

Agenda
Planning Commission
Committee of the Whole
CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU
Ben Haight, Chairman
September 25, 2018

I. ROLL CALL

Paul Voelckers, Vice Chairman, called the Committee of the Whole Meeting of the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) Planning Commission (PC), held in the Assembly Chambers of the Municipal Building, to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: Paul Voelckers, Vice Chairman;
Nathaniel Dye, Dan Miller,
Dan Hickok, Andrew Campbell

Commissioners absent: Percy Frisby, Michael LeVine, Carl Greene, Chairman Haight

Staff present: Jill Maclean, CDD Director; Beth McKibben, Planning Manager;
Laura Boyce, Senior Planner; Allison Eddins, Planner 1

Assembly members: Loren Jones

II. REGULAR AGENDA

Ms. Eddins told the Commission that planning for this Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan began in 2015. One of the main objectives was to update the existing preservation plan, she noted. The most recent preservation plan was adopted by the City in 1997, she said. At that time, it was not presented to the Planning Commission or the City, so it has been sitting for 21 years. The plan needs to be updated in order for the community to be competitive for state and federal funds, said Ms. Eddins. The state has been very generous with two rounds of funding to make this update possible, she noted.

The Community Development Department (CDD) has completed heavy public outreach in the formation of this plan, said Ms. Eddins. There have been two large, well-attended public meetings, and numerous focus groups, she said. They implemented an online public survey and have been on the radio four times announcing the meetings, with many flyers and opportunities for public comment, said Ms. Eddins.

They are now finalizing the draft, which will be ready on September 26, (2018) for a 30-day public comment period, explained Ms. Eddins. They plan on bringing the plan back to the Planning Commission in mid-November for review, and after approval by the Commission, it will be submitted to the Assembly for final approval, she said. The goal is that by February, 2019, the community will have its first preservation and cultural plan, said Ms. Eddins.

The public would like the use of historic buildings by the community, and they would like to see that past injustices be recognized, and not swept under the rug, said Ms. Eddins.

They would like to develop a recognition program as a way to identify the importance of a site to the community. They would like to create ways to manage those resources and to track them, map them, and make them available to the public, said Ms. Eddins. They want to create incentives to encourage community development of historic sites. Education and interpretation of how the history of Juneau should be shared need to be identified, she said. They want to create solid partnerships with community organizations, said Ms. Eddins. Administration of the program currently resides within the CDD department, said Ms. Eddins. They want to make sure the department has the resources that it needs to carry forward with the development and implementation of the plan, she added.

Commission Comments and Questions

Mr. Hickok asked how many property owners have been involved in the process.

Ms. Eddins said they have had input and contact with the downtown improvement group and the business association among others. She said they are strong proponents of the main street program which would help create strategies to revitalize down town.

In answer to a question of Mr. Voelckers about overlooked historic sites, Ms. Eddins said that the Indian Village in town has been overlooked, as well as the Douglas village site, and sacred ground in Auke Bay. The land in Auke Bay is not currently designated as a sacred burial ground, she said.

Norè Winter, principal consultant and owner of Winter and Company, said their firm has been involved in the drafting of the plan. He discussed the role that preservation may play in creating community identity and spurring revitalization efforts, such as the Main Street Program.

Mr. Winter told the Commission that Juneau is a special place with a rich heritage. It has a unique history and represents a wide range of development and life styles linked to its natural environment.

He told the Commission that the plan identifies opportunities the community has to enhance the livability with goals and action items that can be spread out over the next decade.

He said the goal is not only to respect the places that form Juneau's past, but to use the places and buildings to live and work in, without putting the historic buildings under a glass jar. A fundamental benefit from having a historic and preservation plan in place is to create a sense of connection within the community. These sites will also provide a strong sense of place that is a vital tool in heritage tourism.

The Main Street Program has been around for 30 years, said Mr. Winter. It has four essential components:

- ✓ Design to build on historic resources
- ✓ Promotion of heritage and cultural events
- ✓ Economic benefits such as creation of jobs in the rehabilitation industry
- ✓ Protect investments in historic properties

Mr. Winter said rehabilitation work is most often supplied by local labor, rather than exterior sources. Because of this, a high percentage of the labor revenue stays within the community, he said. High tech jobs and start-up companies like to settle in areas where there is a high quality of life, he said. The built environment can contribute to that as well, he said. Every \$1 million in rehabilitation work provides a large percentage of employment for the community, said Mr. Winter.

"Heritage tourism" is very popular, said Mr. Winter. This is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry, and it attracts tourists who want an authentic historic experience, unlike the false storefronts along South Franklin, he said. Heritage tourists tend to spend more per person, and they also tend to remain longer in the community, he said. They want to take part in the community, said Mr. Winter. The wider array of heritage and cultural experiences the community has to offer, the wider the options are for the visitors, he said, and the more likely they are to remain in the community for a longer visit.

Cultural and heritage preservation can be encouraged in the community by instituting practices such as expedited permitting or placing more flexibility within existing code and providing technical assistance for small grants for these locations, said Mr. Winter.

Mr. Voelckers asked how authenticity for cultural and historic sites would be preserved.

Ms. Eddins said that the plan is not proposing that guidelines be redone, but to revisit them and tweak them so that other historical periods and cultures can be recognized.

Mr. Winter noted that it is historical buildings they want to respect, but that buildings next to them of no historical significance do not need to be artificially decorated to look historical.

Mr. Campbell asked how the City Museum fits into the new plan.

Ms. Eddins said that the City Museum is a partner in the plan implementation and is listed as a co-lead agency. The new director has attended some of the preservation plan meetings and provided helpful insights, she noted.

III. **OTHER BUSINESS**

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

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