Cordova Historic Preservation Commission

Members: Jim Casement, Chair; Brooke Johnson, Wendy Ranney, John Wachtel, Heather Hall, Cathy Sherman and Nancy Bird

Meeting Agenda: **Thursday, April 25 2019 - 5:10 pm**
Conference rooms, Lower level, Cordova Center

And via teleconference for those outside of Cordova
To access the meeting, dial 1-877-820-7676 and when prompted,
Enter Conference ID number 22233

AGENDA

1. Roll call and approval of Agenda
2. Approval of minutes from March 14, 2019
3. Cordova Historic buildings survey – discussion
4. Next steps – next meeting date?
5. Adjournment

Cordova Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – *Thursday, March 14, 2019*

Members present: Jim Casement, John Wachtel, Wendy Ranney and Nancy Bird, and via teleconference: Brooke Johnson and Heather Hall. Absent: Cathy Sherman.
Others: Sylvia Lange, Dustin Solberg and Leif Stavig.

The meeting was called to order by Chair J. Casement about 5:02 pm.
The agenda was approved without objection. The Chair welcomed new member Wendy Ranney.

Approval of minutes
Motion by Bird, seconded by Ranney to approve the minutes of Feb. 7, 2019. Motion passed without objection.

Discussion Cordova Historic building survey

Boundaries
While previous discussions had indicated the Commission wants to include the current City limits as boundaries but approach the project in phases. Several expressed concern to limit the scope of the project initially and learn from a Phase I which might include a small geographic area or a sub-section of known historic buildings already included in the Alaska Heritage Resources Survey. Another suggestion was to first focus on buildings over a certain age, perhaps 75 years and older.

That suggestion led to a brief discussion about a historic building (the Castle Inn) which is slated for demolition in the near future; Lange asked how the Commission and/or community might help save it. Casement agreed to meet later with Lange about listings on the National Register.

Following that discussion, Commission members quickly ***reached consensus*** **to set the boundaries for the Phase I project to include all buildings within the city limits which are 75 years or older**.

Stavig noted that the city's property tax cards do include age data, and there was agreement that high school students – who we hope will participate in this project – could collect research from those property tax cards.

Training Workshop
Bird reported that the Office of History & Archaeology's travel budget will not allow Summer Louthan, the author of the *Alaska Historic Buildings Survey Manual & Style Guide* to come to Cordova for a workshop in person. Discussion ensued on:

- the purpose of a workshop - to explain why building surveys/inventories are useful and how they are done,
- the general outline of a workshop – the morning session would be in a classroom setting, going over the nuts and bolts of a survey and reviewing resources available to fill in historic details; the afternoon would be devoted to completing an actual survey, preferably using a digital form and/or a paper form on a clipboard
- it is also expected that a workshop would explain how to identify character defining features of buildings

Consensus reached to continue planning to have a workshop around August 20, about the time school starts so that high school students can participate along with other community members interested in the project. The workshop might include teleconference web-based classroom materials with assistance from Summer Louthan and John Wachtel.

High School Student Involvement
Casement and Bird reported on conversations they've had with the school Superintendent and the high school principal who are both interested in seeing a high school special interest class be set up to involve students in the historic building survey project. Commission members reviewed the draft template and the draft class outline and generally approved of the direction both documents are headed.

It was suggested that Oral Histories of specific buildings could be another research tool and good addition to the project. High school students might be very interested in doing these interviews and compiling the information.

Hall said the Eyak Cultural Camp is scheduled in early August and that an Australian group of volunteers focused on documenting archaeological resources is scheduled to visit the following week. She thinks they might be good partners. Wachtel said inventorying cultural resources would be another section of the survey and that the Australian group might be able to add to or develop that section.

Five-Year Plan from Office of History & Archaeology
This document was not discussed but referenced as a resource. It is available online or may be gotten in hard copy by request. Hall believes there may be some sections that can be woven into/used for descriptions of our survey project, the reasons for it, etc.

Possible additional columns to add to the draft template (spreadsheet)

1. Photos of buildings
2. National Register listing – has it been evaluated? Is it an eligible site?
3. Period of significance
4. Common name, i.e. the *Reception Building* or *Castle Inn*

NEXT STEPS:

- Bird will contact Dixie Lambert who did a survey of the cemeteries and seems to like working on spreadsheets, particularly to help history projects; she will see if Dixie is able and willing to become the spreadsheet Point Person for this project. An updated template is needed by about April 8
- Ranney will draft a paragraph describing the project for the high school class, needed by about April 8.
- Wachtel will contact the manager of the AHRS and find out if Leif Stavig can be allowed access to this database, so that Stavig can assist the project by inputing the AHRS data.

Certified Local Government Annual Report

Commission members suggested a few additions to this report. Bird will incorporate them into a new draft and distribute it via email for final review prior to its submittal to the Office of History & Archaeology by March 29.

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Other comments
Lange suggested that an article be drafted for the Cordova Times about the Historic Preservation Commission and the building survey project. All agreed that would be good to do, particularly prior to the start of the survey project.

Next meeting date
The next meeting will be in April.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.
These minutes were approved XXXXX.

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