

Port Orford Historic Preservation Commission

Minutes of Meeting - Friday, April 28, 2023

Commissioners Present: Rick Cook (Chair), Steve Roemen, Maurisa Markstein, Beverly Bacak, Joyce Spicer

Meeting called to order by Chair Cook at 9:35 am.

1. HPC Commissioners voted unanimously to approve minutes of the March 31, 2023 with three minor corrections. Corrected: Date on March 31st minutes, spelling of Bryan Thomson's first name (item #4, second paragraph), changing "the" to "them" (Item #6, first paragraph).

2. Old Business: Lindberg House Update

Chair Cook reported that, regarding the demolition of the Lindberg house, Joe Marsh appears to be the sole bid submitted to Puget Sound Guardians, the family trust with legal control over the Lindberg property. Marsh had not yet received a response from Puget. Commissioners discussed the benefit of a local contractor conducting the demolition, as it would increase the likelihood of salvaging historically important architectural artifacts from the remaining house structure.

3. Report on Battle Rock Sign

Chair Cook connected with Parks Commission Chair Thompson to discuss the poor condition of the large interpretive sign at Battle Rock Park and share problems and ideas of what should be done. Chair Cook shared that HPC has reached out to Siletz but their Cultural Commission is currently very busy and has not been able to focus attention on Battle Rock.

Commissioners discussed that ultimately it is up to the Port Orford City Council to decide after receiving a recommendation from the Parks Commission. HPC, through Chair Cook, will recommend to both the Parks Commission and City Council that the current sign be removed, and possibly be replaced with a new sign and updated narrative.

4. Port Orford Historic Resource Survey

Chair Cook lead discussion of the area to be included in the survey with the decision of the commissioners to include both sites and structures within the city limits and also within the Urban Growth Boundary. The type of survey will be a Reconnaissance Level Survey as specified in the Guidelines from SHPO.

Chair Cook is willing to be the official surveyor and will verify that this will satisfy SHPO despite the Guidelines specifying professional qualifications that Cook does not meet. Cook shared that he believes it would be a waste of time and money to involve SHPO for a survey that could be conducted without SHPO. Commissioner Markstein also shared that she was told by Kuri Gill of SHPO that Markstein could be trained to do the survey.

Chair Cook reported that he connected with Jason Allen, the SHPO Database Coordinator, regarding the current HPC project of updating the "Port Orford Cultural Resource Catalog", published in 1983, which included the 1974 survey by Stephen Dow Beckham and the more extensive 1983 survey by Patrick Masterson. Allen has characterized this HPC project as the Port Orford Inventory Update.

Discussion followed regarding whether this project will qualify as the official Historic Resource Survey (with data developed from a Reconnaissance Level Survey as specified in SHPO Guidelines), which HPC is required to produce by both state law and local city ordinance, or whether this is a more informal continuation of HPC collecting data for the official Historic Resource Survey.

Chair Cook agrees to consult with SHPO and confirm that the Surveyor professional qualifications as specified in the Guidelines for Historic Resource Surveys (which include the requirement of a graduate degree in architectural history or a closely related field), either do not apply or can be waived to allow Chair Cook to be the official Surveyor.

Discussion continued regarding where and how the survey will be made available to the public. The city currently has no web master. The survey would ideally be referenced on the city home page with a link to the survey itself.

All commissioners submitted their top three choices of which historic resources they would like to see included in a public presentation planned by HPC when the commission announces the “official” inauguration of the Historic Resource Survey.

Chair Cook requested that Commissioner Bacak take the lead in preparing a Power Point presentation for the planned public meeting. Included will be historic photos of selected examples of the local wealth of historic sites and structures. Discussion continues of a possible August scheduling of this public presentation.

5. New Business:

Commissioner Bacak suggested that HPC consider partnering with Main Street as POMSR takes on the task of operating the Visitors Center at Battle Rock Park. Visitor Centers are finding fewer people interested in brochures, with most people now getting their information via smart phones. Multifunction or hybrid centers are increasingly popular with travelers. HPC is interested in the possibility of transforming some of the space inside the Visitors Center to display local history information and artifacts. The site of the Visitors Center is literally on the site of the original founding of the town. Chair Cook suggests that this could be a project of a coalition of Main Street, HPC, Cape Blanco Heritage Society, the Port Orford Arts Council, the Parks Commission and the City. Commissioners discussed the advantage of being able to recruit more docents who might be drawn to helping at the Visitors Center with an interesting local history component.

6. Announcements, additional items:

None

7. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Minutes presented for approval: May 24, 2023 by Commission Secretary, Beverly Bacak.