

**Anacortes Historic Preservation Board Meeting minutes**  
**4 p.m., Wednesday, 10 October 2018**  
**Anacortes Museum Library**

Members present: Chair Bob Ross, Vice Chair Ken Hansen, Secretary Bunny Heiner, Gunnar Christiansen, and Mark Nihart; Museum Staff: Bret Lunsford; Guests: Joe LaBlonde, Eileen Berkeland, and David Malseed

Chair Bob Ross called the meeting to order at 4 p.m. and the minutes were approved as presented.

All three of today's guests were from the Anacortes Eagles, who want to get their building on the National Historic Register for property tax relief. Joe LaBlonde spoke for the group, about the application that was presented to the State for their historic register and said that he had been told it was the "easiest" one they had ever approved. The presentation was given in Spokane with information solicited from the State, the City of Anacortes, the "Anacortes American," and older members of the local Eagles organization. The Eagles are currently paying \$6,000.00 annually for property taxes and have applied for an exception, which was denied by Skagit County, which said that the organization was not eligible.

In 2017 Joe submitted the National Register application to the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), and recently met with Bret Lunsford to obtain the status; Bret got an answer today on the current status via an e-mail from DAHP's Michael House, who said the Eagles submission doesn't "quite meet" National Park Services standards. Bret commented that this will be a study piece for tax relief on historic registered properties. David Malseed contributed that the Eagles are a 501-C-8.

Mark Nihart asked what the AHPB can do to help and Bret replied that we need to educate ourselves and go to the County. Mark offered to help Bret with the project and added that if the County has not granted the tax relief, as requested, it may not know the procedures because at present there are no tax relief structures in Skagit County. Bret said that once he and Mark do research, he will get back to Joe.

After our guests left, the board turned to a discussion of the Board retreat on Monday, 15 October 2018, which will start with coffee and treats at 8:45 a.m. and is scheduled to conclude after the 1 p.m. lunch.

Bob said that when he sent out today's agenda, he included all the documents he could find and that to be more influential, we may need to make some changes. Ken said that before we can change any procedures, we should update the ordinances governing the AHPB.

Bret said the level of community engagement seems to be increasing, despite not being able to save the Anacortes Junk Company, but that we did get the Port of Anacortes to recognize State law as it pertains to historic structures. He thinks the AHPB does have local status and asked, "Do we want to do more?" For example, a current situation is that the Museum's neighbour, Westminster Presbyterian Church, is in the process of replacing its alley side windows. We have no standing in this situation because the church is not on the Historic Register. A problem, Mark said, is that at present we have no board contact at City Hall.

Among the programs the AHPB has that work, Bret said, are the house history programs the Museum hosts from time to time, which can lead to getting structures on the Anacortes Register.

Gunnar Christiansen spoke of his experience with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and said that WSP&RC owns more historic structures than any other entity in Washington; park rangers and maintenance personnel, he said, are not necessarily interested in historic structures and have removed historic parts from buildings and/or have had them torn down for a variety of reasons. He was interested so got involved in the effort to stop destroying buildings and defacing them. WSP&RC created an inventory system (a data base of all structures). Within the data base there were input to identify, monitor, and protect structures that were perceived as having historic value even though the resources (time, funding, and personnel) did not exist to place them on historic registers. Anacortes right now has a similar situation: historic structures and potentially historic structures are threatened in Anacortes, but AHPB has extremely limited resources with which to respond to these threats in a way that is protective of these structures.

Bob asked if we should sit back and wait for someone to come to us, such as the Eagles, or do we go out and solicit people. This again points to the need for some staff to do this work; without funding we cannot do this. Mark said we need someone to work 20 hours per week, at a possible salary of \$60.00 per hour. Bret reminded us that we are an advisory board. Mark commented that the City has referred to the Commercial Avenue business district as "historic."

Our main function as a board, Bret said, is the Anacortes Register. We need to integrate with the City Planning and Permits Department.

A lengthy discussion followed of what we are permitted to do and how to accomplish our goals.

Bob left at 5 p.m. and for the few minutes, we discussed the board retreat. Among the comments made was Gunnar's observation that in the process of re-doing the City codes, those attending the sessions indicated they wanted to preserve the character of the City. Bret said we need to overlap with the Planning Department and Mark said perhaps ad hoc committees could be formed for specific projects.

The meeting concluded about 5:10 p.m. The next regular AHPB meeting will be at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, 14 November 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia E. (Bunny) Heiner  
Secretary