

Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System
Historical Plaques Team Meeting
FMATS Conference Room, 800 Cushman Street
City Hall, Fairbanks, Alaska
Meeting Minutes – March 11, 2013

1. Call to Order

Jessica Smith called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

The following were present:

Name	Representing
Donna Gardino	FMATS Coordinator
Jessica Smith	FMATS Transportation Planner
Deborah Todd	FMATS Admin Assistant
Ron Inouye	Tanana Yukon Historical Society
George Lounsbury	Pioneers of Alaska/Pioneer Museum
Pat Sackinger	Historic Preservation Commission

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Old Business

a. Overall Theme Recap

- Theme: Why were the Founding Fathers in Fairbanks?
 - ✓ Location Specific History, the Founding Fathers, Transportation Hub, Trading/Resources, Environmental History.

Ms. Smith presented a brief summary of discussions and accomplishments from the previous meeting. Ms. Smith stated that she had received over 30 photo nominations and set them up in a gallery format on the website separated into categories for review and selection by the committee members.

b. Layout Recap

• **Wayfinding Design Update**

Ms. Smith presented the consultant design concepts that were created for the Wayfinding Project to the Committee. Ms. Smith explained the concept behind the sun and snowflake design themes for the signs and the blue and gold color theme that was used. Ms. Smith explained that Concept #1 was the preferred design concept chosen by the Wayfinding Committee and the historic plaques could be designed using a similar color theme if the Committee liked the design. Ms. Gardino presented a drawing of the design concept for Cushman Street with planter boxes and gooseneck light poles and an overall dredge bucket brown color scheme. Mr. Inouye inquired about the sign colors of the existing signs and where the color came from. Ms. Sackinger stated that the signs were the same color scheme as the Alaska State Flag.

- **Possible Layouts**

Ms. Smith reviewed the various layouts that were discussed at the previous meeting with the Committee members. The Committee liked the layout idea for the plaques. The preferred layouts discussed were either outside and around the seating wall or along either side of the sidewalk area leading up to the seating area to provide an unobstructed view of the art piece in the apex of the greenspace. Ms. Sackinger suggested that there should be only 3-4 signs inside the circle to avoid clutter. Ms. Gardino stated that she had received a tentative location drawing from the engineer for the artwork placement in the green space. Ms. Gardino explained that the artwork had to be placed to avoid water lines, a storm drain, and in a location that would provide optimal public visibility. Mr. Inouye inquired about where the artist's statement would go in relation to the sculpture. Ms. Gardino stated that it would probably be located somewhere near the sculpture. Mr. Inouye liked the idea of keeping the plaques inside the circle for maintenance purposes and avoiding clutter. Ms. Smith asked what the Committee thought about using a low profile podium type display like the ones used by the river. Ms. Sackinger stated that they were low profile but not below knee level. Mr. Lounsbury stated that 4-5 of the pictures could be placed inside the circle and if there were funds leftover the remaining pictures could be placed all the way around the circle. Ms. Gardino suggested a collage. Ms. Smith suggested a photo mosaic. Ms. Sackinger stated that a collage idea like the one at Pioneer Park might be a good idea. Mr. Lounsbury stated that he liked the idea of the podium and asked about placement and height of flowers in relation to podium placement. Ms. Gardino stated that the flowers to be planted would be determined by Festival Fairbanks. Ms. Gardino stated that they did not want to block the stairs when placing the podiums. Ms. Sackinger stated that most of the flowers planted by the City and Festival Fairbanks near the river did not get over 2½ feet tall. Mr. Inouye inquired if risk management had looked at the area to determine risk of people falling off the wall edge at that location. Ms. Gardino explained that DOT had determined risks and accepted liability for the area. Mr. Lounsbury inquired about cost to have the pictures all the way around the outside of the circle. There was discussion about placing the signs all around the outside of the viewing area. Ms. Smith stated that she would prepare a drawing that would be drawn to scale for visual reference containing a representation of both the 4 and 5 plaque layout concepts that was discussed by the Committee. Ms. Sackinger discussed the size of the plaques and possible problems with reproduction and clarity of photos. Mr. Lounsbury stated that duplication should be avoided when selecting photos because some of the photos might already be hanging around town.

- **Include QR Codes of Web Address**

Ms. Smith explained that at the previous meeting the option of having scan codes and web addresses was discussed and the committee felt that this would be a good way to provide information and related subject matter to the public about the photos rather than taking up plaque space with text.

c. Photograph Discussion and Selection (Action Item)

Ms. Smith explained that she had received 30 photos and some had not reproduced well so she would display them on the computer for viewing and selection. Mr. Inouye stated that the images should be reviewed very carefully for detail and clarity. Ms. Smith stated that she had received a poem from Mr. Inouye for possible inclusion. Mr. Inouye read an Athabaskan poem by Belle Herbert, an Athabaskan from Chalkyitsik.

