



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING

City Council Chambers, 33 East Broadway Avenue Meridian, Idaho

Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 4:30 PM

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## MINUTES

### VIRTUAL MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

To join the meeting online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83416860817>

Or join by phone: 1-669-900-6833

Webinar ID:834 1686 0817

### ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blaine Johnston, President	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Jagosh
<input type="checkbox"/> Tyler J. Ricks	<input type="checkbox"/> Destinie Hart
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Dinger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jody Ault (joined at 4:50pm)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jack Keller	

City staff present were Arts and Culture Coordinator, Cassandra Schiffler, and City Attorney, Bill Nary.

### ADOPTION OF AGENDA

J. Keller made motion to adopt agenda, seconded by J. Dinger

All ayes

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES [ACTION ITEM]

1. Approve Minutes from January 27, 2022

J. Keller made motion to approve minutes, seconded by P. Jagosh

All ayes

### APPROVAL OF MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS [ACTION ITEM]

2. Approve Monthly Financial Statement

B. Johnston asked C. Schiffler to confirm if any new items needed review on the Financial Statement.

C. Schiffler confirmed a second invoice from TAG Historical Research was processed.

J. Keller made motion to approve the monthly financial statements, seconded by J. Ault

All ayes

### **NEW BUSINESS [ACTION ITEMS]**

3. **Welcome New Commissioners: John Dinger and Pam Jagosh**

B. Johnston introduced two new Commissioners, J. Dinger and P. Jagosh.

J. Dinger introduced himself as an Attorney at the Ada County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and a big fan of Idaho history.

P. Jagosh introduced herself as a native Idahoan who has served on a historic preservation commission in the past and is an elementary art teacher at Cole Valley Christian School.

4. **Presentation by Karen Brewer about Ridenbaugh Canal for Consideration in the Meridian Historical Virtual Tour**

Presentation given by K. Brewer (attached).

B. Johnston asked K. Brewer to provide her background.

K. Brewer stated she retired in 2016 after about 20 years at Hewlett Packard and she and her husband own a swimming pool construction company so she has been working in the company with him since her retirement. K. Brewer stated she has lived in Idaho for about 32 years.

B. Johnston stated that the Commission has discussed adding an irrigation portion to the City's virtual Walking Tour during the next upgrade and thanked K. Brewer for making this recommendation which the Commission will take under advisement.

5. **Discuss: Planning for May 2022 Preservation Month Activities**

B. Johnston stated he checked in with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the State's Preservation Month theme is 150 years of mining in Idaho, but SHPO is not sure if they will be hosting in-person events. B. Johnston stated that this theme ties in with K. Brewer's presentation in that while there was no mining in Meridian, Meridian's agriculture, farming, and livestock industries supported the mining seen in the Idaho City area. B. Johnston invited K. Brewer to present again during May. B. Johnston stated that C. Schiffler and he had discussed having demonstrations with sluice boxes so that the community could see how mining was done. B. Johnston encouraged the Commissioners to think of ideas by next month and share them with him.

P. Jagosh stated that Farmstead in Kuna had a mining exhibit set up last Fall so she will contact them about a possible collaboration.

6. Discuss Next Steps for Meridian Library District's Request for Rehoming Objects from Historical Society Collection: Assign Volunteers to Subcommittee Meeting

B. Johnston explained that the History Center in City Hall will not remain as it is and will be overseen in the future by the Meridian Library District, but that the Meridian Library District cannot retain in storage and/or on display everything that is currently on exhibit so they identified an inventory of items they wish to rehome and have asked for the Commission's assistance with this project.

B. Johnston stated that a subcommittee needs to be formed to accomplish this task.

B. Johnston requested clarification from B. Nary on the timeline of when the Meridian Library District wished for this to be resolved.

