



Meeting Notes

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| Subject | Knik Tribal Council Historic Preservation Meeting | | Sheet 1 of 7 |
| Project Number | 21132 – 003 | | |
| Meeting Date Time | September 30, 2005 10:00 AM – 4:15 PM | Meeting Location | Knik Tribal Council Office Wasilla, Alaska |
| Notes by | Julie Jessen | Office | HDR Alaska |
| Attendees: | Rosetta Alcantra, HDR | Julie Jessen, HDR | David Cushman, SRI Foundation |
| Debra Call, Knik Tribal Council | Richard Stern Stephen R. Braund & Associates | Edrie Vinson, FHWA | Dale Paulson, KABATA |
| Jack Alcorn, Executive Director, Knik Tribal Council | Rosie Choquette, Knik Tribal Council Board Member | Jennifer Raschke, Admin. Assistant, Knik Tribal Council | Fran Seager-Boss, Cultural Resources, MSB |
| Theo Garcia, Knikatnu, Knik Tribal Council | Sharon Padilla, Knikatnu, Knik Tribal Council | Patsy Garcia, Knik Tribal Council/Knikatnu | |
| Handouts – Attached | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Guiding Questions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation Planning • Alternative maps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KAC Implementation Plan • Parts of the Plan |

At 10:00 am the meeting began with a welcoming statement by Jack Alcorn, Executive Director for the Knik Tribal Council.

Following the welcome statement by Mr. Alcorn, Edrie Vinson, the Environmental Project Manager for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provided an update on the Knik Arm Crossing project’s status. During the government-to-government consultation, the FHWA identified historic preservation as an important consideration in the face of development. Scoping meetings have been completed, and FHWA has a series of alternatives to carry forward to the draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Ms. Vinson indicated that growth will occur as a result of the project, mostly, but not completely on the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB) side of Knik Arm. FHWA has hired David Cushman from the SRI Foundation to help area tribes create preservation plans to help them identify and protect important properties.

Ms. Vinson also addressed the purpose of the meetings. The meeting is to develop a historic preservation plans that can be presented to the MSB and identify issues that can be considered in



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the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Ms. Vinson also informed the participants that Richard Stern, from Stephan R. Braund & Associates (SRB&A) will explain how the information on currently identified sites was collected, and Mr. Cushman will help identify funds to cover costs if a site needs to be moved. To close her comments, Ms. Vinson stated that the FHWA has no jurisdiction over the State or MSB governments, however these planning sessions are designed to help develop a plan that can be presented to the MSB for help protecting properties. Funding to move a site would depend on the situation. Ms. Vinson was not prepared to address funding as these would have to be handled individually, by the developer, state or local government.

Ms. Vinson then turned the meeting over to Rosetta Alcantra who explained that this meeting was a follow-up to a June 2005 meeting regarding historic preservation planning. The purpose of this and future meetings is to facilitate work with tribes related to secondary impacts that might occur as a result of the Knik Arm Bridge construction project. Ultimately, tribes will be able to prepare historic/cultural preservation plans that can be used to guide State and local decision-makers about secondary impacts that grow out of the Knik Bridge project.

Mr. Cushman then followed Ms. Alcantra with a more detailed description of the agenda and what he hoped to accomplish in this initial meeting. Mr. Cushman described the purpose as to assist the Knik Tribal Council community in addressing impacts to places of cultural and historic importance. Secondary development will impact traditional use area, cultural resources. This will fall under local laws, not Federal. By developing historic preservation strategies now, Knik Tribe will be able to be able to protect important sites through local government authorities more effectively.

Historic Preservation (HP) identifies places to protect and think about things that may be impacted by their loss, before they are lost. HP has become part of what local governments do and is important because places contribute to personal and community identity, relating and connecting the past and future. Historic preservation is a way of preserving these places that affirm community values. At this meeting, participants were asked to identify preservation goals and address what to do about what is happening. By identifying preservation problems and establishing goals related to those problems, the community will be able to identify steps to implement those goals in the second meeting and preserve sites.

Ms. Alcantra asked if the group could spend a little time to discuss what their council Mission, Vision, and Values are, and how these values relate to the community. Collectively the participants came up with the following list of values.

