

Minutes of Nantucket Historical Commission Meeting – November 19th, 2021

Commissioners Present: Hillary Rayport (Chair), Angus Macleod (Vice Chair), David Silver (Secretary) Mickey Rowland, Clement Durkes, Georgia Raysman, Tom Montgomery, and Barbara White, David Silver (joined mid meeting)

Staff: Holly Backus

Guests: Erin Doherty (Epsilon) Mary Bergman, Ken Beaugrand, Polly Waldorf, Brian Pfeiffer.

The meeting was called to order via Zoom with a quorum present.

Hillary Rayport made a public comment that she has sponsored a citizen's warrant article to amend the Nantucket Planning & Economic Development Commission. She stated that the purpose of the amendment is to increase transparency and accountability in the Planning Commission.

Approval of Minutes of the October 15th 2021 meeting. Tom: motion to approve; Clement: second, all in favor by roll call. Minutes were approved as submitted.

The chair reported that the Select Board has agreed to include in the 2022 ATM warrant an article to amend the vote of the 2005 ATM creating a Historical Commission with 5 members. Vote will be amended to create a historical commission with 7 members and no alternates. Current alternates will serve until their term expires. The Chair explained that the Select Board had approved expansion of the Commission from 5 to 7 and then later added 3 alternates. This was all done at the request of the NHC in past years. As we are now seven members and feel seven members is sufficient, we are asking Town Meeting to bring the past vote in alignment with our desired composition. This will be voted on at Town Meeting. Chair asked for a motion that this request be adopted by the Select Board and included in 2022 Town Meeting Warrant. Angus moved, Tom seconded, all were in favor.

Budget: The chair reviewed the 2021-2022 budget for architectural surveys and the 2022-2023 budget request. The FY2022 budget for surveys was approved at \$50,000. Our MHC survey project is a \$45,000 project. We will then receive \$22,500 back from the MHC when our current grant work is delivered. So, we have \$5,000 not spent and \$22,500 that will be remitted. For FY2023, PLUS has requested \$25,000 for surveys. We will use this as a match for the FY 2023 survey grants. As the Commissioners had not been contacted about the plan for architectural surveys and their cost in 2023, a discussion ensued regarding whether there were sufficient funds requested for the necessary work. Holly said we are planning to ask for \$20,000 from the MHC to continue survey work in FY 2023, and, should the grant be awarded, the Town of Nantucket would be matching these funds with \$20,000 of the \$25,000 requested in the PLUS budget, The Chair asked if when the \$22,500 is reimbursed by the MHC, will those funds stay with the NHC's survey curriculum. Holly responded that it would. A discussion ensued about making sure that funds that have been budgeted are made available to be spent on the work product they

are budgeted for. Decision that staff should follow up with colleagues regarding budgeted funds and work product.

Holly Backus announced that our consultant PAL will be on island in December to kick off the survey project. Decision that Hillary, Tom, Betsy, and Barbara will meet with PAL when they visit the island. The workgroup will also meet in advance to review maps and give direction to PAL about the neighborhoods to be named in the Survey plan. There is also a need to direct PAL regarding which 100 properties in the Fish Lots should be surveyed (out of the group of 126 we listed). The small group will work on this as well. Commission encouraged everyone who wanted to look at the list of structures to review and it give feedback to Holly.

Holly updated the Commissioners on the WPI projects: Salvaging the Historic Nature of Nantucket/reducing construction and demolition waste. This is a DPW project and Historical Commission members are invited to offer guidance to the students. Various Commissioners offered to assist.

Chair referenced the letter in the packet to the Planning Board, which Commissioners voted at last meeting to send encouraging PB to assist Anne Dewez with her citizen's warrant limiting spas/hot tubs in the historic districts. This letter was sent to the PB. NHC also delivered an update to the Select Board – it's in the meeting packet and the presentation was given to the Select Board. Discussion touched on Mayflower Wind, which is holding information sessions. Holly is monitoring, and Tom is continuing to be NHC representative to the Section 106 process.

Ken Beaugrand announced that he had to leave the meeting at 10:30 and requested that he be copied on all meeting notices and materials for the CLG commission's development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the NHC and the HDC, because a clear definition of roles and clear definition of primary responsibility in areas of overlapping interest is important to the Town. This was acknowledged and agreed.

