

**Historic Preservation Board
Pinellas County
March 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

The Historic Preservation Board (HPB) met in regular session pursuant to Section 146, Pinellas County Code, at 1:00 PM on this date in the County Commission Assembly Room at the Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Brian Scott, Chair, Board of County Commissioners (BCC)
Allison Dolan, Vice-Chair, Clearwater Historic Society
James Bachteler, Community Advocate (alternate)
Jeffrey Brown, Real Estate Broker
Tina Bucuvalas, Folklorist
Gregory Cahanin, Building and Fire Code
Michael Fridovich, Community Advocate
Vincent Luisi, Dunedin Historical Museum
Joseph Oliveri, Architect
Ramona Pletcher, Real Estate Appraiser
Brian Smith, Planning

Others Present

Derrill McAteer, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Tom Scofield, Housing and Community Development Principal Planner/Staff Liaison to the Board
Franchesca DiNapoli, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been made a part of the record.

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Scott called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, and requested that the members introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Cahanin to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

No public hearings were scheduled for this meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

Complying with the Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) & Chapter 872, Florida Statutes

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation and referencing a memorandum titled *Proposed Disposition of Indigenous Remains*, Mr. Scofield provided information regarding several types of Florida Indigenous Peoples' burial practices, as well as locations of some of the archaeological sites where their remains have been found; whereupon, he briefly discussed federal and state laws, the NAGPRA and Chapter 872, Florida Statutes, respectively, related to the handling of human remains.

Indicating that there are two requests before the Board today, Mr. Scofield noted that staff has had ongoing discussions regarding remains held in collections, including those at the Alliance for Weedon Island Archaeological Research & Education, Inc. lab (AWIARE) and at the University of South Florida (USF); and that Dr. Robert Austin and Dr. Thomas Pluckhahn are present to provide information regarding the collections at their locations.

Mr. Scofield explained that Dr. Pluckhahn, as the USF NAGPRA Coordinator, is required to communicate with federally-recognized Tribes that have expressed interest in human remains held in the USF collection; that after posting a notice in the Federal Register, Dr. Pluckhahn received responses from the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and the Seminole Tribe of Florida; and that it is now the responsibility of those two Tribes to determine a course of action with regard to disposition of the remains.

Mr. Scofield indicated that Chapter 872, Florida Statutes, assigns responsibility to the State Archaeologist for coordination with Tribal representatives of human remains that are 75 years or older; and that Dr. Austin has had discussions with the State Archaeologist related to disposition of the human remains in the collection held at the AWIARE lab.

Ms. Bucuvalas and Mr. Fridovich arrived at 1:17 and 1:18 PM, respectively.

Dr. Austin, referring to the aforementioned PowerPoint presentation, provided additional information regarding Chapter 872, including that it outlines procedures for when human remains are found on both state-owned and privately-owned lands. He reiterated that anyone who excavates human remains believed to be over 75 years old is required to contact the State Archaeologist, who is authorized to coordinate with recognized Tribes to determine appropriate reburial procedures; whereupon, he provided an overview of the

function of AWIARE, noting that the contractual agreement it has with the County includes conducting research and educational projects and providing advice for cultural projects.

Referencing the PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Austin provided details related to the remains held by AWIARE, including original burial locations, contents, and the responsibility of locating a reburial place. Dr. Austin discussed concerns related to the possibility of re-excavation of remains if they are reinterred near the original burial site, remains with an unknown origin, and the potential for discovery of additional remains; whereupon, he indicated that discussions have been held with the County and the State Archaeologist regarding a potential centralized site located in Pinellas County for remains that cannot be reinterred where they were found.

Responding to queries by the members, Dr. Austin provided brief information regarding responsibilities when discovering human remains and the history of the Seminole Tribe in Florida, noting that the remains in the AWIARE collection are primarily from pre-Seminole Indigenous Peoples. Dr. Austin also clarified that it is the State's responsibility, under Chapter 872, to contact Tribes who have expressed interest in repatriation of remains.

Dr. Pluckhahn provided introductory remarks including that USF, as an institution receiving federal funds, is obligated to comply with the NAGPRA; that 13 tribes with affiliations to Florida were invited to consult with USF regarding the remains in its collection; and that the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma and the Seminole Tribe of Florida responded; whereupon, he indicated that the Seminole Tribe of Florida has expressed that the remains from Florida be reburied as closely as possible to their original locations. He described remains from other Florida locations which USF has already reinterred and detailed unsuccessful efforts to work with the County related to honoring the wishes of the Tribes.

Responding to queries by Ms. Bucuvalas, Mr. Scofield indicated that Heritage Village has not been considered as a possible reinterment site; whereupon, Dr. Pluckhahn related that he would be glad to facilitate a discussion with the Tribes, but that he feels there could be a tribal concern regarding suitability due to the level of public activity at Heritage Village.

