



**BOARDS & COMMISSIONS**

## Historic Preservation Commission Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2025, at 4:00pm

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Podell called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

**2. Roll Call – Present**

Commissioner Doran Azari  
Commissioner Marshall Clough  
Commissioner Christen DePetro  
Commissioner Sean Jaehn  
Commissioner Melissa Martinez  
Commissioner Brent McHattie  
Chair Dan Podell  
Alternate Commissioner Gabe Llanas  
**Absent:** none.

**3. Approval of the agenda**

There were no changes to the agenda  
**Motion by:** Commissioner Azari  
He moved to approve the agenda as written.  
**Second:** Commissioner Clough  
**Vote:** Motion passed 7-0

**4. Approval of Minutes**

There were no changes to the minutes  
**Motion by:** Commissioner Clough  
He moved to approve the minutes as written.  
**Second:** Commissioner Jaehn  
**Vote:** Motion passed 7-0

**5. Report from Historic Greeley Inc**

Julia Richard noted that the prior minutes correctly captured their review of Historic Greeley's annual weekend preservation project and expressed appreciation for it. She also reminded everyone about the upcoming Historic Greeley Christmas tea, mentioning a few Saturday afternoon tables were still available, calling it a lovely event in a historic home and leaving information for the commissioners.

**6. A Public Hearing to Consider a Request for Certificate of Designation for the Dean Building/Weld County Bank Building/City Hall, at 1000 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Case No. GHR2025-0002**

The following Commissioners had to recuse themselves from this vote because they are on the board of Historic Greeley Inc.: Commissioner Clough and Commissioner Jaehn. Commissioner Azari had to recuse himself because he is a member of the School Board for District 6, an entity involved in the Downtown Civic Campus project. Alternate Commissioner Llanas filled in for Commissioner Azari for this hearing.

Chair Podell opened the item at 4:06pm. He noted that some commission members needed to recuse themselves from this portion of the meeting. As those members left the room, former commissioner Gabe Llanas joined the commission on a temporary basis to sit in for Doran Azari. Chair Podell confirmed they had five members present, constituting a quorum for the designation hearing.

**Staff Presentation**

Betsy Kellums (Planner III – Historic Preservation) began her presentation by reviewing the stricter criteria for non-owner nominations, noting that such properties must demonstrate compelling communitywide historic importance—either uncommon significance whose loss would diminish Greeley’s character or status as a superior or outstanding example of architectural, historical, or geographical significance.

Kellums then summarized the staff report, explaining that the property must meet at least one historical, architectural, or geographical criterion, one non-owner criterion, and integrity requirements.

For historical significance, Kellums outlined the building’s association with longtime Weld County Bank president Norman Dean, who commissioned the round bank at 1000 10th Street in 1967–68. The building’s customer-friendly innovations—its round plan, guides, sit-down tellers, and early TV-based drive-through—reflected Dean’s approach. She also highlighted his extensive civic leadership, board service, and numerous community awards.

Architecturally, Kellums described the structure as an intact and rare mid-century modern example, the only surviving round bank of its kind in Greeley. Designed by Marvin Knedler and built by Hensel Phelps, it retains key features such as arches and columns, curtainwall glazing, a large roof overhang, and a skylight, along with period drive-up elements. The building has been deemed eligible for the National Register. She showed historic photos illustrating these features, interior innovations, and construction methods.

Geographically, Kellums shared the building contributes to downtown’s historic fabric, serves as an iconic landmark, and helps mark the entrance to the historic core.

On the non-owner criteria, Kellums stated that the building is one of downtown’s most significant mid-century structures, with exceptional integrity and a distinctive design that sets Greeley apart. Its loss could materially diminish downtown character.

Kellums added that preservation and adaptive reuse support both the Downtown Greeley 2032 plan and the Imagine Greeley comprehensive plan, which prioritize redeveloping

underused sites and maintaining historic authenticity. Its designation would also open financial incentive opportunities.

Kellums concluded that the building retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, with only minor exterior changes, and meets the integrity criteria.

