

Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 22, 2021 at 11:30 a.m.

via Microsoft Teams and telephonic hearing (907) 519-0237 Conf. ID 242 475 838#

- I. **Call to Order:** *11:32 a.m. by Acting Chair Jim Fredrick*
- II. **Roll Call and Disclosures:** *Present are Commissioners Jim Fredrick (JF), Vicki Gerkin (VG), and Ron Tenny (RT). Staff present are Real Estate Director Christina Hendrickson, HLB Land Management Officer Shelley Rowton (LMO) and Assistant Municipal Attorney Quincy Arms. No disclosures were made.*

As a quorum was not present, Commission agreed to conduct public hearings on proposed action items, holding the vote until a special meeting (date TBD).

- III. **Approval of:**
a. July 22, 2021 HLBAC Meeting Agenda

Amendments recommended by staff:

- 1. Remove item **III.b**.*
- 2. Strike all language in item **V.b** after "US Survey 4805".*

*Motion to approve amendments by RT, 2nd by VG. **Amendments approved 4-0.***

*Motion to approve agenda by RT, 2nd by VG. **Agenda approved 4-0, as amended.***

~~b. HLBAC Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2021~~

- IV. **Director's Report:** *Delivered by Christina Hendrickson – new Director of the Real Estate Department. More detailed report to be delivered at a future meeting. Special meeting will be needed to vote on public hearing items, and that will be properly noticed.*

- V. **Proposed Action Items and Public Hearings:**

- a. **HLBAC Resolution 2021-03:** A Resolution recommending approval of the disposal by non-competitive sale of HLB Parcel 3-073, legally described as Lot 32A Block 10 1st Addition to the Alaska Industrial Subdivision (Plat 64-141), at less than fair market value to public agencies or non-profit organizations for public purpose uses, and amendment of the 2021 Heritage Land Bank Annual Work Program and 2022-2026 Five-Year Management Plan.

Staff report was delivered by LMO. Public hearing opened by Acting Chair JF. No public testimony was offered. Public hearing closed by Acting Chair JF.

Commissioner VG asked how the property was acquired. Staff advised that HLB purchased it from the State of Alaska in 2014, that the deed requires a public purpose use, and that we would notify the state of the sale.

VG asked if the transaction would be closed at a title company. Staff answered in the affirmative.

VG asked if there was a potential buyer. Staff answered in the affirmative.

VG asked why HLB purchased the building and staff provided a brief history of ownership.

- b. **HLBAC Resolution 2021-04:** A Resolution recommending approval of the non-competitive disposal by conservation easement or deed restriction of a portion of HLB Parcel 6-060, legally described as Lot 2 US

Survey 4805 and amendment of the 2021 Heritage Land Bank Annual Work Program and 2022-2026 Five Year Management Plan.

Staff report was delivered by LMO. Dave Mitchell with Great Land Trust (GLT) provided insight into proposed deed restriction, which would extend existing restrictions to the entire property. It would keep the property in a natural state in accordance with Sustainable Salmon Fund requirements.

RT mentioned that the area is home to over 86 species of birds, tidal wetland important to protect, and a couple of ponds that people in Girdwood recreate in. Asked if it would be impacted. Staff could not give a definitive answer as to if those recreational uses would be impacted.

Public hearing opened by Acting Chair JF.

Mr. Dave Mitchell reminded everyone that proposed deed restriction is in packet and that existing patent restrictions on seaward side of highway would be extended across the entire parcel. The funding would require that the parcel would remain in its natural state.

VG asked Mr. Mitchell to inform the group as to the purpose and operation of GLT, which he did.

Mr. Jeffrey Knauf spoke to his alleged claim to a portion of this property as a result of a permit history that he asserts was in violation of MOA's patent. He detailed his billion-dollar approach that mines without wet chemistry or tailings with no impact on the land.

Mr. Brendan Raymond-Yakoubian testified in support of this resolution supportive of HLB land use objectives which recognize conservation as a form of development. This area houses the crown jewel of Girdwood's wetlands and riparian area and many world-class primitive trails. Girdwild has engaged staff and other planning efforts to preserve much of the Virgin Creek area.

Ms. Julie Raymond-Yakoubian spoke in support of conserving this parcel and the entire watershed for habitat and conservation values and designation of a primitive natural space allowing current recreational use to continue.

RT agreed with Ms. Raymond-Yakoubian that this is a forward-thinking effort and that this is a special, spectacular area and this project should be commended.

Mr. Mike Edgington supports the proposal as important to the ecology of Turnagain Arm. He expressed some concern with access for current recreational uses and asked for more information. He also asked for staff to comment on why it was not presented at local Girdwood meetings.

Director CH asserted that this item has been presented under that which is required under municipal code. Future HLB actions will continue to be noticed as required by code and the public is welcome to provide input in this forum.

Mr. Mitchell commented on the access question and stated that the conservation mechanisms were not intended to block recreational use, but if the use were so intensive that it impacted salmon habitat there could be a conflict. The concern is more geared towards things like motorized use or subdivision. The goal is to allow continued recreational use and to protect salmon habitat.

Mr. Knauf posed a question to Mr. Mitchell, out of order.

Public hearing closed by Acting Chair JF.

- c. **HLBAC Resolution 2021-05:** A Resolution recommending approval of the disposal by conservation easement(s) of HLB Parcel 3-037, legally described as W2 SE4 W4 SEC 35 T13N R3W, for use in wetlands mitigation and compensation for current and future municipal capital projects.

Staff report was delivered by LMO. Public hearing opened by Acting Chair JF.

Public hearing closed by Acting Chair JF.

RT asked staff if there was any opposition to this action. Staff responded that they had not received any calls or emails and that this was going to keep it in its current state.

VI. **Appearance Request(s):** None

VII. **Persons or Items Not on the Agenda:**

- a. *Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian spoke to trails related topics and provided suggestions. An email is attached detailing this testimony.*
- b. *Julie Raymond-Yakoubian added to those comments using the Forest Loop trail which was approved by HLBAC several years ago, and since then we have learned that the group responsible for the 5k who would also build the Forest Loop trail violated terms of the agreement on the 5k and they have declared that they no longer intend to pursue the project. She requests that this body rescind the resolution approving that project.*
- c. *Lisa Miles emailed comments which are attached. (read into the record by Director CH)*

VIII. **Commissioner Comments:**

IX. **Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting Date:** Thursday August 19, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. via Microsoft Teams and telephonic hearing.

X. **Adjournment:** *Motion by VG, 2nd by RT. Meeting was adjourned 12:40 p.m. by Acting Chair Fredrick.*

PASSED and APPROVED on this, the 19th day of November, 2021.

Jim Fredrick

Jim Fredrick, Acting Chair
Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission

*Respectfully submitted for the Heritage Land Bank Advisory Commission by:
Shelley Rowton, HLB Land Management Officer*