings, five of which were brick. Tribes represented at the school included Papagos, Moquis, Shoshone, Pima, Navajo, Hopi, and Ute.

The complex was later used as a home for individuals with mental disabilities during the 1930s, a time which marked a second wave of building on the campus. A third wave of building took place in the 1950s and 1960s.

Please describe the site's current use, condition,

The buildings remaining on the site from the period of significance (1880s-1911) are somewhat

and surrounding landscape. If vacant for approximately how long?

altered. The two primary buildings East House A and West House B have several inappropriate alterations but are still intact enough to convey their origins and could be reversed. The Boiler House G and Adaptive H are generally unchanged from their original form. The Boiler House is still functioning in its original manner while the Adaptive building has taken on a new use that is compatible with the original building. The remaining buildings on the site area mixture of occupied and vacant buildings. Most have few, if any, alterations.

The State of Colorado continues to utilize the facility and the majority of the buildings and, thus, has maintained them to minimal livable/useable standards. Several buildings have fallen into disrepair and are no longer used so there is little, if any, ongoing maintenance of those.

Why is this place important? Please include how it is important to the community, region, and/or state.

This site is significant for its representation of the early attitudes toward the resettlement of Native Americans and attempts to assimilate them into white culture.

Why is the site endangered and how imminent is the threat?

The largest threats to the buildings are twofold: the changing needs of the Institution that presently occupies the site as well as impending sale of the property by the State of Colorado. The State intends to close or move remaining operations of housing severely disabled persons and some correctional use elsewhere and excess the property within the next few years. Design work on potential relocation sites for the residents has started. Significant original buildings have been previously demolished and two of the remaining buildings are not in use. These are subject to further deterioration or may be demolished. Renovations for reuse are likely to further impact the integrity of the buildings.

Have any previous measures been taken to protect the site? If yes, please explain.

There have been no previous measures taken to protect the site, to the best of our knowledge.

Is there community support for preserving the site? Please explain.

There is community support for obtaining local control of the property/buildings. The State has passed legislation allowing it to be transferred to another entity rather than sold. There is less support for saving all of the buildings but there is some support for retaining those with the most significance connected to its Teller Institute (Indian School) use and those in better condition. Refer to attached letters of support.

Are you aware of any opposition (or potential opposition) to saving this site or listing it on Colorado's Most Endangered Places? If yes, please explain.

The only opposition we are aware of for saving the property is the fact that some of the buildings may be too far gone or unsafe and potential users that have been identified would prefer building new facilities. There seems to be support for at least saving the older ones on the campus, not so much for the more recent ones.

Are there any short and/or long-term plans for the site?

The short-term plans (2-3) years are to relocate the remaining programs and residents of the facility to new housing. The disabled persons will likely be relocated into group homes scattered throughout the Grand Valley. Once that has occurred, the State is likely to sell or transfer the property and buildings to an as-yet-to-be-determined user(s). Several local entities have discussed creating a consortium to take over the property for a variety of uses including housing, day care and other social services and programs but an exact use is yet to be determined until negotiations with the State have been completed. To date, some representatives of the consortium have undertaken environmental review of the site and the exploratory work to locate the cemetery is underway.

What defines a SAVE for this site and what steps would lead to this save?

A save for this site is to see it successfully transferred to an entity that has a clear program for its reuse and redevelopment that would include at least preserving the core area of buildings most representative of its use as the Teller Institute Indian School.

If selected, what assistance would you hope to receive from Colorado Preservation, Inc?

If listed, CPI could help bring together players and resources that could create a master plan for the larger property, perform further analysis of the remaining buildings, and identify the priority areas of the campus to be preserved. CPI could perhaps also assist with designation of at least a portion of the site in the State Register of Historic Places. Finally, CPI could assist with identification of the Native American cemetery on site.

Contact information for local media outlets (television, radio, web, print, etc.)

Sentinel Print 970-242-5050 tips@gjsentinel.com

KKCO TV 970-243-1111
sarah.schwabe@kkco11news.com

KJCT TV 970-245-8880 stacey.stewart@kjct8.com

KREX TV 970-242-5000 news@krex.tv

KAFM Radio 970-241-8801 psa@kafmradio.org

Please provide information on any identified future funding, partners, and/or potential sponsors.

This is dependent on who takes over the property and what future uses are intended. If the city takes ownership, one potential partner could be the Grand Junction Housing Authority. The city has also identified state historic funds and possibly Community Development Block Grant money as potential sources of funding.