### **Applicant Presentation**

Linde Thompson, speaking for Historic Greeley Inc., opened their presentation by noting the irony of “non-owner” status when the public effectively owns the property, though she acknowledged the legal distinction. She explained that Historic Greeley’s nomination stems from decades of losses of major historic buildings, many demolished for parking lots, including the Camfield Hotel, Chief Theater, Meeker Junior High, and what she called downtown’s greatest loss, the Sterling Hotel and Theater. She argued that these demolitions weakened both community identity and economic vitality, contrasting Greeley with places like Old Town Fort Collins and LoDo that have benefited from preservation.

Linde Thompson said the round building is featured prominently in city marketing and reflects the legacy of figures like Norman Dean and Hensel Phelps’s president Bob Tointon. She urged designation as a sign that Greeley has learned from past mistakes, stressing that Historic Greeley supports keeping Weld County downtown and believes redevelopment and preservation can coexist. She rejected claims that designation would “derail” the Civic Campus, saying the building could offer far more value than a small increase in parking.

Ron Thompson, also from Historic Greeley Inc. then summarized a 2016 structure assessment conducted for the High Plains Library District by highly qualified architects and engineers. The 140-page report identified mainly HVAC and maintenance issues, not structural problems, with most deficiencies categorized as fixable and relatively modest in cost. Adjusted to 2025 dollars, repairs would total about \$1.8 million. Ron Thompson shared that the study found renovation roughly half the cost of constructing a comparable new building. He criticized recent city and county estimates of \$30–60 million as baseless and urged officials to consider renovation rather than demolition. He described an architect’s quick concept sketch showing how the existing building could anchor a new Civic Campus, arguing that imagination, not demolition, should guide planning.

Annette Jaehn, also with Historic Greeley, spoke to the cultural and emotional value of historic environments. She contrasted the richness of historic downtowns with the sterility of areas rebuilt during 1960s urban renewal, when many of Greeley’s most significant buildings were razed and replaced with architecture lacking character. Jaehn described the round building as a rare surviving example of expressive, optimistic modernism that gives Greeley a distinct visual identity. Losing it, she said, would erase one of the few remaining landmarks that provide continuity and sense of place. Jaehn concluded that good community development blends old and new, allowing historic buildings to anchor future growth rather than be sacrificed to it.

### **Owner Presentation**

Kelli Johnson (Assistant City Manager), representing the property owner, began her presentation by recognizing the commission's role in preserving Greeley's history and introduced the city and project team. She explained that the Civic Campus project is a major, long-term effort to reshape downtown in line with the city's master plans, strengthening economic vitality, retaining downtown employers, centralizing civic functions, activating public spaces, and improving long-term sustainability.

Johnson described nearly two years of collaboration among the City of Greeley, Weld County, and School District 6, an unprecedented partnership designed to keep all three entities downtown. The project consolidates and reduces surface parking from 6.5 acres to 1.7 acres, provides more than 100 spaces for the county's judicial center, and relies on extensive land swaps, financial commitments, and real estate acquisitions by all partners. Johnson presented economic analyses projecting major investment, job creation, and increased tax revenue, emphasizing that the project aligns with the city's 2037 vision for a more vibrant and walkable downtown.

Turning to the round building, Johnson said Greeley City Hall has changed locations historically as community needs grew, and continuing to occupy this building would require taxpayers to fund costly renovations to a space that no longer functions for modern services. She argued that adaptive reuse is unusually difficult here due to flooding issues, failing systems, tunnels, and operational constraints. Updated cost estimates place restoration between \$24–33 million, not including likely overruns.

Johnson addressed the 2016 High Plains Library District report, stating it was preliminary, not a comprehensive assessment, and noted it did not account for major unknowns such as asbestos, technology upgrades, and high operating costs.

Johnson argued the nomination fails the high threshold for non-owner designation. She asserted the building lacks documented historic events or figures that meet the ordinance criteria, that mid-century modern design is not rare in Greeley, and that the round form is not sufficient architectural distinction. She also said the structure has no meaningful geographic significance and is known mainly through familiarity, not historic importance.

Johnson emphasized that neither the Downtown Master Plan nor Imagine Greeley identifies this building as a preservation priority, and both prioritize catalytic redevelopment, precisely what the Civic Campus delivers. Johnson said integrity alone does not make a property significant, and preservation incentives apply only when reuse is feasible and beneficial, which she argued this building is not.

