

Recommendations from Heritage Preservation Commission, Human Rights Commission, and the Advisory Planning Commission

All three commissions met earlier this spring 2018 to consider the matter and met again in the summer of 2018 to make a recommendation. Below is a summary of each recommendation and the reasons that were given by the three advisory commissions.

Heritage Preservation Commission Recommendation June 6, 2018

The Red Wing Heritage Preservation Commission conducted an extensive review of the Barn Bluff Painting issue at their meetings on April 4, 2018 and June 6, 2018. On April 4th, Brian Peterson presented the Barn Bluff Graffiti Policy Report in its entirety with particular attention drawn to the discussion related to the National Register listing; restrictions in the original deed of the bluff to the city for park purposes; and the input from the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Prairie Island Indian Community. At that meeting the commission had a lengthy discussion and took no action on the matter.

On June 6, 2018 the commission took up the matter. After discussion, the Heritage Preservation Commission adopted a motion unanimously to recommend that the City establish a Closed Public Forum for He Mni Can – Barn Bluff Park and direct staff to draft clarification amendments to the graffiti ordinance for council consideration. A date should be established in the future by the council (for example in 90 to 120 days) at which time the new ordinance and policy will become effective and enforced. The Commission gave the following reasons for their recommendation:

- The elimination of painting on the bluff would be more in keeping with the purposes of the Heritage Preservation Commission by preserving a National Register of Historic Places site. This would reduce the possibility of any action in the future to delist the site because of degradation and poor stewardship.
- Elimination of painting on the bluff would show respect for the Prairie Island Indian Community which has demonstrated that the bluff is a sacred place to the Dakota and painting the bluff is considered a desecration of a sacred place. Furthermore, eliminating painting on the bluff would show a good faith action on the behalf of the City of Red Wing in response to PIIC's decision to refrain from listing Barn Bluff to the 100 Most Endangered Sites. Protecting the bluff would also meet the commission's purpose based on the idea that keeping the bluff in a more natural state better reflects elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political, visual, or architectural history.
- The deed for the bluff property in 1911 stated that the property was to be used for park purposes and that the property should not be defaced. Painting the bluff defaces the property and elimination of this activity would be more in keeping with the maintenance of the bluff in as natural a state as possible.

- The City has a graffiti ordinance already established and should enforce the ordinance.

Human Rights Commission, June 14, 2018

The Human Rights Commission met on May 24, 2018 and reviewed the material in the He Mni Can - Barn Bluff Graffiti Policy Report. At their June 14, 2018 meeting commission adopted a motion unanimously to recommend that the bluff be considered a Closed Forum. On August 16, 2018, the Human Rights Commission approved the following list of reasons for their recommendation:

- The bluff is a sacred place to the Dakota people, and the Prairie Island Indian Community has stated through its representatives that it strongly desires no painting on He Mni Can-Barn Bluff. Respecting this wish is a form of reparations for past transgressions and should be honored. Although painting on the bluff has been tolerated for decades (and has been recognized as a tradition to some), we as a Red Wing community know more now about the bluff's history and its importance to the Dakota people than we did years ago. Knowing what we know now, allowing graffiti to continue would be a worse offense than it was in the past.
- The original Barn Bluff Park deed to the City of Red Wing in 1911 states that no property on the bluff shall be defaced. The act of painting the bluff is in violation of this deed.
- The City upholds a graffiti policy citywide and painting graffiti anywhere on He Mni Can-Barn Bluff is still in violation of this law. Although the law has not been enforced in this specific location in recent decades, the policy should cover all places equally.
- The HRC supports a coalition of people examining the prospect of designating another space, accessible to everyone, as a place for public expression.

Advisory Planning Commission, June 19, 2018

The Advisory Planning Commission reviewed the Barn Bluff Policy Report at their meeting on April 17, 2018. On June 19, 2018 the commission adopted a motion unanimously to recommend that the City establish a Closed Forum for He Mni Can – Barn Bluff Park and direct staff to draft clarification amendments to the graffiti ordinance for council consideration. Establish a date 120 days in the future at which time the new ordinance and policy will be effective. The following reasons were given:

- The elimination of painting on the bluff would be more in keeping with the park master plan vision statement to recognize that the bluff "...will stand as an honored landscape sacred to the Dakota, respected by all, where our wise stewardship will perpetuate its natural and cultural integrity." This policy change would show respect for the Prairie Island Indian Community by acknowledging that the bluff is a sacred place to the Dakota and painting the bluff is considered a desecration of a sacred place.
- The elimination of painting on the bluff would be consistent with the guiding principle related to "Sustain" because the deed for the bluff property in 1911 stated that the property was to be used for park purposes and that the property should not be defaced. Painting the bluff defaces the property and elimination of this activity would be more in keeping with the maintenance of the bluff in as natural a state as possible.
- The elimination of painting on the bluff would be consistent with the guiding principle related to "Educate" because it provides an opportunity to educate the community and visitors about the relationship between the Dakota community and the bluff.
- The elimination of painting on the bluff would be consistent with the guiding principle related to "Honor" because it would be a policy change that directly addresses the principle to "Realize that our stewardship for this place is a great responsibility and any interventions must reflect the sacred legacy of He Mni Can."

The Commission also discussed their support for investigating an alternative location in order to find a way to honor the tradition and allow for creative expression.