

**CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2015
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
7:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Steven Gregory called the meeting to order at 7:43 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners present:

Steven Gregory

Doanh Tran

Vicki Williams

James Santana

Erin Reinders, Planning Director

Patrick Jordan, Acting City Manager

Commissioners absent:

Jessica Earnshaw

2. **MINUTES: Historic Preservation Commission, December 18, 2014.** Chair Gregory called for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 18, 2014 meeting. Erin Reinders let the commissioners know that they were voting on the corrected minutes, not the minutes from their packet. James Santana made a motion, Doanh Tran seconded the motion. Chair Gregory asked if there were any further discussions on the minutes. Commissioner Tran wanted it noted what changes were being made. Ms. Reinders noted that paragraph five of item five was updated to further clarify events. Chair Gregory added that he didn't feel the first version of the minutes accurately reflected what happened. He wanted a more accurate account of what transpired and be clear that any member of the public who wished to speak at the last meeting was recognized to speak on their first attempt. He reiterated that comments from the public are valued by the commission. There being no further comments, Chair Gregory called for a vote, which was unanimous (6-0). The minutes for the December 18, 2014 meeting were adopted.

BUSINESS ITEMS

3. **Adoption and submittal of Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2014 to City Council.**

Erin Reinders presented the Historic Preservation Commission's Annual Report for 2014. Ms. Reinders explained that this report was structured much the same as the Planning Commission Annual Report with some minor tweaking to meet the State Historic Preservation Office's reporting requirements. The HPC met four times in 2014. Most of that time was spent reviewing documents and getting an understating of the duties of the commission. The HPC passed two CMMP recommendation resolutions and one resolution for a Section 106 review. The report also highlights some goals for 2015. The main goal for the HPC will be to update the Unalaska Historic Sites and Resources. The City will have to hire an outside consultant for help with this task. The consultant and HPC will coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure all requirements are met. Once this Annual Report is approved, it will go to the City Council for presentation on February 10, 2015.

Last revised: 2/23/2015 1:25:59 PM

Ms. Reinders noted that Code only requires two Historic Preservation Meetings per year. She suggested meeting three times a year in January, May, and September. If any time sensitive matters come up, another meeting could be added on. There was a general consensus.

Chair Gregory asked the commissioners if there were any questions or comments on the Annual Report. At this point, Anthony Grande announced that there was one member of the public who would like to speak to this item. Chair Gregory again asked the commissioners if there were any questions or comments before opening the floor to public comment. Erin Reinders added that this was an Action Item with a resolution of 2015-01. There being no further comments, members of the public were allowed to comment.

Jeff Hancock's main concern regarding the HPC Annual Report was due to the last line of the first paragraph that reads, "This integration of the two commissions allows the City to better maintain active membership in the Historic Preservation Commission". While Mr. Hancock appreciates that the commission has been reinstated after years of inactivity, he stated that many years went by without active solicitation for participation in the commission. He stated that City Council is required to maintain an active commission and they failed to do so. Five or six years previously, there were vacancies advertised while there were applications on file in the Clerk's Office that went ignored and no appointments were made. Previous HPC members were not contacted and asked if they would like to be reappointed to the current Historic Preservation Commission. Mr. Hancock would like to see the last line of the first paragraph stricken from the report.

Erin Reinders stated that this sentence was in reference to the membership of the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission membership mirroring each other, but was not needed in the report. Chair Gregory asked if there were any further questions from the commissioners or the public.

Chair Gregory asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2015-01, the adoption of Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2014. James Santana made a motion, Doanh Tran seconded. Chair Gregory asked if there was any discussion regarding this resolution. Commissioner Tran didn't have an issue with the sentence in question but was wondering if Staff was going to remove it. Staff let her know that the Commission could amend their motion and Staff will remove the sentence in question from the report. Commissioner Tran appreciates Jeff Hancock's comments regarding what did, and did not, happen previous to this Commission's creation. Chair Gregory did not have any problems striking the sentence from the Annual Report.

Chair Gregory moved to amend the original motion by striking the last sentence of the first paragraph of the report. Commissioner Tran seconded the motion. Chair Gregory called for a vote on the proposed amendment to the document, which was unanimous (6-0). The amendment passed.

After asking the commissioners if there were any further comments regarding the Annual Report, Chair Gregory called for a vote on Resolution 2015-01, adopting the Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2014 as amended. The vote was unanimous (6-0). The motion passed and the Historic Preservation Commission Annual Report for 2014 was adopted.

4. Follow-Up on the Historic Resources Inventory and the petition requesting the addition of Unalaska Lake and Iliuliuk River.

Chair Gregory noted that he brought this petition before the Board two months ago due to Jeff Hancock being unable to attend the meeting. Questions have come up at the past two meetings and Staff has continued to look into this issue. For tonight's meeting Staff was tasked to see if the petition fell within the definitions put forth by the State Historic Preservation Office.