- Family
- Access to subsistence lifestyle
- Cultural pride
- Having economic options
- Heritage—preserving who we are
- Traditions (e.g., hunting, fishing, stories, food preservation practice, places in the landscape where these things take place)
- Religion (Russian Orthodox Church)



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- Place names—language in the landscape
- Language and Culture
- Our land

Following the exercising of listing their values, Ms. Alcantra gave a brief presentation about the potential areas of growth. Ms. Alcantra explained that HDR Alaska, Inc. has looked at landscape, soils, the natural environment, traffic patterns and interviewed stakeholders to help define where potential development might occur. Ms. Alcantra referred to a map, which showed areas of high development probability to moderate and low probability. She also explained how FHWA is responsible for direct impacts within the project area and how through the mechanism of historic preservation, HDR and FHWA are hoping the communities can address the secondary impacts after the bridge is built. These impacts include such things as population growth, transportation, infrastructure development, Ms. Alcantra pointed out that these activities are happening today without the crossing. HDR looked at many studies to project the best guess on what development might occur by the year 2030.

After her presentation, Ms. Alcantra asked if there were any questions. One question was whether or not the areas on the map were broken down by development activity. Ms. Alcantra indicated that she understood that the areas were not broken down into residential, commercial, or industrial use (or all three), but she would find out.

Following a brief question and answer period, Ms. Alcantra introduced Richard Stern of Stephen Braund & Associates (SRB&A). Mr. Stern gave a brief background on SRB&A and presented a map of known cultural resources that might be impacted by the project. These were identified through a literature review, particularly Shem Pete's Alaska book and by reviewing the State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPO) Alaska Historic Resources Survey (AHRS) list. There are big gaps in the knowledge base, but areas identified in Shem Pete's book provide clues on where to do future research. SRB&A is also conducting ground surveys and interviews. They are focusing on a couple of areas, primarily Government Hill and Ship Creek. In the Matanuska Susitna Borough (MSB), SBR&A has conducted archaeological testing along the west side of the access road, about 3-4 miles. They are working with tribal members to identify traditional land use and specific sites. The information will be included in the DEIS. They are looking for areas where there may be conflicts in order to avoid those areas as much as possible. Many cultural resources are tied directly to subsistence and natural resource sites. No formal interviews have been done one-on-one yet, but Stephan Braund knows families quite well, so some information conversations have helped identify sites. SRB&A is looking for names of people to talk with. The group suggested talking to Pauline, Rosy, and Patsy, as was Art Theodore. The focus thus far has been on places rather than landscapes for traditional activities, but it would be good to expand. It was suggested that Knik Tribal Council might take this on as a goal within the historic preservation plan. There are resources on how to do oral histories, and there are more sites in the area than are on the map. The Kalifonsky book was also mentioned as a resource.

After Mr. Stern's presentation, Mr. Cushman described preservation plans and provided a handout for what goes into a plan. He explained that HP is a strategy for protecting places for promoting a shared sense of community. It identifies problems and the means for addressing



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those problems. It identifies and describes known cultural resources, which are important and why. It helps to prioritize the things that are the most important to community and plans are usually created in anticipation of threats, from where are those threats initiated and recommendations on addressing the threats.

Following the discussion on the importance of planning, Mr. Cushman handed out copies of the guiding questions to help the participants begin to think about defining preservation problems. He asked the participants to review the questions in preparation of the discussion following lunch.

The group had lunch and returned at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Cushman began with a discussion on the places that should be protected. Mr. Cushman asked participants what places are being lost or are being threatened with loss. Collectively, the group identified the following issues.

- Graves
- Traditional subsistence areas (hunting, fishing, camps)
- Town sites/whole villages (archeological)
- Trails (connections between places)
- Traditional cultural places (physical elements/geographic features that have cultural value, such as landmarks named in legends)
- Churches and other historic buildings such as community halls or people’s homes
- Boats and their remains

Mr. Cushman posted the question of how do you educate newcomers about the history or cultural significance of an area. Mr. Cushman also asked how these places were being affected, what were the sources of threats and who is responsible for addressing the threats. The group collectively came up with the following list to answer his questions.

| Threat | Entity responsible |
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| Residential development | Mat-Su Borough, State Department of Natural Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation |
| Roads, right-of-way | Mat-Su Borough, State Department of Transportation, Federal |
| Commercial development | Mat-Su Borough, State Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Game |
| Industrial (gravel excavations, timber, pulp harvesting, coal bed methane) | Mat-Su Borough, State Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Game, businesses |
| Population expansion | Individual, Federal |
| Political impacts/legislation | Individual voters, village and regional corporations |
| Privatization of public lands | State Department of Natural Resources |
| Recreational impacts | Individual, State, Mat-Su Borough |



