

Ketchikan Historic Commission

January 28, 2021, 3:00 – 4:00 pm

Zoom Meeting ID: **822 5872 7284**

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Communications

- a. Welcome to new Planning Commission representative, Licha Kelley-King

4. Persons to be Heard

5. Changes to the Agenda

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Approve November 19, 2020 minutes

7. New Business

- a. DOT notices (none as of 1/19/2021)
- b. Dragon London's pending resignation

8. Unfinished Business

- a. Historic Preservation Plan: next steps

9. Work Session

- a. Review group work on goals

10. Commissioner comments

11. Adjourn

Next meeting: (4th Thursday monthly, 3 pm) February 25, 2021

Ketchikan Historic Commission

Meeting Minutes: November 19, 2020 ****DRAFT****

Agenda Item #1: Call to Order

The Ketchikan Historic Commission meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m. via Zoom.

Agenda Item #2: Roll Call

(x) Christa Bruce	(x) Deborah Hayden
(vacant) Planning Commission rep	(x) Dragon London
(x) Silvia Greuter	(x) Anita Maxwell
(x) Kristina Hill	(x) Amanda Welsh
(x) Richard Harney for Planning Dept.	(vacant) Community rep

Agenda Item #3 Communications

Dragon noted that David Deal resigned as the Planning Commission representative. Richard is confirming the appointment of a new representative.

Agenda Item #4 Persons to be Heard

None.

Agenda Item # 5 Changes to the Agenda

None.

Agenda Item #6 Consent Agenda

Deborah moved to approve the October 22, 2020 minutes. Seconded by Christa. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #7 New Business

- a. DOT notices

None received.

Agenda Item #8 Unfinished Business

- a. Election of Secretary position

Silvia nominated Anita to continue to serve as Secretary. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Historic Preservation Plan – next steps

Dragon reiterated that the last SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office) grant had asked for clarification about relationships regarding planning responsibilities, especially with the Borough. We need to outline how we'll work together with Saxman, KIC and others. Our goal is to do an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).

Richard noted that any MOU or plan would need to be approved by the Borough Assembly and the City Council. We need to clarify what SHPO is looking for.

Anita shared an email from Judy Bittner, the State Historic Preservation Officer:

From: Bittner, Judith E (DNR) <judy.bittner@alaska.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, November 17, 2020 1:57 PM

To: Anita Maxwell <AnitaM@City.Ketchikan.Ak.Us>

Subject: RE: Ketchikan historic preservation plan

Hi Anita – I am glad Ketchikan is talking on developing a historic preservation plan. As a start I think a letter of support and a commitment to participate on the working group would be good to get from the Borough. Once you have a plan, you would want the Borough to formally adopt the plan.

Are there other City/Borough programs that have worked out a relationship that has been documented in an agreement such as a MOU or even an ordinance that you can use as a model? Will you be applying for a CLG grant to help fund the hp planning effort? We still have some unallocated CLG grant money.

Regards,

Judy

Richard noted that the Council already approved having a Planning Commission representative as part of the Historic Commission and the Borough has committed to being on the Historic Commission. He would like to include the preservation plan as an annex in the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, rather than a stand-alone document, much like the transportation plan for example. Dragon felt that a letter of support would be helpful for the grant and the commitment of serving on the Historic Commission is good. Kris emphasized the importance of defining how the Planning Department and Historic Commission work together.

Richard reminded the Commission that the Borough has no historic preservation regulations. There is the Creek Street Historic District Zone, the corresponding Creek Street Architectural Design Review Board and the Newtown Overlay. The Creek Street zone was established to navigate around construction code (ex. use of vinyl windows versus wood) but the Review Board can only make recommendations. Richard feels that SHPO is not looking for more regulations, rather they want an avenue for community input. Dragon agreed and wants the plan to be a living document.

Kris reiterated the need for a document that states the City/Borough relationship and how the Commission fits within that framework. Deborah gave the example of how the Commission made a recommendation for the Herring Cove bridge railing, despite the bridge not being within the City limits. Christa asked about looking to other groups who have done this before as a model.

Dragon reviewed the goals discussed at the Sept 2018 retreat:

Goal 1: Increase the knowledge and understanding of Ketchikan's historic heritage.

Goal 2: Identify new and strengthen current partnerships to preserve and protect, educate and advocate for Ketchikan's cultural resources.

Goal 3: Identify, document and designate Ketchikan's cultural resources.

Goal 4: Preserve and protect Ketchikan's cultural resources.

Goal 5: Increase the awareness of the environmental, social, and economic benefits of historic preservation.

Goal 6: Strengthen local preservation efforts.

Goal 7: Strengthen and expand financial incentive programs for historic preservation.

Anita noted that we'd need to wait for the grant requirements to be released by SHPO in January to assess whether or not the Commission should reapply for funds to hire a contractor to facilitate the preservation plan development. Commissioners discussed what was a feasible next step. Kris stated that writing a plan is very different from implementing a plan and that producing an outline first will provide clear consensus. Richard recommended that we start simple, offering the example that the Borough's first Comprehensive Plan was four pages then built from that consensus.

Commissioners agreed to work in teams of 2-3 to review the goals. Teams will 1: identify what the goal means to our community and 2: identify what is relevant from the plans from other communities. Anita will add retreat notes and links to community plans on the Historic Commission webpage.