Please provide contact information for local groups and/or individuals interested in saving the site. This information will be used by your assigned site reviewer as part of their review of the project.

Landon Hawes - Senior Planner, City of Grand Junction - 970-244-1435

Kris Ashbeck - Principal Planner, City of Grand Junction - 970-244-1491

Map of the site

[Teller Institute Aerial with Labels.pdf](#)

Current Image - 1

[Teller Institute - West House.pdf](#)

Current Image - 2

[Teller Institute - East House.pdf](#)

Current Image - 3

[Teller Institute - Boiler House and Adaptive Equipment Buildings.pdf](#)

Historic Photograph (if available) - 1

[teller school.jpg](#)

Letter of Support - 1

[Mesa County Historical Society letter of support.doc](#)

Letter of Support - 2

[MWC LetterSupport.pdf](#)

Letter of Support - 3

[49 Mesa County Historical Society letter of support 9156.doc](#)

Other

[Teller Institute- Administration and Carson Buildings.pdf](#)

You can [edit this submission](#) and [view all your submissions](#) easily.



Teller Institute - West House



Teller Institute - East House



House (center-left) and Adaptive Equipment (center-right) Buildings





Administration (left) and Carson (right) Building



PO Box 20,000
Grand Junction, CO 81502-5020
970/242-0971 ~ Fax 970/242-3960
Toll free 888/488-3466
www.museumofwesternco.org



*Museum of the West/Loyd Files Research Library
970/242-0971 ~ 462 Ute Ave. Grand Jct.
*Dinosaur Journey Museum
970/858-7282 ~ 550 Jurassic Ct Fruita
*Cross Orchards Historic Site
970/434-9814 ~ 3073 F Rd. Grand Jct.

August 16, 2019

Colorado Preservation, Inc.
1420 Ogden St.
Suite 104
Denver, CO 80218

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to lend my support to the Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board in its work to designate the Teller Institute (Grand Junction Indian School) as one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places. While still a state-owned property, the constant removal of historic buildings, as well as the imminent sale threatens to destroy an important historic site that helps to tell the often-forgotten history of residential boarding schools operated by the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The Teller Institute is not only important to the history of the State of Colorado, but also for sovereign tribal nations whose children were taken from them under the guise of education. These boarding schools existed to completely replace the students' native culture with those of Euro-American settlers of the area. They were forbidden from dressing in traditional clothing and from speaking tribal languages. Those who died at the school were not returned to their families for culturally appropriate burials but were instead buried on the school property in Euro-American Christian fashion. As such, the Teller Institute is also home to a cemetery where the remains of at least 20 Native American children are interred, the location of which has been lost to time as no known map of the school shows its location.

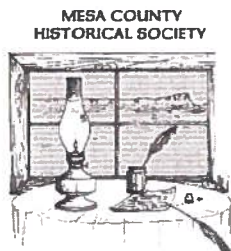
Senate Bill 16-178, signed by former governor John Hickenlooper, has mandated that this site be closed and sold. The Teller Institute site is on borrowed time. Colorado Preservation, Inc. can play an instrumental role in saving the Teller Institute from complete and total loss. The Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board is in a fight against time to preserve this important historic site by ensuring that it is designated as an endangered place. With the help of the Endangered Places program, the Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board can help to raise awareness of the history that is in danger of being lost by preserving the remaining historical structures and the cemetery for future generations to learn about this almost completely forgotten aspect of history.

Sincerely,

Erin Johnson Schmitz
Assistant Director
Curator of Collections and Archives

eschmitz@westcomuseum.org
970-242-0971 ext. 2-209





Mesa County Historical Society
PO Box 842
Grand Junction, CO 81502

August 9, 2019

Colorado Preservation, Inc.
1420 Ogden Street
Suite 104
Denver, CO 80218

Dear Nomination Committee:

The Mesa County Historical Society is pleased to offer its support and commendation to the City of Grand Junction's Historic Preservation Board's effort to nominate the Teller Institute as one of Colorado's Endangered Places.

The Teller Institute was opened in 1886 as The Teller Indian School and named after U.S. Senator Henry Teller of Colorado who helped pass the legislation for creation of the school. Children from a dozen Indian nations were sent to the school where they were stripped of their native customs, language...even their given names. They were trained in gardening, construction and domestic skills and sent out into the Grand Valley communities to help farmers, ranchers and households. Many of these skills were taught on campus. It was reported that around 25 students died while there and are buried in a cemetery on the grounds. Efforts are being made to find the old cemetery and honor those buried.