B. Nary confirmed that the Meridian District Library hopes to complete the re-homing as soon as possible and ideally items will go to historical places in Meridian but next would be places within Ada County and then the Treasure Valley. B. Nary explained that last year a three-party agreement was created between the Meridian Historical Society, the Meridian Library District, and the City of Meridian and this agreement transferred all the materials in the History Center located in the lobby of City Hall as well as in storage in the City Hall basement from the Meridian Historical Society to the Meridian Library District. B. Nary explained the City's role is two-fold: 1) provide the Meridian Library District with storage space in the basement and 2) assist in rehoming items by providing suggested contacts who may have interest in the items. B. Nary stated that for the foreseeable future the History Center will remain where it is in City Hall but at some point, it will likely be moved once the Meridian Library District has a space prepared at the main branch for these items.

C. Schiffler explained that per the Meridian Library District, they want to rehome some of the larger items (i.e., the horse, a few of the large wooden display cases, the loom) because the Meridian Library District would like to redo the current History Center display but are unable to do this with the current items housed in this space and storage is at capacity.

J. Dinger requested clarification on what is meant by "rehome".

B. Johnston explained "rehome" means finding items a new home.

C. Schiffler added that her understanding of "rehome" also includes transferring ownership in a responsible way.

J. Keller asked if items could be re-homed to businesses.

B. Johnston asked B. Nary to respond to J. Keller's inquiry.

B. Nary stated that the City cannot re-home items to businesses as all items are property of the Meridian Library District and they have their own disposal process to follow. B. Nary stated that the Meridian Library District intends to re-home items to places that will display the items and maintain their historical value, so if a business would do this it can be suggested to the Meridian Library District.

B. Johnston asked the Commission if anyone would like to Chair the Re-homing Subcommittee and to let him know after reviewing the packet provided for this

meeting. B. Johnston stated this would be discussed again at the next Commission meeting and requested that C. Schiffler reach out the SHPO to see if they could assist in contacting County Historical Societies to help spread the word about items selected for re-homing and confirmed he would reach out the Owyhee Historical Museum.

C. Schiffler stated that since the Commission did not appear to have the interest level and capacity for a subcommittee and that she could communicate to the Meridian Library District that at this time the Commission does not have the capacity to organize a subcommittee to assist in the re-homing of items, but could provide a list of contacts discussed.

## **REPORTS**

7. Update: Meridian Speedway Nomination to the National Registry of Historic Places

B. Johnston briefly reviewed the project's history for the new Commissioners in anticipation of a final decision to be rendered in Fall 2022.

8. Update: FY2022 Grant Notification from State Historic Preservation Office

B. Johnston asked C. Schiffler to provide an update on the FY2022 Grant Notification.

C. Schiffler stated a grant application had been submitted to SHPO last year but SHPO did not fund the grant. C. Schiffler stated that SHPO confirmed it was not the grant itself or how it was written but due to a high level of funding requests and SHPO trying to provide funding to organizations that have not recently received grants. The Commission still has a project in process (i.e., Meridian Speedway Nomination) that is using SHPO grant funds. C. Schiffler explained that SHPO encouraged the Commission to apply for this same grant for next year or a grant to fund a new project.

B. Johnston stated the Commission is interested in looking at Zamzow's Feed Mill near City Hall to have it nominated to the National Registry of Historic Places and the SHPO grant was applied for to cover the cost of the survey for this project.

## **NEXT MEETING: MARCH 24, 2022**

B. Johnston stated the Commission is not able to meet at the regular time on March 24, 2022, so it is recommended for the Commission to meet on March 31, 2022 instead.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

J. Ault made motion to adjourn, seconded by J. Keller

All ayes

# Meridian's Agricultural Heritage

## Ridenbaugh

Virtual Historic Tour

# Ridenbaugh – Construction History

- Begins at Barber Park . The water comes directly from the Boise River. Ends at Lake Lowell.
- 1877: Construction begins. William Morris completed 7 miles. Referred to as the South Boise Canal or Morris Canal.
- 1878: William Ridenbaugh inherits. Sells in 1883 due to lack of funds to continue the project.
- Several owners until 1890 when Boise City and Nampa Irrigation, Land and Lumber Company bought it and continued the project.
- 1893: Canal was complete to Nampa.