Johnson concluded that designation would halt the multi-agency Civic Campus project, jeopardize millions already invested, and prevent coordinated land transactions. She urged the commission to weigh whether perceived historic value of a 1960s bank outweighs the substantial, tangible benefits of a modern civic campus that could guide downtown Greeley's future for decades.

## **Discussion and Public Comment**

Commissioner DePetro asked for clarification about the land swap and whether the site would inevitably be a parking lot. Johnson said the site would serve as required parking for Weld County's new judicial center and could also accommodate the county's long-term expansion needs.

Commissioner DePetro asked if Weld County could potentially build on the parcel. She also asked about the parking garage plans and whether it wouldn't assuage the parking needs of the county, questioning the need to demolish the building for additional spaces if a parking garage was already planned. Johnson explained that unless they wanted a 10-story parking garage, the planned 4-story structure plus surface parking was necessary for the school district's needs, Weld County's needs, the city's needs, and the size and complexity of the judicial center with Weld County's administrative staff moving downtown.

Chair Podell asked about the number of spaces in the proposed parking garage and the number of current spaces at City Hall. Adam Frazier from Richmark Development came to the microphone and stated it would be 1,000 stalls at the proposed parking garage and confirmed there are 81 existing stalls at the round building.

Chair Podell asked about the orange area on the map being the proposed parking garage location, which Frazier confirmed. Chair Podell asked if the juror lot would remain, Frazier explained it would become the location for city hall, District 6, and a new hotel.

Commissioner McHattie asked about the height of the proposed parking garage. Frazier explained it would be four stories with parking on the roof, taking up the whole half block.

Commissioner Llanas questioned why, if they're planning 1,000 spaces in the garage, the county needs extra spaces where City Hall is. He asked if the county needs more than 1,000 spaces. Johnson explained that between the new judicial center and the county's over 1,000 employees coming downtown, plus required jury trial parking, both the thousand-stall garage and surface parking were needed.

Commissioner Llanas then asked why a bigger garage is not being proposed. Frazier explained cost was a major factor. The garage costs about \$45,000-47,000 per stall, making monetary cost the limiting factor. He also confirmed the existing 81 stalls would become approximately 210-220, a net gain of about 120-140 spaces. Commissioner Llanas stated it is hard to see how such a minimal advantage could justify removing an entire building.

Commissioner DePetro asked whether the county had given any consideration to preserving the building, as the city appeared to see no value in maintaining it, even though the site would only serve as a temporary parking area. Johnson clarified that "temporary" use meant roughly 15 to 25 years. She noted that the current land map was about the fifth iteration reviewed by the county, the city, and the school district, all of which aimed to consolidate resources and better align their operational needs. The process had been highly collaborative, with alternative uses for the building thoroughly considered. Johnson continued by sharing that the data and architectural assessments showed that renovating the structure would require substantial investment in a facility that no longer served the City of Greeley's needs. While the city had considered keeping the building, it could not do so at the expense of meeting modern standards and supporting the demands of one of the region's fastest-growing communities. Johnson

concluded by stating that the resulting land-use plan, enabling consolidation of city and county functions and bringing more employees downtown, was a meaningful win for all parties involved.

Commissioner DePetro questioned whether Greeley, particularly downtown, had fallen behind neighboring communities like Fort Collins, Loveland, and Longmont due to past short-sighted decisions about demolishing historic buildings in favor of parking lots. She noted that sites once dismissed in the 1980s and 1990s are now widely recognized as valuable, yet many were lost and replaced with asphalt.

Commissioner DePetro continued by saying that given Greeley's longstanding reputation for lagging behind regional trends, she asked whether continuing to demolish buildings for parking was repeating the same short-sighted pattern. She pointed out that communities today aim for fewer parking lots and greater access to cultural and public spaces. In her view, the former City Hall and bank building could serve as vibrant venues, concert spaces or arts-focused gathering places rather than more parking. Commissioner DePetro questioned how the city could claim to be forward-thinking while still pursuing decisions that echo the short-sightedness of its past.

