
**Historic Preservation Commission
Yaw Chapel, Sheldon Jackson Campus
Regular Meeting of April 13, 2011
Minutes**

- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chair James Kinsman called the meeting to order at 6pm.
- II. ROLL CALL**
Present: James Kinsman, Peter Gorman, Judith Ozment and James Poulson.
Absent: Pat Eliason (excused); Roby Littlefield; STA Representative (Vacant due to resignation).
Assembly Liaison: Pete Esquiro (absent).
City Staff: Melissa Henshaw, Planning Department; Lynne McGowan, Parks & Recreation Manager; Lance Henrie, Senior Engineer, Public Works.
Contract Secretary: Gail J. Peterson.
Guests: None.
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
M – Poulson/S – Gorman to approve the Agenda.
Motion carried unanimously.
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** March 9, 2011 Regular Meeting.
M – Ozment /S – Gorman to approve March 9, 2011 Regular Meeting minutes.
Motion carried unanimously.
- V. GUESTS &/or PERSONS TO BE HEARD** – None.
- VI. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**
- a) Chair Kinsman
- Chair Kinsman will review the joint PSA with Sitka Historical Society. Commissioner Gorman noted when he would be available to consult with Chair Kinsman. Commissioner Ozment will report the status of the PSA at the next Sitka Historical Society meeting. Chair Kinsman apologized for his delay with this project.
 - Received a Corps of Engineers Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for channel breakwaters in the Sitka Harbor. There is a cultural resource segment that identifies previous cultural resource study and no significant impact.
- b) Commissioners:
- A meeting will be held April 15 to provide updates on Totem Square. Chair Kinsman expects to attend and volunteered to represent the Historic Preservation Commission. Commissioners Gorman and Poulson will try to attend.
- c) Staff: Melissa Henshaw, Planner I:
- Planning Department received information about a silhouette of SJ Museum’s King Island kayak to hang and be visible from windows of Stratton Library. The Planning Department considers the hangings to be artwork, like a mural, and not signage.
 - The Clerk’s Office received Archie Nielsen’s Commissioner application. Stephanie Edenshaw will submit an application to serve as STA Alternate. Applications will be considered April 26, 2011 by the Assembly.
 - Alaska Archaeology Month posters are available for display.

VII. REQUESTS FOR REVIEW:

a) City of Sitka – Skate Park Roof (at the Turnaround):

Lynne McGowan and Lance Henrie introduced this project for Commission review. Ms. McGowan explained limited funds remain available to the Skate Park and come partially from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Several parks in Sitka are funded through this source (a few identified: Crescent Park, Moller Park, Kimsham, Halibut Point). Once the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant is closed out, the federal Land and Water Conservation Program will own the site; the foot print of the property will be used for recreation in perpetuity. A top on the wish list is to install a roof with the remaining funds available for the Skate Park. Mr. Henrie described the type of roof that could be installed with the available funds. It is not possible to afford a fabric roof; the metal roof structure, with open sides, might overlap the concrete of the Turnaround by five to ten feet. Various alternatives were discussed. The conceptual design was considered.

Since the Turnaround has recently been listed on the Register of Historic Sites, Commissioners recommend City staff consult the State Historic Preservation Office prior to proceeding further with the roof design. The costs of fabric and metal roofs were roughly estimated and compared. Fabric is preferred; if a metal roof is installed, it will be galvanized and include sun lights to hopefully provide enough natural light to avoid having to install lighting. The sustainable outdoor recreation plan listed a roof over the skate park as a top priority for local recreation.

**M – Gorman/S – Poulson to recommend the concept project go ahead, however, any impact to the concrete Turnaround is to be avoided; the State Historic Preservation Office is to be consulted to verify the concept project can move forward.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. McGowan will consult the State Historic Preservation Office and report back to Commissioners via Ms. Henshaw in the Planning Office. Future possibilities to stage a Grumman Goose at the Turnaround were brain-stormed. Ms. McGowan and Mr. Henrie were thanked for bringing the project for review by Historic Preservation Commissioners.

b) United States Geological Survey (USGS) Remediation/Cleanup:

- 1. 500 Geodetic Way**
- 2. 502 Geodetic Way**

USGS staff were unavailable to participate telephonically or otherwise. Projects at 500 and 502 Geodetic Way, as presented in bid quote documents provided to the Commission and as told to Ms. Henshaw, were discussed at length. Commissioners would like to know if the properties have a determination of eligibility for inclusion on the National Register. Secretary of Interior Standards and National Park Service briefs for preservation of historic buildings, specifically Preservation Briefs #8 and #37, would be useful for USGS to consult. Chair Kinsman noted the bid documents do not specify the contractor is to follow methods recommended in Preservation Briefs.

**M – Gorman/S – Ozment to recommend the first step the applicant take be a determination of eligibility of the properties for the National Historic Register, and report back to the Historic Preservation Commission.
Motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Henshaw will communicate the motion to USGS staff. Commissioners encouraged the applicant be informed that major changes to the appearance of the buildings would make them ineligible for the register and the benefits in maintaining eligibility of the buildings to be on the National Register. Chair Kinsman offered to help draft any written communications, if desired. Ms. Henshaw will cc Chair Kinsman with the email she sends USGS staff.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Historic Preservation Plan.

Commissioner Gorman reported about three weeks ago Sue Thorsen, Curator at Sitka National Historical Park, found in SNHP records and provided to the Historic Preservation Commission via Commissioner Gorman, a 3-ring binder that belonged to Roy Bailey, one of the first members of the Sitka Historic Preservation Commission. Within the binder contained original minutes from 1994, the first year of the Commission. It also contained a copy of the original Historic Preservation Plan pamphlet and the flow chart for project reviews. This is an invaluable record of the Historic Preservation Commission's first year.