Discussion moved to 3 Bever Street. NHC was asked for a letter of support for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit application for 3 Bever Street. Erin Doherty, consultant with Epsilon, and Polly Waldorf (owners representative) presented. The owners will be rehabilitating the two structures at 3 Bever Street for residential rental uses, and will be applying for State and Federal Tax Credits. Intention is to file with the State for the January 15th application deadline. A letter of support from the Local Historical Commission is required by the state for the state application, as a demonstration of local support. Erin explained that the project is also being reviewed by the HDC, and if there are any changes as a result of that review the tax credit applications will be amended to reflect those changes.

The main house is 1750 and is a lean to house. The cottage is a midcentury structure originally a garage but converted to a cottage some time ago. Erin reviewed the scope of the proposed rehabilitation, and that the project will preserve historic features of the interior and exterior. The Tax Credits will help fund a high standard of preservation work. Polly Waldorf presented the specific plans for the interior. Touching on the need to shore up main beams which are sagging throughout. The front sill and corner posts have rot. Since structure is so close to a flood zone, intention is to raise the property by 3' and put a foundation underneath it and get it out of the

flood zone and waterproofing. Guest rooms will be created in basement. The windows will be maintained and repaired. Project will return a front door that had been there and was taken out (as shown in period photos). A shed dormer will be added to the back, pending approval by the HDC.

Holly confirmed that both structures were built during periods of significance and are contributing structures to the National Landmark District. She reminded the Commission that we want to encourage Historic Tax Credits because of their benefits for preservation, and that this applicant has submitted two prior tax credit applications. Holly mentioned that the elevation of the structure will need to comply with the flood adaptation guidelines. All changes to exterior will need to have a certificate of appropriateness from HDC. She had concerns with the rear dormers and french doors at rear of structure, but these will be reviewed by the HDC in the future. If NHC is recommending the application, and HDC had comments for the COA, application will be amended. Holly said she is still intending to put more information on the town website about tax credit applications, for the benefit of applicants.

The Chair reviewed for the benefit of Commissioners and public, the criteria used by the MHC when they evaluate tax credits applications, so that the NHC can keep this criteria in mind when evaluating NHC support for these projects, because State tax credit awards are competitive. This information is on the MHC website and in the meeting packet. The first criteria is affordable housing – these projects are given preference. Secondly, preservation; the extent to which original material is preserved using traditional materials and technologies. The significance of the target structure (state-wide and locally) will also be considered; 3rd is potential for loss or destruction if the project is not completed; public support – the extent to which the applicant has sought public support – from the NHC but also other local groups, is considered; also considered is the project's positive impact on local economy.

The Chair also reacquainted the commissioners about the Secretary of Interior standard for rehabilitation, which is the standard that is expected to be met by HTC projects, by sharing the standards, as published by the DoI, on the screen, emphasizing that repairs and alterations are expected but the important historic features must be identified and retained. Features that characterize the building will not be altered; and conjectural changes will not be made. Other standards for rehabilitation were reviewed as published by the Department of Interior on the Park Service website.

Brian Pfeiffer, architectural historian, was present and asked to advise the NCH. He stated he would advise not supporting this project for the following reasons: The application refers to a partial cellar with brick paving but the survey shows the crawl space but doesn't show the paved area; the plans show a base of the chimney and a missing mass labeled "cavity" for the utilities. The survey should account for the chimney mass if it is there because this is a major contributing feature of the building. The lifting of the building: one can understand this is a precaution against rising flood water but it rises three feet above its original setting and creates a very different position on the street. Opposes the shed dormer. Regarding the rot to corner posts and frame, these are all normal repairs that are to be expected for a building of this age. He does not observe major sagging of the structure, there are problems where the chimney has been taken out and

there may be some weakness there, but these are all normal things. The project is not preservation – too much is being lost and new things are being introduced. Opposes bringing back the door and removing the window – this is conjectural and will be made of stock parts not particular to the building. This project is more about real estate development and the point of the tax credits is to allow for the building to be modernized while also being preserved. Pfeiffer advised the applicant that if he were the reviewer, he would prefer to see a small wing be added to the rear to achieve desired space, rather than make proposed alterations to the interior, some of which compromise the structure of the building in his opinion. Pfeiffer advised this project does not meet the Secretary's standards for historic rehabilitation.

