



Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission

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Minutes of January 15, 2021

Location: Remote access through online video conferencing, or phone, due to the Covid 19 shelter in place in accordance with procedures established by Governor Newsom and the Nevada County Board of Supervisors, in regards to holding public meetings.

Meeting called to order by: Chair Bernie Zimmerman at 9:02 a.m.

Commissioners present: Elinor Barnes, Barbara Czerwinski, Mike Kochis, Niel Locke, Jerry Martini, Chuck Scimeca, Felicia Tracy, Audrey Trauntvein, and Bernie Zimmerman.

Commissioners absent: Bruce Boyd

Guests and consultants: Jeff Thorsby - County liaison, and Heidi Sproat of the Truckee-Donner Historical Society.

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Mike Kochis.

Presentation: Lee Adams - Chair of the State Historical Resources Commission

1. Postponed to next month.

Approval of minutes from the previous meeting: Motion to accept by Niel Locke, second by Elinor Barnes. The minutes were approved by vote.

Commissioner's Reports:

A. Chairperson:

1. Bernie Zimmerman reported that neither he nor Barbara Czerwinski have heard from their district supervisor regarding their reconfirmation to the commission.
2. Julie's sign shop in Reno, fabricators of the Sargent plaque, are claiming that they are owed \$676.73. We dispute the claim, as the sponsors have paid the original invoice, and will not deal with them in the future.
3. Bernie has been going through the commission archives. He will send a link, so that the commissioners may view them.

B. Secretary-Treasurer:

1. Mike Kochis reported on the current financial status of the Commission.

C. Promotions Director:

1. Audrey Trauntvein reported that social media has been quiet. She will work with Barbara Czerwinski regarding a press release for the McGlashan Butterfly Collection.

Old Business:

1. **Organic documents revision:** Bernie Zimmerman will be signing the revised document. Jeff Thorsby reported that Supervisor Hall and her team will be moving forward with their review of including people. Bernie stated that other counties should not be the benchmark because no other county does what we do, to the extent of our work. Jeff supported Bernie's statement, and that we are by far more comprehensive than any other county in the state.
2. **Presentations to Supervisors:** Bernie Zimmerman is hopeful that in a month or two that the Board will be meeting in person, when Covid restrictions are lifted.
3. **Alexander homesite:** Mike Kochis has finalized the order of the plaque, which will be paid for by the Nevada County Historical Society. In discussing concerns with various plaque vendors, Jeff Thorsby reported that County had a plaque made, which they were happy with, and will send the contact info of their vendor to Mike.

7. Ethnic community landmarks:

AME churches: Linda Jack sent an email regarding the current status. Nevada City is on hold for the time being. The Grass Valley Historical Commission is sorting out a procedural issue, regarding the current houses on the proposed site. Linda was also unsure how much money could be raised by the City of Grass Valley. Bernie communicated to her that NCHLC may be able to add funding support.

Chinese rail workers: Gage McKinney contacted Bernie Zimmerman regarding the possible use of Chinese labor in the construction of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad (NCNGRR). Bernie and Jerry Martini will research further.

Hirschman's Pond: Bernie Zimmerman has been working on the proposed text of a plaque recognizing the mining site, and the Jewish community of Nevada County. The Bear Yuba Land Trust are the caretakers of the property, and are responsible for the development of trails, along with the City of Nevada, who own the property. Bernie has found that historical research has recognized the wrong Hirschman, who owned the mine. A discussion was held on how it became a pond, and where the water might be coming from to fill it. Chuck Scimeca reported there are active springs in the area. The pond used to be stocked with fish many years ago.

Niel Locke reported that he has had discussion with Shelly Covert and Richard Johnson of the Nisenan Tribe, who stated that the property is Nisenan land, but nothing of historical significance had happened there. In addition, the local tribe would like to see the healing rock in Nevada City, and the grinding rocks in Bear Valley designated.

Chinese miners: Bernie Zimmerman reported reading Bob Slyter's book on the town of Washington, and feels confident of the location of the Chinatown section. A discussion was held regarding what information might be on the plaque, and where it should be located. Jerry Martini reported that his research has been vague on the topic, but it was noted that minorities were rarely mentioned by name in news articles. Bernie proposed Professor Chang be involved, possibly with funding, as his ancestors, the Fong family, would be recognized. Jerry will make contact with a possible source of Chinese information.

10. **Potential Historic Designations:**

A. **Cemeteries:**

North San Juan Protestant Cemetery: Elinor Barnes made contact with Dennis Cassella, chair of the board for the Nevada County Cemetery District (NCCD). He stated that he had no problem recognizing the North San Juan Protestant cemetery as an historical landmark. Elinor has submitted an application to Matt Melugin, Nevada County Cemetery District manager.

St. Paul's Church and Cemetery: Elinor will be in contact with applicants regarding their plaque, and Audrey will send out a press release.

Bernie reported that he was contacted regarding three Jewish graves from the 1870- 1880's, which are located on a farm north of Nevada City. Bernie is doing research on their identity and their backstories.

- B. **Kentucky Ridge Mine:** Chuck Scimeca shared a map of the location of the mine. Linda Jack is helping with research, focussing on the years 1851-1852, when black slaves were used as labor. He is looking for the location of the 40 dwellings used for housing. He has a location for the proposed plaque. Chuck shared a drawing of a Chile mill arrasta, which evidence shows was used on the mine property. Chuck will work with the landowner on the application.
- C. **Rock Walls:** Research sources on the topic is limited, and the topic will be removed from future agendas.
- D. **Ghidotti Gold Collection:** Last month, a member of the Board of Supervisors asked if we knew the location of the William and Marian Ghidotti gold collection. Mike Kochis visited the Bank of America, on Sutton Way, where there is a display of local gold. It was found to originally belong to a another unknown local individual, and became the possession of the Bank of America. Further research discovered that the Ghidotti collection had been in safe keeping at the Tri-Counties bank in Nevada City for many years, until the Ghidotti Foundation sold it piece by piece, to support the Ghidotti educational scholarships.
- E. **Rice’s Crossing:** The research will be placed on hold for the time being.
- F. **The Truckee Veterans Memorial Building and the Rocking Stone Tower:** Barbara Czerwinski and Heidi Sproat reported that they received a letter confirming that the two sites will be calendared on the April 30, 2021, meeting of the State Historical Resources Commission.

New Business:

Budget: The upcoming budget was discussed. We have a charges for Zoom, a mailbox, social media, and other overhead, in the approximate amount of \$500. Funding, or partial funding, of plaques for Hirschman Pond and the AME churches will be needed. We will request our usual \$5000, but we should be prepared for possible budgets cuts by the County. Mike Kochis will prepare a draft of the budget, along with Chair Bernie Zimmerman

Good of the Order:

1. Niel Locke had a request from the VFW requesting the history of their building in Nevada City. Barbara stated it was built in 1952, and referred him to the Board of Supervisors, who have documentation.
2. William “Bill” and Marian Ghidotti were discussed, briefly detailing their role in Nevada County history.

Public Comments: None

Next Meeting: February 19, 2021

Location: Zoom video conferencing

Meeting adjourned at: 10:57 a.m.

Minutes approved: February 19, 2021

Respectfully submitted: Mike Kochis - Secretary/Treasurer