



# City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

*Coast Guard City, USA*

## **SITKA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

Regular Monthly Meeting

**Held at Harrigan Centennial Hall**

**330 Harbor Drive**

September 11, 2019 6 p.m.

### **FINAL MINUTES**

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

**Chair Littlefield called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.**

Present: Roby Littlefield (chair), Anne Pollnow, James Poulson, Ana Dittmar, Bob Sam, Scott Saline (arrived 7:10), Candace Rutledge (arrived 7:30)

Absent: Valorie Nelson (assembly liaison)

Staff: Amy Ainslie

Public: Rebecca Poulson, Caren Mathis

#### **II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FY20**

**M-Poulson/S-Pollnow moved to nominate Roberta Littlefield as the Chair. Littlefield accepted. Motion passed 5-0 by voice vote.**

**M-Poulson/S-Dittmar moved to nominate Anne Pollnow as Vice Chair. Pollnow accepted. Motion passed 6-0 by voice vote.**

**M-Dittmar/S-Pollnow moved to nominate James Poulson as Secretary. Poulson accepted. Motion passed 6-0 by voice vote.**

During discussion of the Secretary appointment, Poulson asked if Sam was interested in serving as the Secretary. Sam answered that due to health reasons, he did not feel up to taking on the role. Sam added that he felt it was difficult to be on the Commission without another Native Commissioner, and Sam asked that a native liaison to the community be added to the Commission. Littlefield stated that she filled the seat of the native at-large. Sam stated this was cultural appropriation, and that he wished to see another native person added to the Commission.

#### **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**M-Pollnow/S-Dittmar moved to approve the agenda. Motion passed 6-0.**

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. August 14, 2019 minutes

**M-Pollnow/S-Poulson moved to approve the August 14, 2019 minutes. Motion passed 6-0.**

## **V. GUESTS &/OR PERSONS TO BE HEARD**

Ainslie introduced Caren Mathis as a candidate for the Planning Director position. Mathis was in town on a visit and had completed her final interview. Mathis greeted the Commission.

Rebecca Poulson provided an update on projects at the Sitka Fine Arts Camp as they were wrapping up Historic Preservation Fund grants as well as CLG grants. Part of the grant deliverables was to have final presentations that the Commissioners would be invited to. There would be a presentation on historic architecture on 9/17/19 and an Art Party including an art show, live music, and tours, on 9/20/19. R. Poulson spoke of the re-plastering work that took place in Allen Hall. The Japonski Island Boathouse was also finishing a CLG grant and would have an open house on 9/21/19. R. Poulson also described the rehabilitation efforts at the Boathouse, including the labor-intensive work to reuse the original siding.

Regarding the next item on the agenda, R. Poulson stated that there had been more recent correspondence between SHPO and SSMF she had been included on, however the continuing disagreement between the two organizations regarding plans to replace the windows of Stevenson Hall remained unresolved. R. Poulson noted that the SSMF had new leadership, with Kari Lundgren, Tiffany Pearson joining the board, and Mary Hames taking over as the President. R. Poulson said she was working on a letter to the new board members of SSMF stating the history of the building, and urging them to work with SHPO on the Stevenson Hall plans. Littlefield thanked R. Poulson for her continued works on the historic Sheldon Jackson Campus as well as the Boathouse. Saline stated some questions he had about the cost of the proposed windows. Pollnow asked about the chimney in the Laundry Building on the Sheldon Jackson campus, R. Poulson answered that it was still there and had been preserved.

Rutledge arrived and took the chance to introduce herself to her fellow Commissioners.

## **VI. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

- B. Letter from SHPO to SSMF 8.1.19
- C. Letter from SSMF to SHPO 8.4.19

Ainslie stated that the letters had been included as information for the Commissioners. Pollnow felt that the Stevenson Hall project had already been discussed, and there was no further discussion needed on the letters.

As it was the end of the summer season, Dittmar gave an update on the work at St. Michael's Cathedral. Dittmar said that less work was done this summer as compared to the previous two summers, and spoke to the expense of the on-going work. Dittmar said three-quarters of the roof repair had been completed, and there were fewer leaks. Issues with basement flooding had also been remedied, and use of the basement could now resume. There were future plans to work on the front stairs which might be completed before the winter, and skirting around the bell tower needed to be repaired. Dittmar stated that partway through the summer, the project ran out of money. However, an anonymous donor had given \$50,000 towards the project.

Saline stated that when the Bureau of Indian Affairs came into the Indian Village, many tombstones were discarded or destroyed. Saline passed around an etching of an 1869 tombstone his daughter had done, and shared some ties the tombstone had with the Free Masons that Sam had shared with

him. Saline added that Sam and other tribe members were working to rebury remains and tombstones at the Block House.

Sam stated that on June 21, 1986 at 4 pm, when new housing came into the village, approximately 6 acres of cemeteries were destroyed. Sam, along with Boyd Didrickson and others, moved as many remains as possible to the Block House, working closely with the Orthodox Church. Over 600 people attended the reburial ceremony. Sam stressed the importance of documenting such events, in part to prevent similar events from happening again. Sam said he had since dedicated his life to restoring the burial sites. Sam thanked Saline, and also wanted recognition to go to Boyd Didrickson. Sam concluded some of the remaining headstones would be relocated to an untouched WWII bunker – one of the few left of its kind.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **D. Historic Preservation Plan**

Pollnow stated she was still working on a draft, primarily to fix formatting issues. Rutledge stated her familiarity with the Plan.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **E. 714 Etolin Street – Addition Remodel**

**M-Poulson/S-Pollnow moved to approve the addition remodel project at 714 Etolin Street. Motion passed 7-0 by voice vote.**

Ainslie stated that the owner was Wendy Alderson, and that the project was to remodel an existing addition to the house, the project primarily centered on adding additional doors and windows. Poulson stated that the house was built in the 1980's.

Sam stated that the area in question was once called "Russian Town", Sam asked how many original buildings were left in the area. Poulson stated that most of the buildings in the area were built in the 1930's, but there had been interesting artifacts found in the area. Poulson also noted there were many Finns living in the area, many of whom were carpenters, hence the naming of Finn Alley. Poulson wasn't aware of any remaining Russian built structures. Pollnow stated that Russian black glass, a teapot spout, Hudson Bay Pottery, 1940's era bottles, and school-children toys were found during excavations of the area – those artifacts were now at the museum.

## **IX. SET NEXT MEETING DATE(S):**

(2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the Month, 6 pm **Harrigan Centennial Hall**)

**Wednesday, October 9, 2019** – Regular Monthly Meeting

Ainslie told the Commission that she would be out of the office September 19- 23. Dittmar noted she would not be able to attend the next meeting.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Seeing no objection, Chair Littlefield adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.**