Johnson emphasized that the proposal would reduce surface parking overall. The new parking garage, owned and operated by the City of Greeley, would serve government operations during weekdays and be available evenings and weekends for events like the Farmers Market and UCCC activities. She explained that, as the city considered how to keep itself, the county, and the school district downtown, this plan offered a path toward long-term vitality and helped Greeley remain competitive with downtown Loveland and Fort Collins.

Johnson added that historic reuse had been considered; the city already owns the historic Baptist church behind City Hall and is working to repurpose it for community use. However, she noted that each restoration project draws from the same limited pool of funds needed to meet growing service demands and workforce needs. She stated this proposal strikes a balance, allowing the city to do more good than harm.

Commissioner DePetro acknowledged that everyone agreed on the need for a parking garage, especially in a hail-prone community where covered parking is a clear benefit. No one was asking for more acres of asphalt. She questioned the logic of tearing down this particular building and replacing this specific lot merely providing additional county parking, especially when the new garage would be located on an entirely different parcel. She asked who would be responsible for demolishing the old bank building in the end.

Johnson explained that the city would be responsible, just as the county must transfer its juror parking lot to the city, and just as the school district is responsible for demolishing its own building as part of the land exchange.

Chair Podell asked if there were any more questions from the Commission for the owner. Seeing none, he stated he knew of some emailed comments that were included in the packet. He then asked if there was anyone online wishing to speak to the item. Seeing

none, Chair Podell asked Kellums about those emailed comments. Kellums stated there were five emails all in favor of the designation and are a part of the record.

Chair Podell opened the public hearing then asked if there was anyone in attendance wishing to speak to the item.

Drew Notestine 804 8<sup>th</sup> Street Greeley spoke in opposition to the designation. As a downtown property owner and supporter of historic preservation, he expressed respect for the round building's uniqueness but argued that true preservation involves balancing heritage with sensible growth and adaptation to sustain the community's identity. Notestine continued by sharing that he supported the proposed redevelopment as a rare opportunity for vital investment that outweighs the loss of the building, warning that rejecting it could jeopardize downtown's fragile historic core and the city's long-term vitality.

Commissioner DePetro appreciated Notestine's comments. She acknowledged that the situation posed a real dilemma. She wants Greeley to grow and avoid repeating past short-sighted decisions, yet she also felt a deep personal attachment to the building, having known it since childhood. While she didn't want to stand in the way of the city's progress and appreciated the attention being given to this part of town, she admitted she remained torn.

Bianca Fisher 2393 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Greeley, Executive Director of the Greeley Downtown Development Authority, spoke in opposition to the designation. She emphasized the difficult balance between historic preservation and the economic realities of redevelopment in downtown Greeley. Redevelopment is costly, interest from developers is limited, and many past successes relied on philanthropic investment rather than profitability. While the DDA values arts, culture, and historic character, it also must confront blight and ensure the long-term vitality of downtown. Fisher also shared that she fears that designating the property would jeopardize the Civic Campus project, which is critical for bringing people downtown and supporting local businesses. The DDA declined to nominate the property themselves because they believe designation would have a significant negative impact on redevelopment potential and downtown's future vibrancy.

Frazier spoke in opposition of the designation. He emphasized that after two years of observation, extensive study, and work by top planners, the only plan all three government entities could agree on, and the only one that kept major employers downtown, involves demolishing the building. Frazier warned that political pressures on the city, county, and District 6 are already intense, and adding a nomination could jeopardize the entire project, potentially driving hundreds of employees and visitors out of downtown and damaging the local economy.

Linde Thompson spoke in favor of the designation. She stressed that Historic Greeley fully supports keeping the county, school district, and city downtown, but believes that doing so should not require demolishing yet another historic building, especially for what amounts to roughly 40 additional parking spaces. She stated that better collaborative solutions exist, as seen in many other communities, and that downtown's vitality is strengthened by preserving and adapting historic structures rather than replacing them with parking lots.

Chair Podell asked if anyone else would like to speak to the item, seeing none, he closed the public hearing and turned it over to the Commission for discussion. Conversation ensued between the Commissioners regarding the criteria for non-owner nomination, the history of the building, the architecture, the structure in general as well as the proposed civic campus.