The school was closed in 1910 and many of the original buildings have been demolished over the years. Historical surveys have identified the remaining buildings and there are several original to the opening of the school. The site became the State Home and Training School for mental defectives then the Grand Junction Regional Center, a facility owned by the State of Colorado. The Regional Center is in the process of being phased out.

The history of the Teller Institute is vast and compelling. Should the state sell it off, the remaining historical structures would be in jeopardy.

The Mesa County Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation and presentation of Mesa County history and heartily supports placing the Teller Institute on Colorado's Most Endangered Places list.

Historically yours,

Priscilla B. Mangnall

Priscilla Mangnall, President
Mesa County Historical Society

August 12, 2019

Colorado Preservation, Inc.
1420 Ogden St.
Suite 104
Denver, CO 80218

Dear Colleagues in Historic Preservation:

It is with great enthusiasm that I lend my support to the Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board in its work to designate the Grand Junction Indian School (Teller Institute) one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places. While the Teller Institute is of clear importance to the history of the state, the country, and its sovereign tribal nations, it is even more importantly home to a "lost" cemetery of Native American children who were buried at the school. The steady and shortsighted erosion of the historic character of the property and its buildings has endangered the site for decades. Total loss is now imminent, as sale and privatization jeopardize what is, for now, still a state-owned property.

The Grand Junction Indian School (1859-1911) was a residential boarding school operated by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. American Indian children were transported from their home reservations to the school in order to receive an education and train in one of the industrial or domestic arts. Boarding schools were also designed to wholly replace the pupils' native culture with dominant Euroamerican values and behavioral norms. For example, students were forbidden from dressing in culturally meaningful clothing or living out their native beliefs on school grounds. This ban extended to mortuary rites. The bodies of native children who died at school were not sent back to their families for appropriate funerals, but were instead interred in school cemeteries in Christian fashion.

When the Grand Junction Indian School closed in 1911, the federal government transferred ownership of the property and buildings to the state of Colorado. For their part, the state allowed the buildings and grounds to fall into disrepair for ten years before re-opening it as the "State Home for Mental Defectives." Now known as the Grand Junction Regional Center (GJRC), the Department of Human Services has operated the institution up to today. However, over the decades, most of the original Teller Institute buildings were razed and replaced by modern constructions. Only four buildings from the Indian School-era remain standing. Most importantly, knowledge of the school cemetery has been "lost," and no known map or photograph of the school shows its location. After much research, it appears the remains of at least 20 American Indian children are interred somewhere on Regional Center property. It is imperative the cemetery be re-located before it is lost forever.

With a dwindling number of residents and the need for asbestos remediation, the continued operation of the GJRC has become fiscally unsustainable. Thus, in 2016, former governor John Hickenlooper signed Senate Bill 16-178, mandating the closure of the institution and consequent sale of the property. To the best of my knowledge, it does not appear the Joint Budget Committee, who drafted the legislation, took the historic nature of the property, its boarding school past, or the presence of the cemetery into consideration. Indeed, the history of the property does not appear to have been known by any of the legislators in question, by itself revealing an unfortunate lack of knowledge about the history of the institution amongst today's Coloradans. Discussions about the sale of the property are ongoing in 2019, but that the property will change hands is not in dispute. Without question, the time to preserve what remains of the Indian School and its cemetery is now.

The Grand Junction Historic Preservation Board has taken up this important charge, and is now working to see the Teller Institute rightfully designated as an endangered resource. Colorado Preservation, Inc. can play a vital and instrumental role in saving the Grand Junction Indian School from further damage or loss. The Endangered Places program will raise awareness about the institution and its impending loss, and will hopefully ignite community concern about the loss of its history. The remaining historic buildings and cemetery at the Grand Junction Indian School are living testament to U.S. cultural and American Indian history, Indian/White relations at the turn of the 20th century, and the critical role played by Colorado in both. It should absolutely be preserved for the edification of future generations. I cannot stress enough how important it is to save the Grand Junction Indian School—an institution that has fallen nearly completely out of cultural memory. With the aid of Colorado Preservation, Inc., the loss of the buildings, and our knowledge, can be halted in perpetuity. I thank you in advance for a favorable decision on the listing of the Teller Institute as one of Colorado's Most Endangered Places.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Sincerely,



John D. Seebach, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Archaeology
Colorado Mesa University
Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Grand Junction, CO 81501

970-248-1292
jseebach@coloradomesa.edu