

Nantucket Historical Commission

May 17, 2024 Meeting

10AM

131 Pleasant Street, Nantucket MA and via Zoom

Attendees:

Holly Backus

Clement Durkes

Abby De Molina

Angus MacLeod

Rita Carr

George Butterworth

Tom Montgomery – online

Mike Burns, Transportation Manager – online

Lauren Sinatra, Energy Coordinator – online

Sam Phelan, abutter to the Pleasant Street/Williams Lane proposal – online

Rob and Sue Phelan, abutters to the Pleasant Street/Williams Lane proposal – online

Not present: Mickey Rowland

Agenda

- Roll call at 10AM *Abby, Clement, George, Rita, and Angus are commissioners present, Holly as staff is present; all in person. Tom is present online. Guests are Sam Phelan and Mike Burns, the Town Transportation manager.*
- Public Comment
- Staff Update
 - Attendance at National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Forum *Town has received a scholarship for CLG funding for FL forum in July-Aug and Holly and Nicki will be attending. It is in West Palm Beach.*
- Continued discussion – Pleasant St and Williams Ln improvements *NHC was going to provide feedback to others about the historic integrity and recommendations so that the Transportation department could provide an additional alternative. All agreed on protecting the canopy, having a pedestrian walkway that is as narrow as possible. Most agreed on keeping it two-way but were open to what would work best. Rita was supportive of a pilot of the one-way traffic. George thinks the one-way traffic would be a disaster of traffic flow especially during the high season with the narrow pedestrian sidewalk. Does not believe there should be a bike path as they should be using the road. Tom and Abby both agreed with George's comments. Clement emphasized the materials and be as natural as possible – grass berms/Belgian block with limited signage and paint to preserve the remote and rural feel. Sam was encouraged by the Commission's comments and that preserving the 'narrowness' of the road is most important. Maybe do a 'limited' trial of one week vs. one month. Sam mentioned that his family when they view on their porch most of the traffic goes into town so if we do a trial, we should align with that. The field will not be an issue but the most important issue will be 'privacy' for his brother. Clement mentioned sharing the road with bikers will slow everything down.*

Abby mentioned that the town wants to encourage people to use alternative transportation and not inundate the current paths in and out of town. George mentioned concerns with Orange Street on how the town could create a path that is off the road. Tom mentioned like the discussion on Orange Street, that 61 will need access but will want privacy. Issues also with 65 as there is a very narrow sidewalk (Peter's Hull's old house). Holly wants us to come to a consensus for the letter and asked Mike for parameters on the pilot. Mike mentioned pilot would be coordinated with upcoming sewer work. George commented pilot needs to test during busy season and being open to moving trees if the Phelans prefer. Abby mentioned the family can work with the town's arborists and talented landscapers to find a solution, and, be supportive of testing the one-way solution as the Phelan family does support it.

- Two-way with narrow sidewalk beside it with removal of trees then added on other-side (maybe 10 feet) but this may not preserve the character
- Keep the current narrow two-way road and trees with a narrow footpath as close to the road as possible (behind the trees)
- Have the road be one-way and have the multi-use lane with a pilot – while still preserving the character of the road. Questions on the trial and how to measure success – Mike mentioned there are cameras that do counts of vehicles, pedestrian, and bike movements. Analyze the data – if there are not many pedestrians and cyclists and was not utilized then it is not successful whereas if students and many others use the road then it may be viewed more successful. Healthy to evaluate it. George says to measure traffic before and afterward to set a baseline. Mike mentioned we will have cameras set-up measuring traffic in early June but that we want to get the human element as well. Abby mentioned doing a survey to get contextual feedback. Holly asked about where the pilot would be (rotary from Stop and Shop to five corners or Williams to five corners). We support the latter.
- **Motion to write a letter of support detailing the options and emphasize the importance of historic preservation and natural materials by Abby, second by Rita. George – aye, Abby – aye, Clement – aye, Tom – no (is opposed to the one-way option), Angus – aye, Rita – aye**
- Massachusetts stretch energy code and implications for historic structures Lauren wanted to review the Mass Save language. The Town urged the community to not overturn the new stretch code but noted historic properties are eligible for exemptions. Importance of language: the exemption is contingent upon the submission of a report (to the code official signed by a registered design professional, the State Historic Preservation Officer or the local preservation authority) that details how compliance with the provision would damage the historic character of the building. It is important to note that this report merely documents the basis for the exemption – it is not an application for the exemption. Rita asked how the exemption process would work – the Town and HERS rater want to understand what the proposed process – Holly, Paul Murphy, and Lauren will work together. Holly hopes the stretch code should be utilized like any other building code. Need to be mindful of the historic character of the items (Ex. Windows – would not be forced to replace/choose new windows but hope is the owner would choose the most energy efficient option). Holly talked about an example that came before HDC – original windows had all been replaced for inferior windows so option now is for the owner to choose the best windows of the era (1880s). Angus mentioned it is a

balance and older windows may be more efficient. Should be a case-by-case basis. Holly emphasized this will already be a part of HDC reviews as part of their process (which go up to 1975). Base building code and stretch code do not apply to major repairs or small renovations but rather new construction, large additions, or gut rehabs. Angus asked what Lauren is looking for from us as a commission to be most helpful. Lauren proposed coming back with Andy Bucchino and Holly with specific language and then will look for a letter of support. Question on solar panels but they are part of the code and not required anywhere. The stretch code applies to insulation, heating/cooling system, appliances, and windows. Only visible piece is promoting heat pumps (need screening) and windows. We may see it for historic structures looking for historic tax credits. Will continue to support historic buildings in their use. 16 Broad windows – Green Mountain windows – double-paned and insulated. NHC will try to view and report – start to take pictures to add to the website.

- Ongoing survey work
 - Commissioner comments needed - Batch 5 of Fiscal Year 2022 Surveys received from Public Archaeology Lab *Holly has not heard from PAL – can share a jump drive. Commissioners still need to review. Abby will send the compressed file of the pdfs.*
- Preservation Month webinar with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and National Alliance of Preservation Commissions – Housing and Historic Preservation, May 23, 2024 *Joint free webinar – should be very special. Push to look at Sec of Interior standards for rehabilitation. The new chair Sara Bronin is on LinkedIn and is worth engaging. Register to get the packet.*
- Election of Commission Representative for Off-Shore Wind Farms Section 106 Review *Abby has volunteered to be the representative. Focus on cumulative affects on the National Historic Landmark. All in favor of Abby representing: Clement – aye, George – aye, Angus – aye, Rita – aye. BOEM is suspending their review for 6 months.*
- Commission Goals – Brainstorming Certified Local Government meeting topics
- Approval of Minutes – April 19, 2024 meeting *Clement motioned to approved, second – Tom, Clement – aye, George – aye, Rita – aye, Tom – aye, Abby – aye.*
- Other Business

Motion to adjourn by Tom at 12PM, seconded by George. Tom – aye, Clement – aye, George – aye, Rita – aye, Abby – aye, Angus – aye.