

**Gloucester Historical Commission**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**City Hall**  
**September 29, 2014, 6:30 p.m.**

Present: Steve Pardee, David Rhinelander, Mary Ellen Lepionka, Jeff Crawford, Bob Whitmarsh, Tom O'Keefe, Amanda Nash

Guests: Rachel Meyer and Joshua Gerloff of the First Parish Burial Ground subcommittee

**1. Minutes**

Minutes were reviewed and accepted with corrections to come from Mary Ellen regarding her research.

**2. Public Comment**

Rachel Meyer and Joshua Gerloff introduced themselves; they have been doing hands-on work at the First Parish Burial Ground. They stated that they have been going about once a week (but since the meeting it is has been even more often). The FP is looking great. They have not made a lot of headway on Clark Cemetery yet, but they plan to work on (since the meeting they have gotten a lot more done there as well). A woman named Crystal Daley is also working with them.

Rachel is organizing a workshop on how to clean and preserve headstones. It will be presented in the spring. They have six people interested already, and will need ten. They plan to either apply for grants or charge \$75/person to pay the instructor. Instructor is Cheryle Caputo of the NE Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies.

The workshop will cover resetting toppled stones and cleaning. The first workshop will not address repair beyond that.

Steve noted that the stones need to be catalogued. Rachel said they would bag shards and put in bins, and would catalog and map them. She inquired about storage space for this.

Rachel was asked how many people were in FPBG. She said that "Find-a-Grave" says there are 600. They observed only about 200 stones. This does not include Clark.

Helen McCabe has contracted for goats to come to eat the weeds, etc, in the cemetery. Hopefully this will include the poison ivy, which is rampant. They are to arrive on October 25<sup>th</sup> and stay for a week. [Note: Goats arrived a week early and were only there for two or three days when the Nor'easter came through and they had to be evacuated. There are no plans for them to return, but I am looking into this. -Amanda] They are expected to be located in FP but near the entrance to Clark. Helen had an announcement put in the paper [unfortunately it listed the expected dates, not the actual dates that they came]. Rachel said she wanted to do an open house on November 1<sup>st</sup>, while the goats were still there. [Note: I believe the open house is now canceled because there are no goats. -AN]

Amanda said she would ask Helen to write a note transferring her responsibilities to Rachel and Josh. Helen emailed saying she would do this but has not yet done it. [I will follow up on this after we've worked out whether goats will return or not. –AN] Do we need to go through any additional formal process with the City?

Rachel and Josh need a place to store equipment, e.g., a mower, weed whackers, rakes, etc. There was [is?] a shed, but it was/is subject to vandalism. Should DPW be asked to allocate space in the barn? Rachel and Josh live in Ipswich and have a small car, so it would be much better to find a place near the cemetery. [I am talking with my tenant who has a dance studio on Emerson St to see if either she or her neighbor over there, a roofer, have any space. –AN] Some other places suggested are: Veterans's Center, Pathways (?), high school.

Rachel and Josh said that a lot of the headstones which had been assumed to have been vandalized may have been damaged by mowers. The grass and weeds were so high that the mowers very likely couldn't see the headstones. Rachel and Josh are weedwhacking, which should solve that problem, at least for now. Jeff Crawford said that the mayor said DPW would mow twice a year. Not clear whether that is often enough to avoid the high growth that is obscuring the headstones. Also we need confirmation from DPW. Rachel said that the DPW has been picking up the brush that they've amassed, but not on a regular basis; they do it when Rachel calls them.

The people to talk to at the DPW are Mark Cole and Joe Lucido. If DPW is going to know, it would be helpful to the volunteers to know WHEN.

Rachel said the neighbors love the new volunteers. They now walk there with their parents, kids, dogs...

Rachel reported that Helen wants the funds held by DPW to go into the Gloucester Fund. [Not sure this is still the case. This seems to be a moving target. –AN] She also wants to make sure that funds that get donated to GF for BG will get used for BG, not for other GHC business. Barry Pett of GF says it is easy to do that, you just put on the "memo" line that it is for FPBG (or Clark, whatever).

Short term goals for Rachel's group: 1. Clear a path through Clark; they can't clear the whole thing [Note: since the meeting, they have cleared quite a lot of it, more than a path.] 2. Money for the headstone-repair workshop. [I am encouraging them to apply for an Awesome Gloucester grant; not clear whether they are still interested in getting a grant rather than having people pay for the workshop. –AN] 3. Railroad has encroached on Clark with their fence. A letter has already been sent [by Steve?] to the City's lawyer about this, but received no response. Perhaps this is something Ward III City Councilor Steve LeBlanc should be helping with. [I have drafted a letter to him for GHC approval. –AN] Neighbors also encroach. The City ignores Clark entirely. Another thing it would be nice for them to have: a bench.

Crystal is putting photos and info on "Find-a-Grave." Over the winter, they would like to establish a website on ancestry.com. [I made Facebook pages for FPBG and Clark. –AN]

Who owns Clark? We think the City does, but Rachel will ask Sarah Dunlap.

### 3. Correspondence

**Letter from CPA** denying funding of GHC's National Register Nominations project.

**Letter from MHC** regarding **Gloucester Adventure**'s grant application. MHC asked if they were complying with preservation guidelines. Steve wrote a letter of support.

**Letter from MHC** announcing beginning of the 2015 **Survey and Planning Grant** cycle. Form for Letter of Intent to Apply for Survey and Planning Funds included.

**Letter from MHC to LAND Grant Program Supervisor** regarding **Annisquam Woods Property Land Acquisition**.

**Letter from MHC to Phyllis A Marine Association** stating that the **Phyllis A meets National Register Criteria A and C at the local level**. To qualify at the state level a more extensive National Register nomination will be required.

#### 4. New Business

Steve and Mary Ellen discussed submitting Dogtown map project for the Survey and Planning Grant and asking Linzee Coolidge for the matching funds that will be required. Need a ballpark estimate for professional map designs. Mary Ellen has people coming from Rhode Island on 10/25 to discuss.

Mary Ellen discussed the process for finding status of historical neighborhood sites in MACRIS: You enter the state, then the city, and look at the reports for the neighborhoods, see what they are "recommended for..."

Mary Ellen agreed to join the commission and will submit the appropriate paperwork to the City.

Steve is stepping down as co-chair (but remaining on the Commission). David would like to step down too but is willing to co-chair with Tom. [In discussion with David later, I agreed to take on more of the paperwork. -AN]

Bob Whitmarsh discussed the Pocket Park across from the White-Ellery House. One of the neighbors, Jackie Jamison, wrote a letter saying she would like it to be made more apparent so people would use it. Bob will invite her to come and present the issue to the GHC. David would like to see stakes in the circle with a plaque stating that it is the "Original site of the White-Ellery House."

Mary Ellen will contact Leon Doucette to ask him to come to a meeting as a prospective candidate for commissioner.

Mary Ellen discussed the need for CATS (Cape Ann Trail Stewards), who keep trails open on municipal property, to re-clear Pole Hill. Nick Holland, CATS' leader, has to re-apply for a permit from DPW. Mary Ellen will draft a letter and send it to David send to DPW to get them to expedite the permit.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm. The next meeting will be Monday, October 27th at 6:30 pm at City Hall in the first floor conference room.

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Nash