# Why is Ridenbaugh Important to Meridian

- Settlers filing for land in Meridian area could, under the Homestead Act of 1862, file for 'Desert Land' at \$.25 acre. Desert Land was "Ground that would not, without irrigation, produce any kind of crop". Claimant must have water to the land within 3 years.
- 1886: "Owing to a failure to get water from the Ridenbaugh ditch this season none of the settlers west of Gress' place (corner of Fairview & Eagle) raised anything that amounted to much.  
"Few of them have enough to keep body & soul together by shooting jackrabbits for the bounty offered by the county. " " We can scarcely comprehend how dry the valley was in the days before irrigation. With no moisture in the air, there was not even morning dew."
- After water became available, settlers poured into the area bringing sheep and cattle via the railroad . Most land was claimed by 1900. By 1902, Meridian was home to the dairy and fruit drying industries.



Above, workers use horses and primitive implements to dig ditches for the first irrigation system in the area. Clysta Gray said, "Water came to Meridian for irrigation via the Settlers' Ditch, and by way of the Ridenbaugh," both in the 1890s. The first water for irrigation was via sloughs and consisted mostly of wastewater from the McPhee orchards, first owned by a man named Rossi. The first

Capital Stock, \$100,000.00.

*This is to Certify*

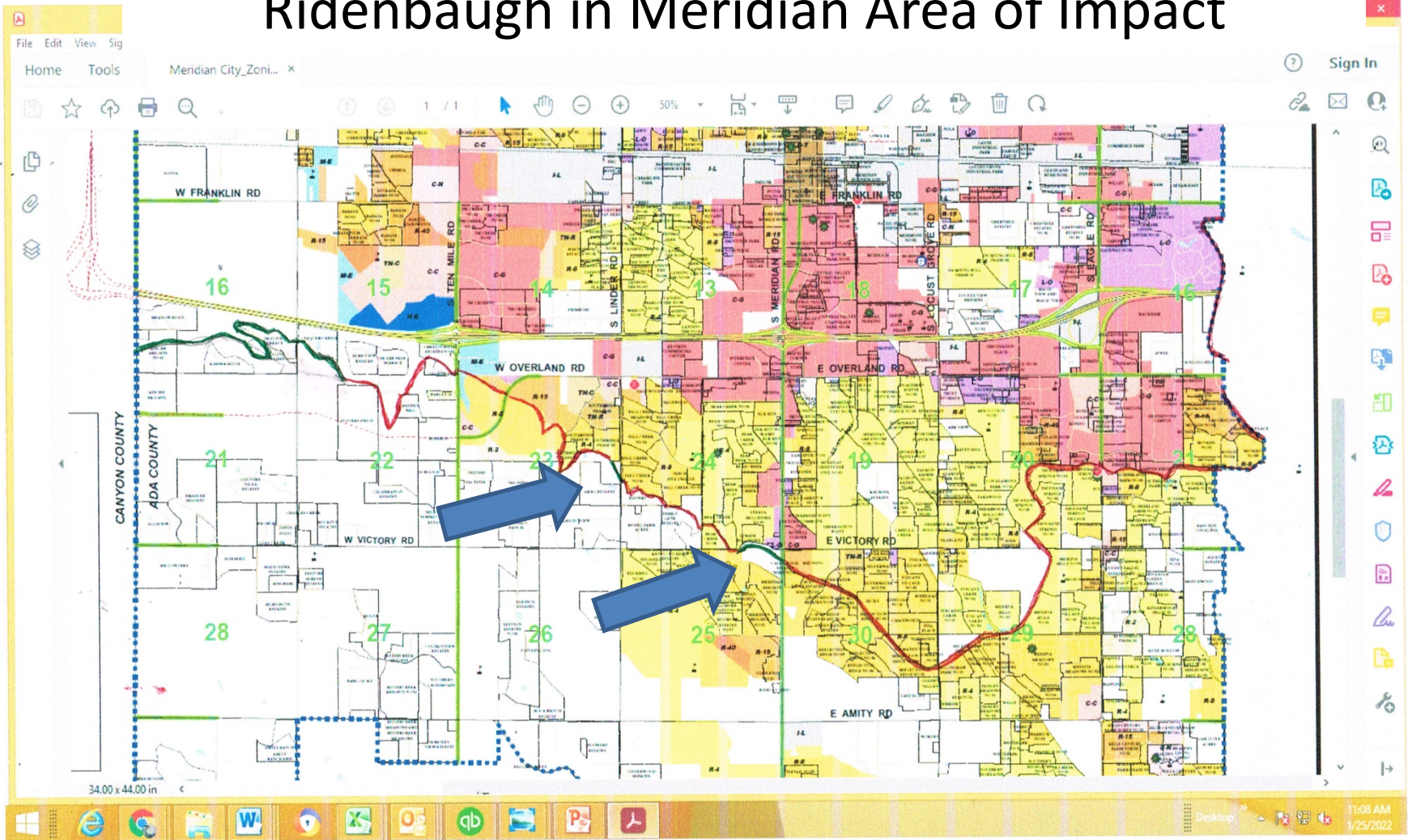
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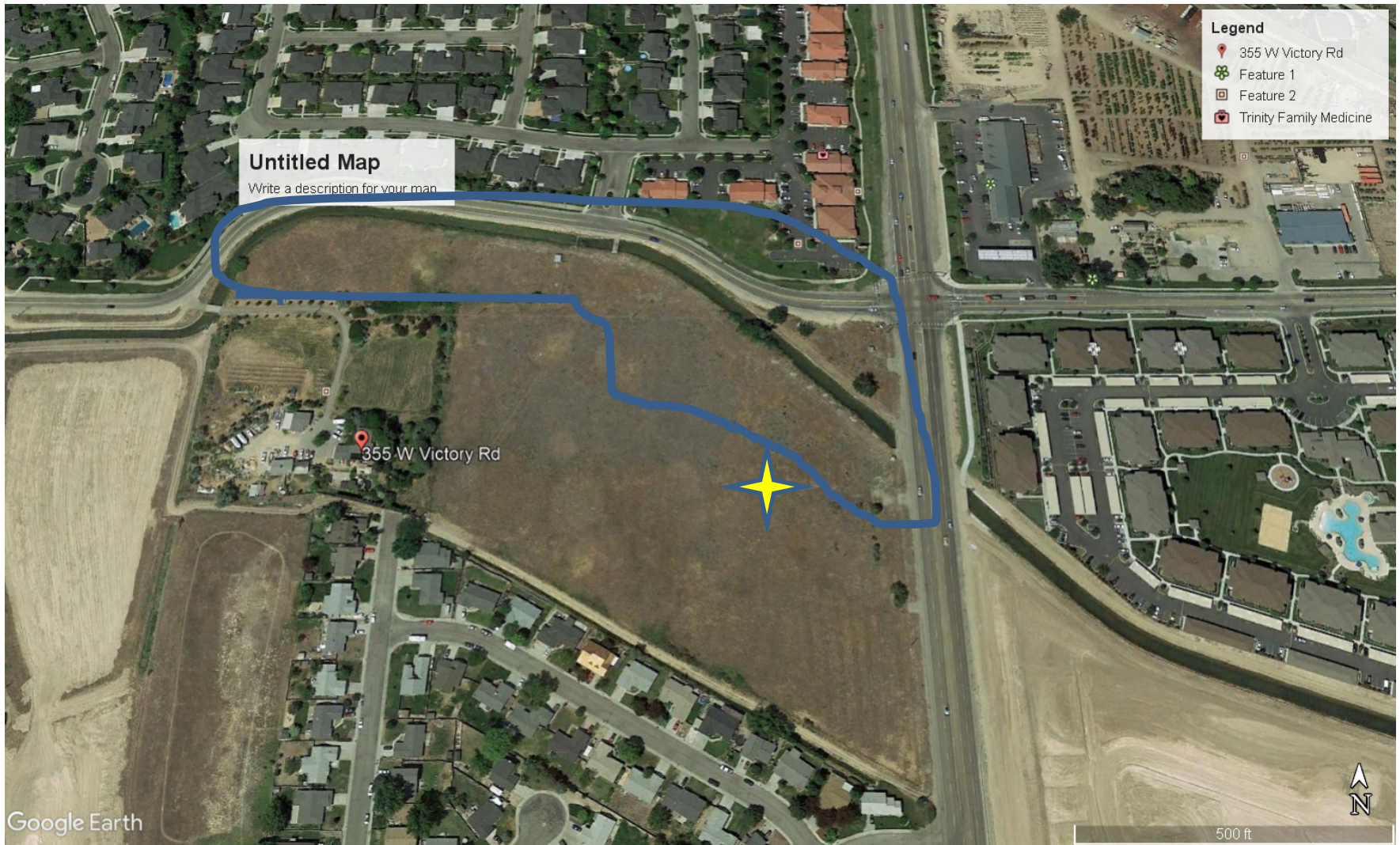


