HERITAGE LAND BANK ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting
March 14, 2019, 11:30 a.m.

Permit & Development Center conference room 170
4700 Elmore Road, Anchorage, Alaska
Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

HLBAC Chair Wilber called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Commissioners Present:  
Wende Wilber, Chair  
Jim Fredrick, Vice-Chair  
Kati Capozzi, Commissioner  
Vicki Gerken, Commissioner  
Peggy Looney, Commissioner  
Ron Tenny, Commissioner

Staff Present:  
Robin E. Ward, Executive Director  
Nicole Jones-Vogel, Land Management Officer

Commissioners Absent:
Brad Quade, Commissioner (Excused)

II. Roll Call & Disclosures

None.

III. Approval of the March 14, 2019 Agenda and the January 10, 2019 and February 14, 2019 Minutes

Vice-Chair Jim Fredrick moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and approval of the agenda passed unanimously. Vice-Chair Fredrick moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approval of the minutes pass unanimously.

IV. Director’s Report

Director Ward provided the Draft 2019 HLB Annual Work Program and 2020-2024 Five-Year Management Plan after all comments and revisions were incorporated after the HLBAC public hearing and would be presented to the Assembly for further public comments and a public hearing. Director Ward stated that HLB has a unique opportunity for the Former Native Hospital Site and asked Ms. Nicole Jones-Vogel to share with the HLBAC. Ms. Jones-Vogel reported that involvement with the Brownfield group had presented an opportunity with the Council of Finance Development and Agencies (CDFA). The CDFA helps communities identify financial strategies to make projects, that are specifically located on Brownfield sites, figure out how to make the capital stack financially feasible and come up with specific ways the community can support redevelopment of these sites. CDFA reached out to us; they want to do an Alaska project. They were looking for sites that had already had some assessment work completed and had a redevelopment plan. We pitched to them this site that we’re talking about today. They’re very excited about the project and plan to come up for a day and a half and meet with our stakeholders, the HLBAC, several development folks in town – so that they have an understanding what our barriers are to redevelopment. At the end of their visit they will provide us with some first gut reactions and then some broad ideas that they’re considering for us. Then a more detailed report that lines out strategies. As soon as we have that date, we’ll keep you updated. Vice-Chair Fredrick inquired if they were a funder or a facilitator. Ms. Jones-Vogel confirmed they’re facilitators. Funding would come through the EPA. They have received a Brownfield
Technical Assistance grant, which allows them to go to project sites, to do this work, and it is funded through the EPA. We expect this to occur in June. Director Ward stated that this would probably be the first of many of these types of opportunities and that activating this site would need a lot of assistance, incentives, and grants. We’re starting that process right now to stack grants.

V. Proposed Action Items and Public Hearings:

a. HLBAC Resolution 2019-03: A Resolution recommending approval of the Draft Former Native Hospital Site Master Plan.

Chair Wilber asked that people sign up to provide testimony for the public hearing and asked for the staff report. Ms. Jones-Vogel stated that she and Holly Spoth-Torres, Stantec’s public outreach consultant, had been on a “roadshow,” presenting the result of the stakeholder working group findings to Community Councils, the Anchorage Downtown Partnership, the Tikahtnu Forum, and the Native Village of Eklutna and talk about where we’re at and what the alternatives are. We wanted to create a transparent, community-informed process. Early on, we identified the Former Alaska Native Service Hospital site’s past use and a vision; we wanted to make sure those themes were carried forward. We had a very robust stakeholder involvement. Community involvement became more active after we drafted the plan. Ms. Jones-Vogel further described the public outreach and the evolution to the two alternative conceptual plans; one commercial mixed-use and the other residential mixed-use. We’ve had the 30-day public review period and forwarded comments received, and draft responses, on Friday. In your packet there are additional comments received from Friday until yesterday. Ms. Jones-Vogel further expounded on the flexibility of the Plan due to constraints and marketability. The next step is to develop a committee to address the memorial with the Alaska Native community.

Chair Wilber asked for Commissioner comments, Commissioner Peggy Looney inquired about the tax-incentives for downtown and if that would be applicable. Director Ward stated that it was adjacent to the Central Business District. We’re going to have to see if there are opportunities to annex this in. We do believe that if we finish the entitlement portion and get this rezoned, residential could be the very first part of development there. We’re going to explore that opportunity.

Chair Wilber opened up the public hearing. Michael Tullius supported both alternative options and the market is going to choose it and be aware of that and changing the zoning from PLI will help. He referenced the electrical undergrounding and the road project, and is concerned that ML&P will leave the poles and ACS and GCI will still have their lines on the poles. Supports undergrounding of ACS and GCI simultaneously, per Title 21, to maintain attractiveness of potential development. Mr. Tullius provided draft resolution to that effect.