Teams:

Goal 1 – Anita and Christa

Goal 2 – Amanda and Silvia

Goal 3 – Deborah and Kris

Dragon will assist with all the teams and will contact Alethea to see where her interest lies.

Agenda Item #9 Commissioner Comments

Dragon shared that Grant Echohawk may be interested in applying to serve as a Commissioner. She also mentioned that Christa had an excellent idea for public outreach to help people understand the historic designation process for their property.

Agenda Item #10 Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Next meeting: (4th Thursday monthly, 3 pm) January 28, 2021 (location or Zoom TBD)

Preservation Plan Notes:

Goal 1: Increase knowledge and understanding of local heritage and historic preservation.

Christa Bruce, Anita Maxwell

To first address Goal 1, we need to specify whose knowledge and understanding we need to increase. Who is our audience? Commercial interests, general public, the unaware, the unheard, students? Do we try to reach everyone or target messages. We are up against the perception that historic preservation is only for the white and affluent. Reaching out to classrooms is challenging as many teachers feel overburdened already.

Also, a branding or definition of our unique local heritage would help outreach efforts. Who are we as a community? "Heritage" needs to be inclusive of all cultures, of all livelihoods. Identifying historic assets as a community is important for buy-in. Juneau's historic preservation planning process included a survey that showed respondents believed that "a public education, recognition and interpretation program" was the most effective and realistic approach to preserving historic places. Would a Ketchikan survey reflected that as well?

Given the wide range of possibilities under "local heritage and historical preservation", we would like to focus on a specific platform that builds a sense of identity. One option would be to feature the Creek Street Historic District. The history of the district highlights diverse groups as well as several preservation successes. Bringing attention to the district would be a starting point from which to build on towards the other historic districts, the waterfront promenade and other important historical features.

Goal 2: Identify new and strengthen current partnerships to preserve and protect, educate and advocate for Ketchikan's cultural resources.

Notes pending.

Goal 3: Identify, document and designate Ketchikan's cultural resources.

Kris Hill, Deborah Hayden

This goal comes almost verbatim out of the process that's outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). I share your concern about the definition of 'cultural resources' – most federal and state agencies usually take this term to mean the tangible remnants of human interaction with the landscape, which can include archeological sites, standing structures and historic buildings. I looked over the list you provided for Goal 3, and a lot of the items on it are those intangible cultural foundations (i.e. language and skill preservation, cultural practices) that some communities have been trying to preserve for the last 50 years or so. So, I think the first thing the Commission needs to decide in the historic preservation plan, for this goal anyway, is the definition of the term 'cultural resources'.

On its face, this goal states that someone would find and document these cultural resources (see previous paragraph regarding definition concerns) and then use the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) significance criteria to determine what should be preserved/protected (referred to in federal law as historic properties). The first question I have is how much of the city and borough has undergone previous cultural resource survey? Of those surveys, which were conducted for archeological sites and which were done to assess possible NRHP-eligible buildings and structures? What areas have these previously conducted surveys focused upon, and which areas have seen no previous cultural resource inventory? Are there reasons why a particular area was or was not previously surveyed (i.e., the likely lack of archeological sites in an area known to be landslide-prone)? In order to determine where new cultural resource survey is needed, the KHC needs to be able to articulate this previous work and its results.

What does that mean for the KHC? Once we can articulate what's been done and what was found, the Commission could then determine within the Historic Preservation Plan what areas within the city/borough need further cultural resource survey. When these areas are identified in the plan, the KHC will then need to prioritize these areas and provide justification for that priority decision. It's possible that the KHC determines that no further survey work is needed to identify new historic properties. What then? Are there sites and buildings that have not been evaluated against the NRHP criteria? If so, then maybe the plan includes steps to accomplish the NRHP determinations. Are there sites and buildings that are NRHP-eligible, but have not been formally nominated to the NRHP? If so, then the plan may need to include work on the nomination of the historic properties to the Keeper of the National Register.

What is relevant to Ketchikan (narrowing down options from the previous question)? I think that investigation into the previous CR work completed will launch and streamline what is needed under Goal 3.

Following is a list as a beginning point for further elaboration about what we mean and can include as cultural resources.

Native American Culture

Dancers/Drummers
Storytellers

KIC Cultural Projects
Beach Monitoring
Bear Project
Invasive Weeds Prevention
Ocean Acidification

Monitoring
Stream Monitoring
Safely Harvesting

Totem Heritage Center
Weaving
Carving
Regalia making
Language

Tongass Historical Museum
Historic cultural displays
Events
Archives

Saxman
Totem Park
Carving shed

Maritime culture
Boat building/repairing

Aviation Culture
Seaplanes
Save the Goose

Timber culture
Pulp mill
Sawmills

Fishing culture

Gear groups—seiners, trollers,
longliners, gillnetters
Dive fishery
Processors

Scandanavian culture

Filipino culture

Arts

Arts Council

Festivals-Blueberry, Winter

Arts

Art Gallery-shows
Events-Wearable Arts,
concerts

Individual artists

Performing Arts

First City Players
Community Concert Band
Community Chorus
Various bands/groups
Individual performers
Ketchikan Theatre Ballet
Ad hoc events-Matt

Hamilton promotions

4th of July Parade