# Ridenbaugh in Meridian Area of Impact



Only remaining natural sections of Ridenbaugh

# Section to Include in Historical Tour

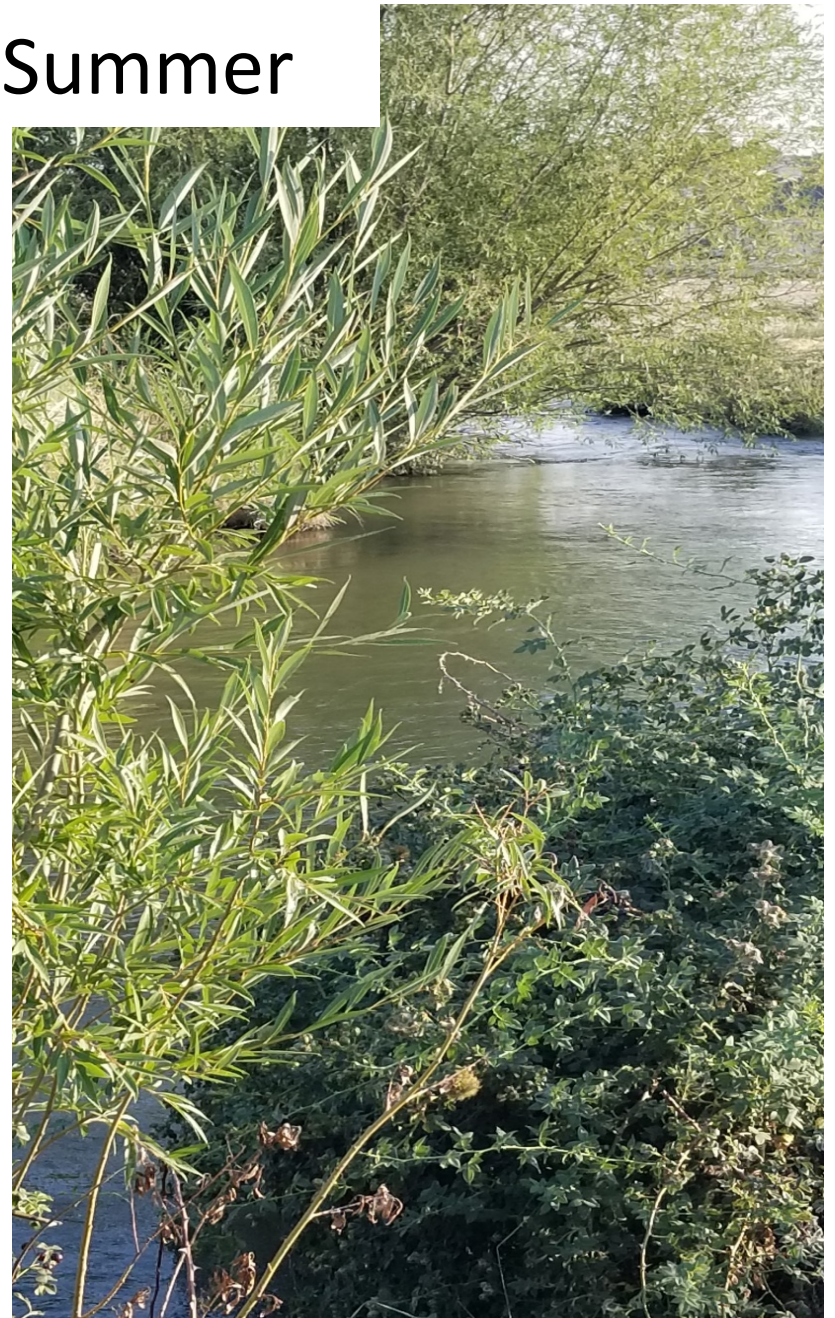


From Idaho Historic Sites Inventory  
Meridian Area of Impact  
O.Haga / Doris Frost Farmstead #01-19811