Angus stated he agrees with Brian and shares the same concerns. Emphasized the chimney base should remain. The lifting of the structure and the window wells at the front of the house are uncharacteristic with the period and generally discouraged. The framing and joinery should be saved.

Other commissioners seconded these comments for reasons including that the changes did not meet the standard because they were not reversible; the appearance and function of the winder stair will be degraded by the addition of the powder room; the interior is destroyed and the exterior is transformed; the streetscape is harmed; project does not retain its historic characteristics. The program of development is out of balance with preservation. David Silver pointed out that tax credit projects do need to be income producing and on Nantucket this means a rental.

Discussion ensued about the difference between Federal program and State program. Brian Pfeiffer informed the Commissioners that the Federal program is by right but the state program is competitive and is intended to meet some societal goals in the Commonwealth. For that reason, it's fair for a community to weigh multiple considerations and maximization of profit is not an absolute right in the State program. Moreover, Nantucket is less threatened with loss through abandonment – the greater threat on Nantucket is projects don't retain historic integrity. Discussion also of what are the defining characteristics of 18th century homes – it's a simple timber frame structure. The timber framing, the central chimney mass and other interior features are the defining structures and should be documented, as well as the massing of the home and its relationship relative to the street. Foundation should be repaired but there is no requirement that the home be elevated to be flood proofed – utilities can be elevated; this structure is being elevated to create living space in the basement.

Chair asked if this was going to be used for year round rental or affordable rental – answer from applicant is no.

Ms. Waldorf reviewed the status of the chimney masses – some areas had been demolished and other areas are hidden behind board and would need to be explored. The ridge beam is staying and will be sistered. The roof is sagging and being held up by 2x4s. May not be able to leave the beams exposed because of method of sistering. Emphasized the sagging nature of the building. Discussed attributes that will need to be reviewed by HDC.

Pfeiffer recommended the owner explore more traditional approaches to shoring up the building's timber framing. Chair recommended applicant consult with Nantucket Preservation Trust regarding the house and traditional methods of repair.

There was some discussion about the plan to elevate the building. The applicant emphasized that the plan for elevating the building follows the guidelines for elevating buildings. Applicant requested to continue the request for a letter of support to a future meeting.

Motion from Angus Macleod to continue the discussion once the applicant has secured commentary from the HDC, and include the HDC's comments. Also to include existing conditions documentation of cellar, foundation, and portions of chimney stack that remains, and lastly, information about the flood elevation criteria at the location, and whether the 3' raising requested represents a minimum raise or is in excess of the flood projections. Seconded by Clement, and all voted in favor.

Waldorf and Doherty departed.

Holly spoke to her interest in creating more information and education for applicants wanting to use tax credits, including posting a work flow for applicants, and to provide a more advanced staff report to the commission. Applicants should provide information to the NHC at least one week in advance. Discussed interest in educating the public about Nantucket house forms, what is contributing to these historic structures and should be saved as far as interior features and framing.

The NHC confirmed meeting schedule for 2022 will continue to be the third Friday of the month at 10:00, unless holiday or unexpected circumstances intervene.

Georgia left the meeting at 11:45.

Discussion of next CLG meeting: Holly Backus will be circulating minutes and working to schedule the three follow up meetings that the NHC & HDC agreed to, to work out the MOU between the commissions and also decide on joint initiatives. The Commissioners viewed some slides showing the stated primary duties of the HDC and the NHC, and also shared some information from the Park Service regarding the process for updating lists of contributing structures. Park Service agent who works directly for the Keeper of the Registry recommended consulting with SHPO. Q&A is in the packet. The Chair also shared a document that could be a jumping off point for an MOU (also included the packet) which has a statement from the NHC about what NHC does and asks HDC to fill in what they do. Commissioners discussed document. Decision to send this document to the HDC as a starting point, for their consideration. Holly will share this document with Ken Beaugrand as well for his feedback. Chair clarified that the MOU is not a legal document and expressed her hope that the final document will be primarily designed to clarify communication and responsibility and bring the commissions together.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

1. Mass Preservation Project Fund: Call for applications

Discussion: The commission discussed the MPPF grant window which is now open. These grants fund studies, plans, and construction work necessary for the preservation of publicly owned or non-profit owned historic structures. So, a grant could be used to extend the reach of the funds Town is seeking in the 2022-2023 budget request: ~\$40,000 for historic sidewalk study. The Town Manager has indicated she will not be making staff available to apply for or manage a Massachusetts Preservation Project Grant, reason being lack of staff time. Can the NHC manage a grant application by itself? Do we know what the scope of the work would be, and can we realistically take this on? Plan to talk to MHC to see if local Historical Commissions manage and apply for grants on their own. Since we have already written the grant, it would be easy to apply, but we would need to solicit the Town Manager and finance departments approval for this.

