

Nantucket Historical Commission

October 17, 2025 Meeting

10AM

131 Pleasant Street, Nantucket MA and via Zoom

Attendees:

Barbara Halstead (Commissioner)
Betsy Tyler (Commissioner)
George Butterworth (Commissioner)
Angus MacLeod (Commissioner)
Sarah McLane (Commissioner)
Rita Carr (Commissioner)
Abby De Molina (Commissioner) – online
Holly Backus (staff – Preservation Planner)
Caroline Balzer
Ron Colcott – online
Virginia Vidoni – online
Hillary Hedges Rayport – online
Kathy Baird – online

Agenda

- Roll call at 10 AM *All commissioners Barbara, Betsy, George, Angus, Sarah, and Rita are in person. Staff Holly is also in person. Commissioner Abby is online. Member of the public Caroline is in person and Ron, Virginia, and Hillary are online.*
- Public comment *None*
- Staff update *Holly was at rededication of Walter Beinecke's plaque at the Congregational Church, along with Niles Parker from the NHA and Cormac McCarthy from the Nantucket Conservation Foundation*
- Special Town Meeting: Review and Discussion of Articles 1 & 2 *Caroline had written a letter for article 1. Rita wants to keep the discussion to the historical nature of the articles. In addition to hearing public comments, the Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of the STR articles 1&2 and without consensus, voted unanimously not to endorse either article. Motion to take no action by George, seconded by Sarah. Unanimous approval: Barbara – aye, Betsy – aye, George – aye, Angus – aye, Sarah – aye, Abby – aye, and Rita – aye. Brief discussion on the feasibility of historic tax credits and how hard it is to make them work.*
- Historic resource surveys update
 - Wind Fund RFQ response – PaleoWest, LLC *We have moved forward with the consultant the Town Manager is going to sign the contract and Chronicle Heritage will start the engagement. They will be coming to the island to survey town-owned resources*
 - Massachusetts Historical Commission funding RFQ *Holly received the fully executed contract from the state to extend it another year. We are hoping with the new contract Procurement will get a response this time with less surveys.*

- FY 2026 Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey & Planning Grant Pre-Approval Deadline November 19, 2025: Discussion of potential projects *We don't have to apply for surveys but Holly has proposed using funds to create a Preservation Plan. CLG is more competitive but has better conditions. The grant match for CLGs is 60/40. We could also apply for MA Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) for the town-owned structures including the structures at Jetties Beach, which would need work. Due before our next meeting. The Commission supported Holly's proposals. Caroline mentioned support for Jetties tennis renovations and asked Capital Committee (CapCom) for funds. Motion by Sarah to enable staff to go forward and does the grant pre-approval for a preservation plan, second by Angus. Unanimous approval: Sarah – aye, Angus – aye, George – aye, Betsy – aye, Barbara – aye, and Rita – aye (Abby dropped at 11:15AM).*
- Civil War Monument repair *Looking to get a status update from Drew Patnode on getting an update on the repair, has the granite been returned, and how to prevent this process from happening again with the insurance choosing subpar subcontractors. Holly has not been able to connect with Drew but has connected with Finance to understand who to speak with about the insurance. Keep on the agenda for next month.*
- Nantucket Association of Real Estate Brokers workshop – October 29 Holly, Angus Sarah and Mary Bergman from Nantucket Preservation Trust will be presenting. Brief discussion about historic tax credit program – but that it is more effective from much larger project and program, as opposed to individual homes. The Commission supports them just we are aware that usually they have been used on income-producing rental homes here on the island. Epsilon, the consultant that usually does these projects, has indicated the state is not providing much for the island for these projects. Mention of the state ADU law at the next Planning Board meeting with EOHLC and town counsel.
- Upcoming training opportunities
 - Eastern Massachusetts Historical Commission Coalition, “Exploring Historic District Bylaws, Guidelines & Rules,” on October 21
 - National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, “Integrating Preservation into Municipal and Planning Processes,” on October 30
- Commission Goals *We will review next month.*
- Approval of minutes – September 19, 2025 meeting *Motion to approve by Angus, second by Sarah. Unanimous approval: Angus – aye, Sarah – aye, George – aye, Betsy – aye, Barbara – aye, and Rita – aye.*
- Other Business ICCROM – *Holly and Mary Bergman and Charles Johnson spoke with the international students. Final presentations at the Whaling Museum and Holly will send final date and time.*

Motion to adjourn by Betsy at 11:41AM, seconded by George. Unanimous approval: Betsy – aye, George – aye, Angus – aye, Sarah – aye, Barbara – aye, and Rita – aye.