

**NEWS FROM THE SAGUACHE HISTORIC COMMISSION
REGARDING THE UPCOMING PUBLIC VOTE FOR THE ACQUISITION
OF THE DUNN BLOCK BUILDING**

Del Norte architect Ron McClure came to town on December 2 to talk about the Dunn Block building at the corner of San Juan and 4th. At a public meeting held by the Historic Preservation commission, McClure made four main points: how special the building is, how well built it is, how much local material went into its construction—and how local jobs can be created if the building is renovated.

McClure, who completed a Historic Structural Assessment of the building for the owners in 2008, called the building a "jewel" —a unique example of Italianate architectural style found nowhere else in southwestern Colorado. Newspapers as far away as Denver praised it highly when it was completed in 1876.

The foundation and walls are strong and show only slight signs of settlement after 140-plus years. Large foundation stones were quarried locally. The bricks used for the outer walls were made from local materials as well. Interior walls, floor joists and ceiling rafters were milled from local timber. And the distinctive arched windows were manufactured in a carpentry shop located at the now-abandoned town site of Milton on Cemetery Road. Many of the windows, complete with original glass, have been stored in the building for safekeeping.

McClure also added that any contracts let for restoration of the building can stipulate that a percentage of workers hired are required to be residents of the local area.

Mayor Greg Terrell spoke about the economic benefits to the Town if the building were purchased.

Pete Blair, the Town's CPA/Auditor, recommends the purchase for three reasons:

- 1) Based on appraised value, the Town would immediately gain \$60,000 in equity, and depreciation would help the bottom-line of the audit for many years;
- 2) Almost always, when a historic building is bought, the restoration is paid for by grants from History Colorado and private foundations, and restoration dramatically increases the equity value and depreciation benefit; and
- 3) Restoration and use of the building after restoration create short-term and long-term jobs for locals and improved economic health for the town, particularly if the building is in a commercial district.