2. Review Draft of MOU with the HDC:

Holly is seeking comments for our follow-up meeting with the HDC. The Commissioners discussed the logistics around joint voting – do alternate commissioners vote, and how to address that NHC has 7 regular members and HDC has 5. Every member from both commissions, whether elected or appointed, is a member of the CLG. For joint discussion in next CLG meeting. Directed Chair to suggest language for Holly to include in draft MOU, ensuring balance for voting purposes.

3. State Historic Preservation Tax Credits

Holly, Mary Bergman, and Hillary had a conversation with Erin Kelley, Executive Director of Preservation Massachusetts, Inc., to discuss their standards and criteria for tax credit applications. They have a form/template (in agenda) that the NHC could use/modify to help standardize our discussions about letters of recommendation. Priorities are to communicate to the MHC how the project meets Preservation Priorities as well as housing, social, and economic priorities identified in Nantucket's Master Plan and by the Select Board. The Commission feels that a format/template would be beneficial to everyone. Guest and HPTC applicant Mr. Glaser and consultant representative from Epsilio confirmed that such forms were, in his opinion, common and would not be inconvenient for the applicant because they have to include them for other parties who ask for them.

2 Mayflower Circle:

Property owner and tax credit applicant, Frank Glaser, and consultant Erin Doherty joined the call to discuss the ongoing project at 2 Mayflower Circle. MHC and USPS determined that the

project scope met the standard of rehabilitation for the first application. The project is eligible for \$270,000 in credits. He intends to apply for State tax credits in the January 15th round and is seeking a letter of support, as required by the MHC. The application is unchanged.

Discussion: The Commissioners discussed that since the application is unchanged our position regarding recommending the project should be unchanged from the letter submitted in August. However, has the Commission has recently become sensitive to the social and economic purpose of tax credits and the MHC's interest in receiving information about whether applications meet local priorities, it would be appropriate to comment on the intended use of the project. The Commission confirmed that the intended use is short term rental.

Motion to offer a renewed letter of support to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for this project that includes a statement that the project would be more beneficial to the community if it helped address issues of year-round housing affordability, which is a community goal.

Motion: Angus

Second: David

All in favor via roll call.

4. Island wide survey of Historic Resources (PAL)

Update on kick-off meeting with consultant PAL. Holly is excited to see the next report since they are through the RFQ. They were here to work on the survey plan but are also working in the fish lots for the pilot program. 3 significant properties from the Fish Lots will be selected and From B's will be produced.

5. Section 106 Review: Mayflower Wind

Mayflower Wind: Val Oliver is in attendance to discuss the Mayflower Wind Project as a concerned citizen. There have been a few public information sessions with BOEM that Tom attended as our Section 106 representative. The NHC should comment on any adverse effects related to preservation of our historic landmark. The impact of these projects needs to be looked at collectively. Tom Montgomery and Holly Backus are NHC's official liaisons to the Section 106 review of the wind farm projects.

Discussion: How do we assess the effects of these projects to our National Historic Landmark? We want to promote clean energy, but we also do not want to see our oceans industrialized. Issues surrounding these wind farms range from lighting to aesthetics to effects on marine life and fisheries. The Town has a "good neighbor" agreement with Vineyard Wind, so our conversation should focus on the totality of wind farm projects and other projects. Visual impact is the crux of our concern, and we need adequate renderings to determine what these projects will look like. The burden and disruption of ongoing maintenance requirements were also brought up during the discussion.

Summary: Town has retained expert council to represent itself in each wind farm agreement. The good neighbor agreements are done on a company-by-company basis, rather than an overarching agreement. Ensure that NHC is on the email thread with the consultants/attorneys. Tom will continue to update us on these projects as new stakeholders emerge. Emphasize request for visual renderings.

Motion to adjourn

All in favor via roll call

~meeting adjourned~