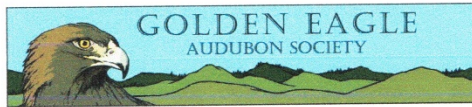
Original Ridenbaugh – Natural State

# Ridenbaugh Last Summer



# Why Include in Historical Tour

- Ridenbaugh is one of the most important, if not the most important, part of Meridian's agricultural heritage.
- Unique section of Ridenbaugh remains as originally constructed.
- This is the only natural section still visible to people walking or driving.
- Used as a 'stop over' area for migrating and nesting birds. Large number of birds use riparian area. eBird documented over 43 species in the area. *See Golden Eagle Audubon Society letter that follows.*
- Goal for adding to Historical Tour is to make citizens aware and appreciative of the area and to hopefully preserve it as amenity if the land is developed. *Meridian Comprehensive Plan 4.6 "It is essential to find a balance that protects and preserves Meridian's natural resources, agricultural heritage and open spaces....."*



To Whom It May Concern,

The Golden Eagle Audubon Society is southwest Idaho's chapter of the Audubon Society. We are dedicated to building an understanding, appreciation, and respect for the natural world in order to conserve and restore natural ecosystems for birds and other wildlife. Our 1,200+ members, the vast majority of whom live and birdwatch in Ada County, are very interested in activities that preserve and enhance bird habitat as well provide local opportunities to observe birds close to home.

Recently, our members and partners informed Chapter leadership about the unique opportunity to provide habitat and birding opportunities in an area of the county where such features are rare: the currently undeveloped 18.5 acre tract at the southwest corner of Meridian and Victory Roads. We are aware that several plans to develop this property for residential housing have not been successful due to safe access, infrastructure and fiscal issues. Due to the positioning of the Ridenbaugh Canal as well as its functional and historic significance, it seems these issues are not likely to change.

Moreover, this property may prove to have a much higher value to Meridian City residents if left as open space and zoned or designated as a public asset nature sanctuary. A quick survey of the surrounding areas reveals there are no similarly designated places for many miles in every direction. Decision makers are urged to consider the value open space and naturally functioning parcels provide to citizens – both nearby residents and County taxpayers. Again, our quick map survey reveals recent residential development adjacent to the property and the potential for even more development. These new residents would greatly benefit from nearby open space – a place where they can find serenity and a small slice of nature. Recent studies in urban planning and social science overwhelmingly support such places as critical to mental health and social cohesion of residents living in developing areas.

These 18.5 acres, formerly an alfalfa field, have sat untouched since at least 2003. The property changed hands at least 3 times as multiple developers have attempted to convert it to residential housing. Although currently zoned as RUT (Rural Urban Transition), it is clear residential development is not likely to work there.

A review of ebird.org indicates that 43 bird species have been observed on this property *even though it is currently not being maintained as bird habitat*. Imagine what appropriate zoning and proper care and maintenance would do for bird diversity there! Now extend that imagination to include the sounds of bird song in the springtime as Moms leisurely push strollers down paths, school children (from the 3-4 schools within walking distance) picnic in an amenity-rich outdoor classroom, and teams of nearby residents work to restore native plants that benefit butterflies, birds and other wildlife as well the residents themselves.

This property is primed for such use having extensive water rights, an Idaho Power easement (think partners with mitigation funds) and the historic Ridenbaugh Canal that ties together nature and society and could be an anchor for cultural and natural connectivity with educational signs that speak to these connections and to the foresight of community planners who made the bold move to reserve this property.

Golden Eagle Audubon Society's 1,200+ members would support this concept and we implore you to as well. We have a 40 year track record of working with local leaders to conserve space for people and nature and support wholly these uses for this property.

Sincerely,

Liz Urban  
President, Golden Eagle Audubon Society

Ridenbaugh in Concrete

