

Nantucket Historical Commission

February 16, 2024 Meeting

10AM

131 Pleasant Street, Nantucket MA and via Zoom

Commissioners Present: Rita Carr, Clement Durkes (in person); Tom Montgomery, Mickey Rowland, Angus MacLeod (online); Abby De Molina (online, departed early).

Town of Nantucket staff present: Holly Backus, Preservation Planner; Mike Burns, Transportation Program Manager; Erika Mooney, Operations Administrator.

Others: Eric Riese, Consultant engineer, GPI; Hillary Rayport.

Commissioner absent: George Butterworth

Agenda

- **Roll call at 10AM** *Rita, Clement, and Holly are present in person; Tom, Mickey, Abby and Angus are online. Guests Mike Burns, the Town Transportation manager, consultant Eric Riese, and Hillary Hedges Rayport.*
- **Public Comment** - none
- **Staff Update**
 - Demo delay bylaw update: Holly reports that previously discussed changes will not appear on the warrant for Annual Town Meeting, Holly will continue to work on it and bring forward next year, or a potential Special town Meeting
 - National Alliance of Preservation Commissions will report to the Select Board next week (2/21/24)
 - Community Preservation Commissions – applications submitted jointly with Preservation Institute Nantucket for Main St sidewalk project and the West Monomoy (Five Corners) neighborhood reconnaissance surveys have been accepted and will be on the Town Meeting warrant
 - Offshore Wind Fund community grant: Previously discussed video can be done in-house with funding from the communications department HDC is in support of videos to illustrate *Building with Nantucket in Mind*
 - Holly submitted an application for surveys of Town owned historic resources, submitted herself on behalf of the NHC
- **Ongoing Survey Work**
 - **Update on FY2023 Request for Qualifications**
 - Holly had a joint meeting with the MHC and Finance department; discussed difficulty finding a qualified consultant. RFQ will be revised; Massachusetts Historical Commission rejected an applicant who had no Massachusetts experience.
 - Angus asked about methodology for finding consultants on island; Holly explained that the “Nantucket factor” of higher costs per survey and travel required by our location hasn’t been previously taken into account; the number of surveys required for a \$40,000 project may be reduced for the new RFQ

- Clement asked how many organizations are qualified; Holly said about six and had reached out to a few to see might be interested and they said they would be, but likely the consultant hired will not have past Nantucket experience.
 - Holly explained the boilerplate for the RFQ requires a certain specific amount of past survey experience, she has been discussing with the state the subject matter experts on the island who might not meet that threshold but would otherwise be qualified.
- **Application for FY2024**
 - Holly and Town Admin decided not to go forward with an application for FY2024 due to the open pending contracts for FY2022 and FY2023.
 - Angus cautioned against losing momentum, Clement noted we have the steps in place and can hopefully keep going when the open projects are completed
- **Section 106 Review – Milestone Rd/Polpis Rd Intersection**
 - Eric Riese, GPI presented the project; 100 percent design submission will be due next week, project will be advertised in the summer and begin after Labor Day
 - Holly noted that multiple boards did not receive a project notification letter from GPI; she noted this is within the island-wide National Historic Landmark District, and there are contributing structures within the area of potential effect
 - Angus noted the importance of maintaining the historic setting of the road.
 - Hillary Rayport noted the road itself is historic, and noted the bylaw that limits road construction to preserve the historic setting. Roads are part of the cultural landscape. Nantucket has historically not had turning lanes.
 - Clement questioned the safety of T-stops vs Y-intersections, and has concerns about signage and curbing, road paving
 - Eric noted 5 total signs are proposed, including replacing existing signs. All signs are either federally mandated or for safety. Reflectivity is tied to a federal standard, all signs are black and white. Curbing will be asphalt berm, median will be granite block flush with the road
 - Erika Mooney: Stressed the importance of granite flush with the road so house moves can move easily through the intersection. Noted her personal appreciation for the “crosswalk ahead” signs
 - Discussion of the confusion over stop signs on bike paths; they are not being proposed for this project.
 - Holly asked about having the path on one side continue; Erika answered that the whole project started as a bike extension project, that is the driver
 - Clement asked about the width of the bike path, 10 feet is standard, this is proposed as 15 because it is busy and the extra width exists.
 - Hillary asked for discussion about the turning lanes, and how widening the road will change the character of Milestone Road.
 - Mickey asked why a T-intersection is proposed and not a roundabout for safety
 - Mike and Eric answered a roundabout is the long-term preferred alternative
 - Erika noted how turning lanes on Old South Road have positively improved traffic there

- Discussion about flow from Polpis Road; most drivers are turning right, only one lane on Polpis would delay motorists turning right, two lanes allows more flow
- Angus expressed concern over the widening creating a different open feeling; suggest planting what is suggested as plain grass with wildflowers
- Discussion of mitigating the impact of the increase in pavement with green space; intention is not to have a manicured “lawn” effect
- Additional concerns noted about the concerns with turning lanes, particularly on Polpis. Eric noted the delay and potential road rage not having a turning lane could cause, stressed that a roundabout is the long-term goal.
- Tom raises the importance of wide enough roads for large trucks to pass through the intersection; Eric and Mike discussed the size trucks used in models to create this plan
- Discussion of the 2004 bylaw that banned turning laws; Erika questioned if it would be passed today; Mike noted that it doesn’t apply to Milestone Road as it is a state road, and this plan has less total pavement.
- Holly asked – is there an Area of Potential Effect map; Eric will follow up
- **Motion: NHC to write a letter to MassDOT reflecting the Commission’s concerns over the intersection project. Made by Clement, second by Rita.**
 - **Vote: Clement, aye; Rita, aye; Mickey, aye; Tom, aye; Angus, aye**
- Mickey questioned a “green blob” on the plan, it’s a sediment forebay into an infiltration basin for stormwater. Angus asked about vegetation in the basin, it will be a mostly grasses
- **Approval of Minutes:** will be revised for approval in the March meeting
- **FY2023 Report:** Holly to add a section about the wreck of the Warran Sawyer
 - **Motion to approve the Annual Report with Holly’s addition. Made by Clement, second by Mickey.**
 - **Vote: Clement, aye; Mickey, aye; Rita, aye; Angus, aye.**
- **Commission Goals**
 - Hillary asked that Section 106 review be included on the Goals document, Holly noted the different types of Section 106 review and that the NHC has been involved. Discussion on why the NHC was not involved in the Milestone/Polpis review earlier, desire for the NHC to be involved at the start.
- **Motion to adjourn at 12 PM: Made by Rita, Second by Clement**
 - **Vote: Rita, aye; Clement, aye; Mickey, aye; Angus aye.**