

Nantucket Historical Commission

July 18, 2025 Meeting

10AM

131 Pleasant Street, Nantucket MA and via Zoom

Attendees:

Rita Carr (Commissioner)
George Butterworth (Commissioner)
Angus MacLeod (Commissioner) – online
Sarah McLane (Commissioner) – online
Holly Backus (staff – Preservation Planner) – online
Betsy Tyler, Nantucket Historical Association
Michael Harrison, Chief Curator at the Nantucket Historical Association
Mary Bergman – Executive Director of Nantucket Preservation Trust – online

Absent:

Abby De Molina (Commissioner)

Agenda

- Roll call at 10:06AM Commissioners Rita, Angus, George, and Sarah are in person. Staff Holly is online. Members of the public Betsy Tyler and Michael Harrison, both at the NHA, are also in person. Mary Bergman (NPT) joined online at 10:20AM.
- Public Comment None
- Staff Update *The Bienenke family is looking to do a rededication of the plaque to commemorate the 300th anniversary – big celebration in the fall in October.*
- Request for letter of support – 'Sconset Trust to the Community Preservation Commission for Sankaty Lighthouse work *Question to Holly on whether she had received the supporting documentation but she said she had not had a chance to request it from the Sconset Trust. We assume we would still write a letter but would like more information. Rita proposed we draft a letter and make it conditional upon receipt of an application with details. Motion by George to write the letter with conditions, second by Sarah. George – aye, Sarah – aye, Angus – aye, and Rita – aye.*
- Civil War Monument repair *Questions to be resolved based on information from insurance and the Town. Holly could not get further detail from the DPW Director Drew or follow-up with the company yet but hopes to prior to the next meeting. Rita shared photos again – feels it is worthwhile to advocate for changes since granite looks different (patina) and is not level. George hopes to at least achieving levelness. Angus mentions they should at least they should cut the posts so they are the same heights and the bars needs to be level. Materials can be preserved and needs a reworking. Sarah thinks the issue is they shrank the roundabout itself which is why the retaining is much higher. Michael Harrison from the NHA mentioned there are 7 historic structures within walking distance and agree the repair is not consistent with its integrity and stone is incorrect. NHA is willing to connect the town to the right firms with the right skills. Ex. Grand Central Terminal was able to match the stone exactly and he presented the same firm that did that work. He is leaving a list of three firms. Holly thanks Michael for this. She*

mentions the insurance company pre-selected the company to do the work. The many had been doing this work for many years including cemeteries in Plymouth County. No vetting of other preservation organizations. Holly agrees we need more answers. Rita will summarize the questions from today and last month, pass to Holly who will send to Drew so we can get answers. Mary Bergman from NPT commented she is in support of Mike Harrison's comments and wants to know how we can change the insurance company choosing the organization and be doing the best work as a National Historic Landmark and setting an example as a community. Angus thanked Mike for his offer agreed with Mary so we can be confident in future repairs. He questioned level of formality but Holly recommended starting informally.

- *Demolition by neglect – role of the Historical Commission and collaboration with the Historic District Commission Discussion about how to handle. Angus thinks it is important to identify properties at risk. We should note the address and notify HDC. Holly wanted to note that staff does do this already – various enforcement at different stages. Cathy Flynn or Nikki Sheriff both do this already and CC Holly and HDC Chair. They have an active list. She recommends reaching out to staff to confirm a property is on the list. She also noted it is a lengthy process (6 Fair Street).*
- *Historic resource surveys update CLG has applied to MHC FY23 funding will extend and update RFQ. Congress had approved FY25 funding and 10% is required to be provided to SHPO's. We are still pending FY26 historic preservation fund – there has been a move to slash that. Mentioned to push representatives at state and federal level.*
 - *Potential other funding sources Wind Farm funding can do properties in any location and update old 1988/1989 surveys – demolished or moved buildings not handled by consultant. Also mentioned CPC – looking for projects. Have funding 2 projects with University of Florida, New Guinea/West Monomoy which will result in 250 forms. It is a pilot as lots of history needs research before the consultants do surveys. Mentioned funding not from MHC is much easier to work with on the procurement process. Question on when we can do another RFQ. Holly does not know as she is waiting for a few things with procurement in OpenGov portal. New fiscal year may make it move quicker – hopes an update for August. Angus asked if we could do anything simultaneously for further CPC funding to continue PAL work. Holly has discussed working with PiN to do additional CPC projects. Holly mentioned farming history and locations – not new form Bs but may create new Form As. She also mentions working with private organizations as well. Question for when latest PAL surveys will be on MACRIS. Holly said they are understaffed so we do not know yet. Betsy mentioned PiN has been doing great work and is very thorough.*
- *Community Preservation Act – potential applications for FY 2026; application deadline September 8 Holly will apply for CPC funding for the aerals – 38s and 57s, and more ongoing survey efforts so wants to know what area to continue with that includes PiN. Rita asked Holly to provide draft applications for the August meeting.*
- *Commission Goals Abby is not present so will review next meeting*
- *Approval of minutes – June 20, 2025 meeting and confirm vote for April 18, 2025 meeting No June minutes to vote on. Motion to approve April minutes by George, second by Angus. George – aye, Angus – aye, Sarah – aye, and Rita – aye.*
- *Other Business See everyone in August. [Note there was no motion to adjourn but meeting ended at 10:52AM].*