Mr. Scofield related that discussions have been ongoing for two years, with no resolution to the matter. He provided information regarding the potential for a collective reburial site and detailed aspects of a location known as Leach Park. In response to queries by the members, Dr. Pluckhahn related that he is confident that tribal representatives would be receptive to a compromise related to the proximity of the site to the original location of the

remains. A discussion ensued, with Mr. Scofield and Dr. Austin providing remarks related to the viability for reburial at various sites throughout the County.

Mr. Scofield indicated that while he invited a representative from the County's Parks and Resources Conservation Department to attend today's meeting, he would like for the next step to be a request for a formal audience with the Department; whereupon, Chair Scott indicated that he plans to prioritize this topic at a meeting tomorrow with the County Administrator, and a brief discussion ensued.

Chair Scott indicated that an update will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Documenting Buildings Owned by Pinellas County in Downtown Clearwater

Mr. Scofield, referring to a handout titled *Buildings Owned by Pinellas County in Downtown Clearwater*, provided information related to ongoing discussions regarding the potential consolidation and relocation of County offices from downtown Clearwater; whereupon, he noted that while discussions regarding a new campus are still in the preliminary stage, he would like to begin documenting information in the Florida Master Site File for the 14 downtown Clearwater buildings owned by the County.

Mr. Scofield discussed a State-funded survey grant to which the County could apply, which requires no County fund match, and provided information related to how the funding could be utilized to research and document data for each of the buildings; whereupon, Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the grant application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Dolan and carried unanimously.

In response to queries by Chair Scott, Mr. Scofield provided a timeline of the grant application process.

WORK PLAN UPDATES

Historical Markers – Whispering Souls Cemetery Marker Dedication

Mr. Scofield indicated that the historical marker for the Whispering Souls Cemetery has arrived; that he will be working to schedule a date for the marker unveiling; and that in the past, the Chair has served as a master of ceremonies for these events; whereupon, Chair Scott expressed his willingness to serve in that capacity.

In response to queries and comments from Ms. Dolan, Mr. Scofield provided updates regarding pending markers.

Local Designations – Update on Anclote Village Historic District

Mr. Scofield provided information related to a discussion with the County’s Floodplain Manager, indicating that he would like to work out more details related to local designations and potential waivers before meeting with property owners.

Pinellas Preservation Summit

Mr. Scofield indicated that he intends to schedule a meeting of the subcommittee formed at the previous meeting to discuss the Pinellas Preservation Summit, which is scheduled for May 17 at the Innisbrook Resort.

Deviating from the agenda, Mr. Scofield indicated that the Florida Legislative Session recently concluded; and that Attorney McAteer will provide an update related to State legislation that affects local preservation issues.

Attorney McAteer briefly discussed Senate Bill 592, noting that it would require the Secretary of State’s Office to work with the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network to fund certain items and projects; and that he does not know how or if it would affect the HPB’s activities; whereupon, he related that it has not yet been signed by the Governor.

Attorney McAteer related that Senate Bill 1526 is of a bit more concern and detailed that it imposes absolute preemption on any local government activity with regard to restrictions on demolition of structures that are at least partially seaward of the coastal construction control line (CCCL), non-conforming, deemed unsafe by a local building official, or ordered to be demolished by the local government; whereupon, he noted the following exemptions:

- National Register properties
- Single-family homes
- Contributing structures or buildings within a historic district which was listed in the National Register before January 2000
- Structure of building located on a barrier island in a municipality within a population of less than 10,000

Briefly discussing a provision contained in the bill, Attorney McAteer related that it has been transmitted to the Governor; and that he anticipates that it will be signed. He indicated that staff is in the process of researching maps of the CCCL line; and that he plans to inform Building Development and Review Services of the bill.

Responding to comments from Mr. Cahanin, Attorney McAteer provided his insight related to potential impacts if Senate Bill 1526 is signed, noting that Mr. Scofield is also

studying what the impacts could be to historic preservation districts and individual designated or recognized properties.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE

CHAIR/BOARD/STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Luisi indicated that the City of Dunedin will be working with the County to conduct a survey in the upper northern section of the city, listed as Dunedin Isles, and expressed appreciation on behalf of its Preservation Committee.

Mr. Scofield indicated that the next meeting will be held April 17, at 1:00 PM; that there will be at least one Certificate of Appropriateness application on the agenda; and that he would like to invite the Parks and Conservation Resources Department to discuss the burial issue.

Ms. Dolan reported that the Clearwater Historical Society opened its annual *Trailblazing Women* Exhibit on March 1.

Chair Scott mentioned the *Marriage & Mayhem in the Sunshine State* Exhibit at the Palm Harbor Museum, the Heritage Village Classic and Vintage Car Show to be held on March 30, and the Palm Harbor Main Street Historic District stakeholders' meeting scheduled for May 15.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 PM.