

Nantucket Historical Commission

January 16, 2026 Meeting

10AM

131 Pleasant Street, Nantucket MA and via Zoom

Attendees:

Betsy Tyler (Commissioner)
Barbara Halstead (Commissioner)
George Butterworth (Commissioner)
Rita Carr (Commissioner)
Holly Backus (staff – Preservation Planner)
Abby De Molina (Commissioner) – online
Angus MacLeod (Commissioner) – online
Mike Burns (staff – Transportation Manager) – online
Drew Patnode (staff – Head of Department of Public Works) – online
Antone Almeida (Project Manager with landscape architecture with Weston & Sampson) – online
Devin Herrick (Wetland scientist with Weston & Sampson) – online
Mary Bergman (Nantucket Preservation Trust) – online

Absent:

Sarah McLane (Commissioner)

Agenda

- Roll call at 10 AM *Commissioners Rita, George, Barbara, and Betsy are in person. Commissioners Abby and Angus are online. Staff Holly is also in person. Staff Mike and Drew are also online, as are Weston & Sampson consultants Devin and Antone and Mary.*
- Public comment *None*
- Staff update *None*
- Tom Nevers Multiuse Path design review for potential impact to historic resources *Path will be 2.1 miles and will connect Milestone Road with the Tom Nevers field. The Weston and Sampson consultants presented the detailed slides. No wetland impact – an assessment was done. Land Bank supports. They showed how there is a boardwalk on some of the path. Question from Abby if there will be crosswalks to the streets on the other side of Tom Nevers Road. Goal to have the path permitted and open by Summer 2027. MHC has approved the project. Holly mentioned the one historic aspect of the project is the old railroad bed. Abby recommended some sort of plaque, possibly near a water fountain. Commissioner Angus joined at 10:05. He said the old railroad is probably the most historically significant aspect of Tom Nevers and suggested that a way to recognize that would be to embed rail tracks in the path at the intersection of the old railway. Due to the dangers of automobiles traveling at excessive speeds on Tom Nevers Road and wanting to retain a rural feeling for the path, he suggested keeping the path as far away from the road as possible and to provide a vegetative barrier between the two with more trees. Noting that the Polpis bike path is one of the most desirable on island*

and was only 8 feet wide, he suggested a reduction in width of both the 10-foot-wide path and 12 foot wide bridge. Drew mentioned putting in a well would be necessary for the bubbler and said the tie would need to be plowable. He also supported the extra 2 feet on the bridge and proposed resting place at Old Tom Nevers Road. Clarified the telephone poles are also between the road and the path. Rita asked about the crosswalk warning system – keeping it consistent with other projects and a different project on Milestone Road with Weston and Sampson but Mike clarified it is on private land owned by the Nantucket Conservation Foundation. Abby suggested crosswalks at Longwood Drive and Lyons Lane.

- Historic resource surveys update
 - PaleoWest, LLC/ Chronical Heritage survey of Town-owned historic resources *Holly mentioned they will be on island the week on 1/26 so is coordinating with the different town groups.*
 - Massachusetts Historical Commission FY23 funding Request for Qualifications – Response Submission Deadline January 23rd *We are hoping for some respondents, a few questions with answers on OpenGov*
- FY 2026 Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey & Planning Grant Application for Preservation Plan *Per the letter we received from MHC and they requested we set up a meeting before we submit our response. Holly has reached out a few times and will follow-up; Holly thinks it will be like Webster. It is only for CLGs this round and is competitive so no guarantee we get funding.*
- Distressed properties list – potential demolition by neglect citations *Holly mentioned we cannot identify the properties without giving the homeowners notice. Abby recommended we build a running list of notifications into the process. Holly clarified we have them all the time so once we start building the list we can have Holly cross-reference with notifications before discussing.*
- Civil war monument damage repair *Angus asked for a phone number so we could contact the insurance directly because we have not gotten any traction. He also mentioned he thought the NHA offered to fund some repair if Town is unwilling; Rita mentioned she thought they were only offering to help sourcing. Ultimately, we want to restore the old stones. Recommendation to get a concrete offering from NHA before having Holly reach out to the Town Manager. Holly also recommended having photos and a detailed account.*
- Upcoming training opportunities *Thursday January 22 at 1PM – National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC) Supporting Skilled Preservation Trades.*
- Commission Goals *Abby reviewed with the commission. Holly mentioned wanting social media for the upcoming Chronicle Heritage visit.*
- Approval of Minutes: November 21, and December 19 2025 meetings *Motion to approve the minutes by Angus, second by George. Angus – aye, George – aye, Barbara – aye, Betsy – aye, Abby – aye, Rita – aye.*
- Other business *None*

Motion to adjourn by Barbara at 11:17AM, seconded by George. Unanimous approval. Barbara – aye, George – aye, Betsy – aye, Abby – aye, Angus – aye, Rita – aye.