Chair Gorman noted it is still difficult to find the date and place of the Commission's regular meetings. Ms. Henshaw noted this information is always available on the roster. Commissioners recognized that unless one knows where to look, it is difficult to find this information. Commissioners recommend the date and place of HPC regular meetings also be posted more prominently on the web page.

Commissioners expressed they are pleased to be able to meet on the SJ Campus and appreciate Alaska Arts Southeast/Sitka Fine Arts Camp providing space for the meeting since the Centennial Building did not have space for this month's regular meeting.

Commissioners reviewed page 4 of the draft Sitka Historic Preservation Plan and discussed an outline based on the Secretary of Interior's standards.

- Commissioner Gorman provided research on preservation plan outlines.
- Commissioner Poulson also researched historic preservation plans; historic preservation plans are an inventory and define historic context for site(s). Historic Preservation Plans also provide options and priorities for preservation, given available funds.
- Commissioner Gorman read from a plan developed in Ohio, which stated: "The plan at its best, however, is more than a written document. It should be a continuous process that brings together citizens and interest groups and helps them identify where diverse goals complement historic preservation and how they can work together to preserve their local heritage."
- Commissioner Gorman advocated Sitka's plan be a useful document of why Sitka is a unique historical resource. A public process was brought into the Plan with the attempted poll of the Community to identify priority areas for preserving the unique history of Sitka. The community's priorities become the focal point of the plan. One result would be a local register. Many areas in Sitka have already been officially recognized through a public process, such as Sitka National Historical Park, which has been recognized as a designated cultural landscape.
- Areas which have not been recognized, such as various neighborhoods, need to be recognized before they entirely disappear. Examples were given, such as the corridor of the water front area and the houses on Katlian Street up through Lincoln Street.

- Chair Kinsman stated developing a local register with local criteria would be helpful. Along with that could be a certificate &/or plaque to recognize citizens' efforts to preserve Sitka's history.
- Commissioner Ozment agreed recognition of preservation efforts via plaques can be helpful, noting the highways and byways program, which creates public awareness of historic areas with plaques.
- Chair Kinsman stated the outline format is somewhat good to follow; outline items five and six haven't been addressed yet, but are in Sitka's current Historic Plan.
- Chair Kinsman observed historic context and what areas are important in Sitka need to be in the Plan.
- Standards to define historic districts, significant buildings and neighborhoods were discussed. Various examples of regional architecture (such as the "brutal architecture" of the State Museum building in Juneau) and areas that could be defined as historic districts were cited (Sitka's pulp mill era neighborhoods, such as Lakeview Drive and Sitka's unique waterfront trailer parks). Areas significant to Sitka's history should be recognized, recommended for preservation and preserved.

Commissioners emphasized how helpful these discussions are to the process of developing a consensus on Sitka's historic preservation plan.

b) Discussion of areas to designate for automatic review per Planning Map.

Commissioners continued the discussion in terms of Planning Map designations. Chair Kinsman provided a draft map showing expanded boundaries as discussed in March. Adjustments to boundaries were marked on the draft map:

- O'Cain Street has a gun emplacement and Quonset huts are on Cascade St.
- Along Marine Street from Katlian Street
- Lake View Drive

Commissioner Gorman asked at what point there would be a public process on these boundaries. Chair Kinsman noted these outlines are preliminary. Ms. Henshaw stated the map is only intended for Planning Department and City in-house use and is not binding. It was observed the map is intended to aid staff during the interim period prior to finalizing the historic preservation plan. The discussion of the map is helpful in developing the historic preservation plan and a local inventory of historic sites. Eventually, the map could be incorporated in the historic preservation plan, and at that point in time the map would be part of the public review process. Commissioner Gorman would like the maps clearly marked as DRAFT. Chair Kinsman suggested and Commissioners agreed to title the map "Working Draft for HP Commission and Planning Department."

Chair Kinsman referenced the local inventory, which he has never seen. He observed the City and Borough inventory numbers do not cross reference with the State data base (HRS) and Quad maps. State HRS and Sitka CBS numbers need to be cross referenced. Meanwhile, a working draft map will be refined per Commissioners' comments and recommendations.

Commissioners discussed developing local standards and criteria to base Commission reviews and recommendations. The Commission is advisory only and

serves to develop awareness of Sitka's historic resources. The Ordinance for the Commission needs to be strengthened to support a role beyond advisory.

An appropriate role of the Commission was discussed in the planning process(es) of Harbor parking redesign, Centennial Building remodel and Kettleon Library expansion. Ms. Henshaw will inquire and report back at the May meeting.

M-Gorman/S-Ozment to authorize Chair Kinsman to draft a map showing expanded boundaries as discussed.

Motion carried.

c) Discussion of USGS Bunker Demolition and Foreclosure (if necessary; deferred from March Agenda, New Business)

Chair Kinsman introduced this topic. Commissioners were asked to write a letter regarding the USGS handling of the Bunker Demolition prior to the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement. It was acknowledged that Sitka Historic Preservation Commission was not invited to be a party to the Memorandum of Agreement. USGS appears to have begun to cooperate better in regard to its obligations for historic preservation in Sitka. Sending a letter now could be counterproductive, since USGS is becoming responsive to preservation obligations.

M-Ozment/S-Poulson to find it is not necessary to send a letter now regarding the foreclosure of the Bunker, although the Commission is disappointed the Bunker was demolished.

Motion carried unanimously.

IX. NEW BUSINESS. None.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE(S) and/or Agenda Items:

Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at 6pm, Harrigan Centennial Hall.

Commissioner Gorman reported he will be absent at the May meeting.

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

M – Gorman/S – Ozment to adjourn.

Motion carried.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:08pm.

Minutes Prepared by: Gail J. Peterson, Contract Secretary