

Minutes of the Nantucket Historical Commission Meeting January 21, 2022

Commissioners Present: Hillary Rayport (Chair), Angus Macleod (Vice Chair), Mickey Rowland, Clement Durkes, Georgia Raysman, Tom Montgomery, Susan Handy and Barbara White.

Staff: Holly Backus

Guests: Mary Bergman, Ken Beaugrand, Betsy Tyler

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes: no minutes to approve.

The chair reviewed the 2022 workplan. This item was moved up in the agenda so Ken Beaugrand, Town Real Estate specialist could participate in the discussion, given the Town's concern and requests regarding the NHC's proposed workplan.

1. Initiate Preservation Plan for Town Owned Historic Resources: The object of this project is to survey buildings and objects owned by the town, to provide information to the Select Board and Town Administration regarding historic structures, as the town engages in facilities planning.
2. Initiate discussion with Tribes and State Archaeologist: Intention is to fulfil the Historical Commission's mandate to consider historic resources in the ground. How do we account for and preserve the native history on Nantucket? What are the correct questions to ask and how do we make sure we have a Native voice at the table and don't assume to speak for the Wampanoag?
3. Assess archival needs with respect to historic town records. The purpose of this project is to identify which historic records exist in the town where, what condition they are in, how accessible they are, and what if anything is being done by various departments to preserve them and make them accessible. Further, what if anything the NHC could do to support town departments with these efforts.
4. Develop concept for small loan fund. This is modeled on a public/private partnership that exists in the Town of Arlington. The fund makes low interest loans to residents who live in historic buildings, so they can keep the buildings in good repair. Question is, would such a fund be appreciated and used on Nantucket?

The Commissioners and Ken Beaugrand proceeded to discuss the workplan items. The Town Manager has specifically requested NHC not contact the tribes. The Chair advised that archeology is part of our mandate in our enabling legislation, and deserves careful thought. NHC resolved to research various questions and approaches and discuss possible courses of action regarding Archeology at future meetings.

Barbara White shared that had spoken with Town Clerk Nancy Holmes about Town records and Nancy expressed interest in having assistance with historic records.

There was discussion about whether the Town owned any historic structures and other historic resources aside from structures. Several structures were named including the old fire station, the Jetties pavilion, the Civil War Monument, and cemeteries. Holly has a list. All would be included in a Preservation Plan, which is something Nantucket should have.

Ken questioned who would fund the small loan fund and instructed the Commission that there would not be staff support from the Town for such an activity.

The group committed to continued collaborative, inclusive and transparent discussion of this workplan with the Town.

- MHC advised Surveys of Historic Resources
 - o Update on 2021-2022 survey
 - o Status of 2022-2023 grant

The chair shared the interim report from PAL. Holly let the commissioners know that the process is fairly prescriptive and PAL is following the MHC format. Holly is providing information and guidance. The commissioners should comment on the work and pay special attention to the neighborhoods identified that will form the organization for the Survey Plan, and identifying neighborhoods is necessary but challenging because so much has evolved organically. These neighborhoods are listed in the Phase I report.

The 2022 grant application is due Feb 7th and we need to identify what area we want to survey next. The Chair read the list of identified areas and showed the list on the zoom screen. The list is available in the packet. The Commissioners discussed the list of neighborhoods and questions. It was decided that the map should be updated to match the table, and this map should be distributed to the commissioners for review, allowing for better ability to visualize the neighborhoods.

The discussion moved on to the topic of what neighborhood(s) to survey with our 2022-2023 survey. We have to include a few neighborhoods in our grant application, which is due before our next meeting. Betsy Tyler suggested finishing the fish lots and continuing south through New Guinea and West Monomoy. She also suggested prioritizing the areas that are under pressure from rising seas. It also might be attractive to prioritize areas that are under pressure from re-development. Mickey suggested Brant Point as an area that is valuable culturally and for heritage, and under pressure from sea level rise and redevelopment. Multiple commissioners seconded the idea of prioritizing Brant Point, because of its importance, because it is threatened by demolition and infill, because there is some documentation and this needs to be updated, and because climate change will be altering the topography and the structures and roads will need to respond to this.

Holly Backus agreed that Brant Point is a priority and it's also attractive to finish the fish lots and move west.

The working group is meeting by zoom with Michael Steinitz from MHC today and will discuss these three priorities for the grant application.

The discussion moved onto the WPI projects that were recently completed, that are of interest to the NHC. They are the Dark Skies and streetlight projects and the Sustainability and Reuse project.

Regarding lighting, NHC should be conscious that there is a lot on Nantucket today that is a constructed idea and not actually historic. What do we know about lighting, from a historic

perspective? The Chair briefed the Commissioners on her discussions with the Dark Sky group, the problem with the fading pink colors of High Pressure Sodium Lamps (as the bulbs get older they get whiter and greener). It is unavoidable to have a range of light colors, from the HSP bulbs) how this compares to LED lights, the desire to have a warm LED light (HSP is more 2200 kelvin, bright white is 4000k), issues of glare and the Dark Sky's interest in lights that do not have glass globes. The Commission looked at pictures of globeless lights, which were included in the packet. Some commissioners thought they looked strange. Question is what is historically accurate and what are we looking for in terms of style? There is a report by Errol Coffin on historic lighting that appeared in the NHA magazine in the 1960s. Lauren is finding a copy of this and will share it. The NHC decided a future meeting would discuss the earlier research on lighting, that lead to the "historic" boulevard light, so that we might advise the Town and Dark Sky on approaches to lighting. We are getting a warmer LED bulb and Lauren will let us know where this is installed. There are also globeless lights installed at Richmond and everyone should look at them. Nantucket owns the decorative street lights and the Chair advised that the DPW is responsible for lighting – it's their call. Dark Sky would also like to see the town purchase the cobra lights, but the utility owns and maintains these and the town does not currently want to buy them. This will come back to our agenda when there is a decision point.

Sustainability: Is there an initiative we might get behind or anything we might do on sustainability, which is a high interest topic for us? Any comments on the WPI report? Discussed options for salvage. Discussed extending the existing 60 day demo delay for the purpose of reuse, and how this intersects with preservation. Commissioners were not in favor of "parking" houses at new locations so they could be salvaged, as was suggested in the WPI report – preferred extending the demo delay, but also support the HDC's ability to stop demolition of historic structures. Mary Bergman said her research showed that the cost of a move-on is the barrier to salvage. The chair suggested the NHC should have a slate of legislative ideas that we are working on and developing all the time so we are ready to comment and advise other boards well in advance of town meetings. Various commissioners suggested the discussion about demo delay for salvage should include Housing Nantucket.

Town Meeting discussion: discussed the citizen's warrant article about solar panels and the HDC legislation. Reviewed how this is treated in MHL 40C and contrasted this to the citizen's warrant. Discussed this with Holly Backus, who has concerns about the approach of the citizen's warrant and intends to bring this up with the HDC. Emphasized that Nantucket has decent solar design guidelines and active work of HDC with applicants about Solar. Chair suggested this is something to put on our agenda for the next joint meeting with the HDC which is scheduled for next Friday at 1:00. Holly will follow up on who will be making a motion on this article – Planning Board or Fin Com.

Commissioners also agreed chair should send a letter of support for the "spa" citizen's warrant article to the Planning Board in advance of their next meeting to consider articles of planning concern.

Adjourn.