Karen Barnard, St. Mark Lutheran Church, AFACt provided testimony and literature regarding poor public safety due to break-ins. This land should be for medical care and maintain PLI zoning. I was not invited to this public process. The property is fenced and the people are still breaking in. This plan to gentrify is blatantly racist.

Chair Wilber seeing no other persons present to provide testimony, closed the public hearing. Chair Wilber asked if there were Commissioner comments or questions for staff. Vice-Chair Fredrick expressed concern that he did not observe a seismic overlay for the residential alternative in the plan and believes those areas may be in the zone 5. There is a dangerous potential of the hillside sliding down to the creek. I think it needs a lot more technical work than that. Ms. Jones-Vogel replied that when we do more soil sampling for the assessment, we’ll try to also incorporate geotechnical work at that time so we can get a better understanding of what the real seismic risk is. Vice-Chair Fredrick stated people aren’t going to build on it if there’s that much risk. Ms. Jones-Vogel requested Jacque Boutet, The Boutet Co., to expand on response. Mr. Boutet stated he was the engineer involved with the study and agreed with Vice-Chair Fredrick. The residential areas do encroach into the more risky side. The entire
site has various shades of seismic risk. As Ms. Jones-Vogel stated, one of our strong recommendations, which is an early action pre-development activity, is to do a detailed site specific assessment. The surface geologists with USGS did an assessment in the early 1980s and mapped it based on terrain mapping and maybe did some random sampling around Ship Creek. They drew one map and then later the engineers came in and did a regional based study without any site-specific study here. Geologists want to be precise; engineers want to be safe. The geologists established boundaries and the engineers pushed those boundaries back and inland for safety. Somewhere in there is where the reality is. Mr. Boutet stated now we have the ability to do more testing and have a much better understanding of foundations and seismic risk than we would’ve in the 1970s and 1980s. We would urge this assessment to be the first step for MOA to characterize this site in a more definitive way. From there, the development community would figure out what makes the most sense. Commissioner Ron Tenny commented that, in Chicago, displacement of the homeless resulted in just shifting the problem elsewhere. There is a bigger problem that we’re not going to be able to solve on this commission.

Chair Wilber asked if there were any more Commissioner comments, questions, or discussion. Seeing none, Ms. Looney moved to approve HLBAC Resolution 2019-03 recommending approval of the Draft Former Native Hospital Site Master Plan and then asked if this plan was set in concrete. Director Ward responded that this is a general concept that we call development bubbles. Chair Wilber asked if Ms. Looney would like to speak to her motion. Ms. Looney responded that it is encouraging to hear that there was a lot of public input, this is a great first step and would like to see additional planning where discussions can take place. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

This motion: Passed 6-0

VI. Appearance Request(s)

Seeing no Appearance Requests, Chair Wilber moved on to Persons or Items not on the Agenda.

VII. Persons or Items not on the Agenda

Karen Barnard, St. Mark Lutheran Church, AFACT stated that citizens need and wish for a solution. The seismic issues may result in the property being waterfront when there’s another 1964 earthquake. The treatment for the types of people who are on this site is disrespectful. Theirs is a serious medical-based issue. They don’t do this just for fun. Their parents’ and their grandparents’ land was taken away. They have a sorrow, and unless you’re an Alaskan Native, you have no idea. Ms. Barnard stated she felt betrayed and the mentally-ill homeless people will be locked out of this site. She supports housing and mental health treatment for them. She is dismayed with not being included.

Chair Wilber seeing no other persons wishing to provide testimony or comments, moved on to Commissioner Comments.

VIII. Commissioner Comments

Chair Wilber added asked if there were any Commissioner comments, and seeing none, thanked staff and the consulting team for taking into consideration the native culture and the Dena’ina people and engaging the former hospital representative, Native Village of Eklutna, and the many other diverse groups in the area. There was a phenomenal public process with this plan. Chair Wilber added that at 12:15pm, there would be a joint meeting with Girdwood Board of Supervisors Trail Committee to discuss trails. Chair Wilber went on to the next scheduled meeting.
IX. Next Meeting

Chair Wilber stated the next regularly scheduled commission meeting date will be at 11:30am, Thursday, April 11, 2019 in the Permit & Development Center conference room 170, at 4700 Elmore Road.

X. Adjournment

Following the completion of business, Vice-Chair Fredrick moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

PASSED and APPROVED on this, the 11th day of April, 2019.

Signature

Wende Wilber, Chair
Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission

Respectfully submitted for the Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission by:
Tawny Klebesadel, RED Office Manager

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