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After the listing, Mr. Cushman commented that in historic preservation communities are often dealing with the same cast of characters. He asked what steps the community has taken already to talk with authorities about cultural resource issues. Theo Garcia, Knik Tribal member and General Manager of Knikatnu, Inc. mentioned conversations about the Nike missile site. It was also pointed out that the historic preservation planning meeting today is another example of the community taking action. At this time, Fran Seager-boss offered an invitation to a Knik member to serve on the MSB historic preservation commission. This led to a brief discussion and the group recognized that they had to deal with some other questions before they could commit to the commission. Ms. Seager-Boss’s invitation was acknowledged and appreciated.

The discussion also led to problems, and how to address those problems. Following is a list collectively compiled by the participants.

| Rank | Problem | Goal |
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| | Sites, buildings, graves, being damaged or destroyed | Stop the destruction, particularly in the absence of consultation. |
| | Lack of information/knowledge | Gather information and use for education (activity: develop curriculum) |
| | Historic preservation is not a priority | Make historic preservation a priority, internally and externally. |
| 2 | Lack of resources (technical, monetary, experts) | Find and identify resources. |
| | Lack of legislation to support historic preservation | Pass new legislation. |
| 1 | Lack of communication (internal and external) | Improve communication both written and verbal. |
| | Lack of control over decisions on private land | Be more proactive. This is also an element of all the other goals. |
| | Resistance to government intervention | Be involved in the process (activity: get education on how to become involved). |
| | Ignorance/prejudice/(mis)perceptions | Have a more accepting community. |
| | Lack of involvement and being shut out of political process | Become involved in the planning process. |

In his closing comments, Mr. Cushman cautioned the participants that the goals identified will take many years to achieve and things may not be achievable immediately. He also encouraged the participants to make some of the changes and goals permanent. The goals will give direction in the future and will drive preservation planning efforts.

Mr. Cushman also indicated the work completed today addressing the problems and goals will be the basis for the next planning session. In the next meeting he indicated the participants would be looking at the rank for each goal and will talk about how to achieve the goals. Mr. Cushman also suggested the Knik Tribe may want to create a cultural committee dedicated to thinking about these issues. There is also an opportunity to connect with the Native Village of Eklutna to develop a larger plan.



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After his closing comments, Mr. Cushman indicated that he had time to discuss other issues or concerns. At this time, Debra Call, Knik Tribe Council Member suggested doing a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of the internal community to help the participants look at some of the goals. Collectively the participants came up with the following list.

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
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| Tribe has both a non-profit and for-profit working together to represent the entire community | Loss of knowledge, connection to past as Elders pass on |
| Leadership | Communication and lack of resources for communication |
| Being able to focus on problem-solving | Internal divisions |
| Land base and land holdings | Membership is spread-out geographically |
| Young local government | Lack of interest |
| Adaptability | Small rotating membership, creating the potential for instability |
| Political connections with Cook Inlet Tribal Council, other tribes, Southcentral Foundation, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Denali Commission (resources) | Tradition not being passed on |
| Young people | Not actively proactive and not knowing how to be active |
| Networking | Regulatory spider web |
| MSB preservation office | Lack of technical knowledge (e.g., GIS) |
| Good staff (longevity) | |
| Training (recognizing the need and doing it) | |
| Creativity | |
| 1100 members from all over the state (diversity) | |
| Council commitment | |
| History as a group (30 years) | |
| Elders | |
| Knik Tribal Council is a young organization, not jaded and with energy | |

| Opportunities | Threats |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Knik Arm Crossing (bridge) | Knik Arm Crossing (bridge) |
| Can influence change | Economic expansion and development |
| Increasing population | Increasing population |
| Tribe membership numbers | Loss of knowledge |
| MSB preservation office and knowledge | Individual (mis)perceptions |



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| Opportunity to involve more tribal members | Loss of resources through development |
| Develop Tribal coalition between Eklutna, Tyonek, Chickaloon, Knik | Globalization and the global economy |
| Watershed planning | Changes in federal funding |
| Identify common themes | |
| Education bout traditions | |
| Empowerment | |
| Moral/Tribal stature | |
| Personal education—create an ombudsman to interact with agencies | |
| Opportunity to learn new technical skills | |

The SWOT analysis exercised helped the participants to think objectively about what they can and cannot accomplish. This information will be used in the discussion about goals and how they are addressed.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, October 24th at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.