Erin Reinders provided the follow up on the questions regarding the HPC's role and the requirements of a cultural resource inventory as well as Staff's findings regarding the Unalaska Lake & Iliuliuk River Petition. Ms. Reinders reminded everyone that the inventory serves as an informational tool only. Having a property or site listed on the inventory offers no direct protections. After inquiries were made to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding this petition, Ms. Reinders stated that SHPO made it clear to her that natural features such as water bodies and landscapes are rarely designated as a historic resource. Usually it is the building and sites surrounding them that have been altered by humans that are considered. Ms. Reinders added that the commission can certainly still try. In order to update the inventory we need to hire a consultant with a certain level of expertise. Staff is requesting funds for FY16 in order to be able to make that happen. When a consultant is hired we can pass this petition along to see if they can document the details to qualify the lake or the river as a historic site in order to include them on the inventory.

Chair Gregory asked the commissioners for any questions or comments they had on Staff's presentation. Commissioner Tran asked if there was anywhere in the state where there was preservation or creation of a historic area for a natural resource. Commissioner Tran cited Mendenhall Glacier as a possible example. Ms. Tran also believes that another goal of the petition is to provide some sort of informational piece about this significant area for visitors. She wanted to see if it was possible to proceed with an informational piece. Ms. Reinders believes there are multiple approaches available. One possibility is the community as a whole putting together a piece on the role of the river and lake in the community. Staff's recent focus has been trying to coordinate with SHPO to see if this met the definition of a historic site. Ms. Tran stated that she had attended several of the meetings where the petition was discussed and the idea of having an information kiosk was brought up as part of the petition.

Chair Gregory asked if any other commissioners had comments. There being none, he asked Staff if there were any requests from the public to speak. Anthony Grande announced that one person signed up to speak about the petition.

Jeff Hancock believes there was some misinterpretation with the petition's intent. Mr. Hancock stated that the questions asked to SHPO, specifically to Jeffery Weinberger, were misguided. His petition was designed to not only protect the lake and the river but the entire watershed including the uplands/shoreline. He believes that SHPO's response that waterways did not usually qualify as a historic resource would have been different had the question been framed properly as watershed instead of waterway. Mr. Hancock believes that protecting the watershed is possible many different ways under the National Register guidelines, as well as state and local guidelines. Mr. Hancock referenced the Preservation Plan from 1990 that lists sites sensitive to development, which included the Iliuliuk River, from the valley waterfall to Unalaska Lake and the base of Haystack, from the mouth of the Iliuliuk River to the Bridge to the Other Side. The 1990 Plan discussed creating a series of conservation easements. The River & Lake are

considered historic landscapes and could possibly be protected by having an archaeological or conservation easement alongside their banks. When Mr. Hancock talked to Jeffrey Weinberger at SHPO regarding the petition, Mr. Weinberger referred him to National Register Bulletin 15 for guidance on how to apply criteria. Mr. Hancock then referred Mr. Weinberger to National Register Bulletin 30, which has more definitions that are used to evaluate a site. Mr. Hancock states that this bulletin defines sites in many different ways and that the word "landscape" is included under the site definition. He states that other definitions include specific places where an event occurred and an area of occupation which he believes qualifies it since that area has been inhabited for many thousands of years. Mr. Hancock believes that since there are many other sites in the same vicinity as the river and lake that already have an Alaska Heritage Resource Survey card on file, it shouldn't be much of a stretch to include the 1.5 – 2 miles of river and lake area or for the area as a whole to be identified as an historic district. He believes this area deserves further survey and inspection. Mr. Hancock explained that the petition was developed in response to comments at the Restoration Management Plan & Storm Water Management Plan meeting and felt that there needed to be more local review of development projects. He added that the petition continues to be circulated and is still accumulating signatures.

Chair Gregory thanked Jeff Hancock for his thoughtful comments and asked if there were any other members of the public that would like to comment. There being no more comments from the public, Chair Gregory asked the commissioners if they had any questions for Mr. Hancock or for Staff. Commissioner Tran asked Mr. Hancock to share his documents with the Planning Department to make available to interested commissioners. Chair Gregory stated that the commission was requesting funding for a consultant to update the historic sites and resources inventory and would prefer to leave any questions regarding listing the river and lake for a professional consultant to answer. Director Reinders thanked Mr. Hancock for the explanation regarding the intent of the petition. Moving forward, Ms. Reinders will present this petition to the consultant hired to explore ways of adding the river/lake watershed to the inventory. Chair Gregory is looking forward to hiring a consultant and hearing more public comment at that time since he is in favor of any steps to protect the river.

OTHER BUSINESS: *None*

5. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:38 PM.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 26 DAY OF Feb 2015 BY THE CITY OF UNALASKA, ALASKA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION.



Doanh Tran, Acting Chair

2/26/15

Date



Erin Reinders, Recording Secretary

2/26/15

Date

Prepared by Kelly Tompkins and Erin Reinders, Planning Department