

Cordova Historic Preservation Commission

Meeting Minutes – Monday, May 11, 2020

The meeting was held via Zoom and teleconference.

Members present: Nancy Bird, Jim Casement, Heather Hall, Sylvia Lange, Wendy Ranney, and John Wachtel.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Wendy Ranney about 5:15 pm.

Motion by Lange, seconded by Casement, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed without objection.

Approval of minutes

Deferred until next meeting.

Cordova Historic buildings survey project

Discuss the degree to which COVID-19 will impact the survey project plans.

Wachtel asked for some general discussion on Cordova's situation and what Commission members' views are on the possibility of visitors from the firm hired coming to town later this summer. Bird said the fishing season is about to get underway, that there are some businesses beginning to reopen slowly but still a lot of closures; she expects the town to be more open in a few months. Lange said it's extremely difficult to make predictions. Ranney said Cordova is lagging behind the Governor's promotion of reopening, and that it's hard to predict where it will be in a few months. The Governor is expected by May 19 to revisit the 2-week quarantine for outside visitors. She re-stated Lange's note that the larger group of outside workers and fishermen don't usually arrive until mid-June or July, and Ranney said her family's business may reopen by August but it all depends on the Governor's mandates and whether additional COVID cases are found in Cordova.

In response to whether hotels are open, Lange said the Reluctant Fisherman Inn is running. Ranney noted that just a few take-out restaurants are open now. Hall suggested that the firms may not be willing to travel yet, given the potential health risks. Wachtel indicated the correspondence from the two firms under consideration suggests they both remain very interested in the project. Casement agreed with the other Cordova residents on their comments.

Bird asked if, due to the limited funds available for this work, and the two firms' responses to the Scope of Work, the project could be broken into phases. She wondered if the first phase might only be work from a distance, perhaps developing the template and training. Wachtel responded that, yes, that could be an alternative path to follow. Summarizing the discussion, Wachtel said it sounds like a site visit – if included in the project – would best be scheduled later in the summer (late July or August), and that the exact tasks for the project will be determined in discussion with whichever firm is chosen. Ranney agreed but noted that things can quickly change.

Move forward with selecting a firm for the project based on our review of their proposals and qualifications. (Proposals received from Corvus and True North) Determine next steps.

Each Commission member gave a brief summary of their reviews of the firms. There was unanimous support that either firm could do the work but everyone also leaned more heavily to True North. One member noted that True North's costs for data composition looked more reasonable. Another noted the proposal submitted by True North was more specific to our project. It was also noted that True North's

project in Fairbanks included many aspects that Cordova's project is hoping to do (such as synthesizing past work here, developing a windshield survey).

Next steps Wachtel will contact the two firms and confirm that True North remains interested with the smaller contract amount. He will also suggest True North representatives meet with the Historic Commission soon to further discuss the tasks and determine how to proceed.

In response to a question, Wachtel said the end product deliverable for this project is a solid template in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, digital spreadsheet, and details of methodology to use in completing surveys of the neighborhoods of Cordova. Noted that this template needs to be a living document that the Commission can easily search and find properties, and update them as time goes by. It also needs to align with the state historic office's records for historic properties.

Hall said the U.S. Forest Service has a national database that she's reminded of and notes that it will be important for the Cordova database to be able to have new items/documents and photos added to it as people find them (such as diaries or other information about a property and/or the property owner). She also recommends hard copies of these documents be maintained in Cordova with an additional website developed.

Next meeting date is expected to be next week, **tentatively on Monday (May 18)**, assuming the representatives from True North are available.

Motion to adjourn by Bird, seconded by Wachtel. **No objections.** The meeting adjourned about 6 pm.

These minutes were approved May 20, 2020.