The Committee discussed the relevancy of Athabaskan culture to development of Fairbanks. Ms. Smith stated that Wickersham's diary pages were available and quoting from actual historical text would be an idea. Ms. Sackinger stated that the Founding Father plaque should be placed due south to be in the most accurate location.

Ms. Smith presented the photos selected by the Committee and the photos were discussed and selected based upon content, subject matter, and resolution.

Ms. Gardino suggested organizing the photos into categories. The Committee thought that placing the photos in categories was a good idea.

1. Founding Fathers Photos

1. ET. Barnette (first chronologically)
2. Felix Pedro (second)
3. Judge Wickersham (third)

Discussion: Ms. Sackinger suggested that all photos contain dates of birth, dates of death, dates of arrival in Fairbanks for reference). Mr. Inouye suggested using Photo Shop to make the photos uniform in size.

2. Transportation Photos (Photos Discussed: #2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10) Photos chosen:

1. Photo of Steamboat with Lavelle Young name visible on it
2. Airplane/boat photo
3. Children with dog & wagon photo-(kids' faces could be improved but really cute picture)
4. Cable ferry (with DK Kennedy pack train) photo
5. Bobby Sheldon with car photo
6. Railroad photo Tanana Valley Railroad (TVRR)

Discussion: Ms. Sackinger stated that if the photos came from VILDA, they could not be altered. Mr. Lounsbury stated that some of the pictures were available for use from the Pioneer Collection. Mr. Lounsbury stated that the origins of the pictures needed to be determined. Ms. Sackinger stated that she would like to see a photo depicting gold miners coming in from Cleary Creek or

the actual cable ferry in the transportation category. Mr. Inouye stated that the photos would take quite a bit of explanation and reminded the committee that text should be kept to a minimum for non-English speaking tourists. Mr. Lounsbury stated that Bobby Sheldon's daughter, Francis Erickson, is still alive and living in Fairbanks and might have more photos of Bobby Sheldon for use. Mr. Lounsbury stated that he would contact her and find out if she had any other photos available. Mr. Lounsbury stated that a woman was reviewing 150 old negatives from his grandfather from 1921-41 when he was the agent for the railroad and also lived in the old railroad depot and the negatives were in good shape and maybe a better photo was in that group of negatives. Ms. Smith stated that she would go back and try to find better pictures of the photos that were chosen. Ms. Sackinger stated that some of the railroad photos could be found in a book at the library by Nicholas Deeley entitled: "The History of the Tanana Valley Railroad."

3. Location Specific Photos

1. Architecture Photos #1, 5, 17
2. Chena River Photo #6
3. Chena River Breakup Photos #3 & #4

Discussion: Ms. Sackinger stated that the Photo#5 of Barnette's Cache would be an excellent photo. Mr. Lounsbury stated that Photo #1 showed the Catholic Church in the early teens before the steeple was installed, the NC Warehouse in the background upper left, the approximate area of where the Big I is located north of the bridge. Mr. Lounsbury stated that Photo #5 of Barnette's Cache contained a lot of components like a tent city and was from circa 1904.

Mr. Lounsbury stated that some of the photo ownership would be hard to track.

4. Public Gathering Photos

1. Architecture Photo #2
2. Public Gathering Photo #3-(Lots of Content but might not come out clearly)
3. Public Gathering Photo #7-(Ice Skating)
4. Bridge Photo #19 (depicting Alaska Day)
5. Greenspace Photo #12-(Hockey players on ice on Chena River)
6. Location Specific History Photo #21-(shows Garden Island area)
7. Photo #12-(Photo of Dogs)
8. University Skating Photo #13-Could take place of Photo #7-Ice Skating photo if it had better image resolution

5. Trading Photos

1. Bridge Photo #6
2. Bridge Photo #10
3. Bridge Photo #17

6. Panoramic

1. Photo #2-Fairbanks March 1940
2. Photo #16-Fairbanks circa 1940

d. Next Steps: Staff & Team Member Assignments

- **Deadline for Completion**

Ms. Smith explained that she would obtain and download the best quality version of the photos that were chosen by the Committee, categorize them on the website, and provide a link for review before the next meeting.

Mr. Lounsbury stated that he would talk with the lady reviewing the negatives from his grandfather and determine if there were any useful railroad photos.

Mr. Lounsbury stated that he would also contact Mr. Sheldon's family for more photos. Mr. Inouye suggested contacting Candy Waugaman to obtain more information and the stories behind some of the photos that were chosen. Ms. Smith stated that she would look for the ice skating photo from the University of Alaska and use that photo to replace the ice skating photo chosen. Ms. Smith stated that she would send the meeting minutes summary from the February 27, 2013 meeting to the committee members. Ms. Smith also stated that she would prepare a scale drawing depicting placement options for both the 4 and 5 plaque scenarios that were discussed at the meeting so the Committee could better visualize the plaque placement area.

5. Public Comment Period

None.

6. Other Issues

None.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m. The next Historic Plaque meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 11, 2013 at 1:00 p.m.

Approved: Jessica Smith Date: 4-11-2013
Jessica Smith
FMATS Historical Plaque Team