Commissioner Martinez asked whether, if the building is designated, the city would continue to use it, or if the city would still vacate the property, leaving it empty. Johnson stated the city will likely need to vacate the building. One key issue is the lack of centralized city space: staff are spread throughout the city, and there is no coordinated customer service location. Visitors often need to navigate multiple buildings for services. The current building, never designed as an office, has inefficient and unusable space, making it unsuitable for modern staff needs. Johnson shared that there are no current plans to rehab or repurpose the historic building, and costs for redevelopment are prohibitive. While soliciting developers remains an option, the city may not be in a market comparable to larger cities like California or Denver for such projects.

Chair Podell clarified with Kellums that the vote is strictly whether it meets the criteria and it should be designated or does not meet the criteria and should not be designated. Discussion between the Commissioners ensued regarding the non-owner nomination criteria.

Chair Podell asked if there was anyone else in attendance wishing to speak to the item. Seeing none, he asked if there was any other discussion among the Commissioners. Seeing none, Chair Podell invited a motion.

**Motion by: Commissioner DePetro**

A motion, based on the application received and the preceding analysis, that the Commission finds and concludes that the Dean Building/Weld County Bank Building/City Hall Building at 1000 10th Street meets significance criteria of Section 24-1003(d)(1) and (2) and integrity criteria of Section 24-1003(d)(4) of the Greeley Municipal Code, as summarized below, and therefore makes recommendation to City Council to designate the building on the Greeley Historic Register and issue a Certificate of Designation to be recorded by the Weld County Clerk and Recorder. Based on 1A historical significance.

1(a) Historical Significance:

1. The property has character, interest and integrity and reflects the heritage and cultural development of the City, State or Nation.
3. Is associated with an important individual or group who contributed in a significant way to the political, social and/or cultural life of the community.

1(b) Architectural Significance:

1. Characterizes an architectural style associated with a particular era and/or ethnic group.
2. Is identified with a particular architect, master builder or craftsman.
3. Is architecturally unique or innovative.
4. Has a strong or unique relationship to other areas potentially eligible for preservation because of architectural significance.
5. Has visual symbolic meaning or appeal for the community.

1(c) Geographical Significance:

1. Has proximity and a strong connection or link to an area, site, structure or object significant in the history or development of the City, State or Nation.
2. Is a visual feature identifying an area or neighborhood or consists of buildings, homes, replicas, structures, objects, properties, parks, land features, trees and sites historically or geographically associated with an area.

(2) Non-owner nomination Significance:

- (a) Unusual or uncommon significance that the structure's potential demolition or major alteration would diminish the character and sense of place in the community of Greeley.
- (b) Superior or outstanding examples of architectural, historical or geographical significance criteria outlined in the criteria for designation in this section. The term "superior" shall mean excellence of its kind, and the term "outstanding" shall mean marked by eminence and distinction.

Section 24-1003(d)(4) Integrity criteria.

All properties and districts shall be evaluated for their physical integrity using the following criteria, as defined by the National Park Service in the current version of the publication "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association.

The term, "superior" shall mean excellence of its kind, and the term "outstanding" shall mean marked by eminence and distinction. Section 24-1003, Subsection D, Subsection 4, Integrity Criteria. All properties and districts shall be evaluated for their physical integrity using the following criteria as defined by the National Park Service in the current version of the publication, "How to Apply" the National Register Criteria for evaluation. Location design, setting materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Second:** Commissioner Martinez

**Vote:** Motion passed 5-0.

Chair Podell asked the recused members to join the meeting.

Former Commissioner Llanas stepped down, and recused commissioners re-entered the meeting.

**7. Commission Member Report**

There were no Commission member reports.

**8. Staff Report**

Kellums reminded the Commission that registration for the Colorado Preservation Inc Saving Places is open, and they can use the CLG rate.

**9. Adjournment**

Chair Podell adjourned the meeting at 6:14pm.

Signed by:

*Dan Podell*

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**Dan Podell – Chair**

Signed by:

*Betsy Kellums*

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**Betsy Kellums – Secretary**