

TOWN AREA PLAN WORK GROUP
Meeting of December 15, 2023, at 4:00 pm by Zoom

FINAL AND APPROVED MINUTES

Attending: Mary Anne Easley, Marsha Fader (4:05 pm), Regen Horchow, Alison King, Mary Longacre, Lee Saperstein, and Henry Terry.

Absent: Mickey Rowland.

Attendance was verified by a roll call; there was a quorum at all times. The meeting was recorded and can be viewed at the following address:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gny8hxXjPRQ&list=PL49sKqpy7VAhF3WZ8xvh3sdHgJEvCabR6&index=35>.

1. Call to Order.

Chair Henry Terry called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm. Mary Longacre reviewed the rules on remote-attendance meetings and said also that this meeting would be recorded.

2. Agenda Approval.

Henry Terry asked for consent for the agenda; it was given unanimously.

3. Minutes Approval.

Henry Terry asked for approval of the minutes for the meeting of December 5, 2023. Mary Anne Easley so moved, Mary Longacre seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

4. Public and Member Comments.

There were no members of the public present, hence no public comments.

5. Old and New Business.

Henry Terry announced that the Work Group would be discussing the item submitted by Mickey Rowland titled “5. Natural and Cultural Resources,” attached. Marsha Fader noted that this piece has a number of elements that coincide with “3. Housing,” for which she and Mickey Rowland are responsible. She asked how we might integrate similar items found in multiple subcommittee reports. Mary Longacre said that while they might be similar, they have been written from different perspectives. Lee Saperstein suggested that we not worry about overlap and, instead, let the editorial process iron them out when the integrated, final draft is written.

At this point Work Group members looked at the suggestions in the report. It was apparent that they have been written so as to encourage new buildings to conform to the historic nature of the Town Area. Several suggestion points, such as avoidance of side-yard building additions and matching building mass with that of its neighbors, appear to be guidance for adoption by the Historic District Commission, HDC.

Others, such as ground cover, driveways and noise, may be suggestions for changes to the Town's Bylaw regulations, specifically, *inter alia*, Chapter 101, Noise, and Chapter 139, Zoning, sections 139-7, Use Chart, 139-17, Height Limitations, and 139-20.1, Driveway Access. The HDC reviews applications for new structures for their conformity to guidance on historical form and appearance; the Planning Board reviews applications for their conformity to the use regulations appropriate to the relevant zone, in the case of the Town Area: R-C, ROH, R-1, and R-20 (see Use Chart and the Town Area Map).

The current requirement for driveway aprons at 10 feet from the road boundary was noted as being inconsistent with many existing driveways in the Town Area. Other comments suggested that the considerations in the report vary between suggesting changes to the philosophy of compliance versus actual changes in the Bylaw. Work Group members also reflected on other items in the appended report. The final sentence in the report asks about inclusion of "commercial STRs" in the Town Area Plan. Mary Longacre pondered if the broad topic of Short-Term Rentals, STR, is beyond the scope of the final area plan. Marsha Fader asked if the topic of STRs was entirely taboo. Henry Terry raised the issue of noise and noise sources. Mary Anne Easley joined in to suggest that some noise sources such as outside speakers for audio and video should be banned while other more social structures such as fire pits, pools, and spas are socializing things and their use may be controlled but cannot be banned. Regen Horchow suggested that personal behavior may not be regulated. Mary Longacre asked if a definition of acceptable behavior can be written for a thickly settled region such as the Town area. Lee Saperstein noted that the Town's Noise Bylaw includes noise limits at any time and time-of-day limitations also. He also reported that the Nantucket Civic League's Executive Committee is studying quality-of-life issues such as excessive noise.

The discussion became more generalized with Mary Longacre commenting that visitors have expectations of Nantucket and its quality of life. More data are needed on the breakdown among daily visitors, over-night visitors, and year-round inhabitants in the Town Area. Marsha Fader suggested that over-night visitors be classified as short-term versus long-term with 30 days being the divider between them.

In other new business, Mary Anne Easley said that she has received data from Nathan Porter, GIS Coordinator, on residential use in the Town Area and will digest it before sharing it in a report. Marsha Fader asked if the data may be shared. A question on final report preparation led to a mention by Mary Longacre that she will submit the report on circulation as soon as she is able. It is the missing piece.

The Work Group discussed the timing of the next meeting, which ordinarily would be on the first Tuesday of January, i.e., January 2, 2024. Henry Terry said that this date would be canceled meaning that the next meeting will be Friday, January 19, 2024, at 4:00 pm. He looked ahead to February, March, and April and said that the normal dates in those months would work. The May meeting could conflict with Annual Town Meeting.

6. Adjourn.

Henry Terry said that we had reached the end of the agenda and that adjournment was appropriate. Mary Longacre moved, Regen Horchow seconded, and all approved a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 pm.

The next scheduled meeting is Friday, January 19, 2024, at 4:00 pm. This meeting will be by Zoom. Please remember that the Zoom link for Friday meetings is different from Tuesday's link.

For reference: Subcommittee composition.

2. Land Use: Liz Almodobar and Mary Anne Easley
3. Housing: Marsha Fader and Mickey Rowland
4. Economic Development: Alison King and Mary Longacre
5. Natural and Cultural Resources: Liz Almodobar and Marsha Fader
6. Open Space and Recreation Plan: Mary Anne Easley and Henry Terry
7. Services and Facilities: Regen Horchow and Mickey Rowland
8. Circulation; Mary Longacre and Lee Saperstein

Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary, saperste@mst.edu

5. Natural and Cultural Resources. Notes submitted by Mickey Rowland, December 14, 2022.

The residential neighborhoods of the town of Nantucket have well established historic characteristics. Future infill development within the neighborhoods, including additions to existing houses, should look to the context of the immediate surroundings (defined as within 150 feet) for guidance when approving any new construction.

Specific considerations should include but not be limited to:

- Scale: The size and scale of new construction should be consistent with other houses in the immediate surroundings.
- Side yards: Traditionally, houses in town consisted of a single main mass facing the street, and any subordinate masses were added to the rear of the main mass – not to the side. Any new additions should project rearward whenever possible. If there is not a sufficient rear yard, additions to the side should be set back from the face of the main mass as far as possible (at least 8 feet).
- Driveways: Driveways are a relatively modern convenience and should be as inconspicuous as possible. Any new driveways should be limited to one car width within 30 feet from the street.
- Noise: Constructed elements which may be associated with excessive levels of noise should not be allowed within the more densely developed town residential neighborhoods. These features can include but not be limited to spas, firepits, and hard surfaced game courts.

Can the prohibition of commercial STR's be included somewhere within the Area Plan?