

## **Gloucester Historical Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes 27 June 2016**

**Attending:** Mary Ellen Lepionka, Holly Clay, Sandy Barry, Stephen LeBlanc (VP City Council), Zenas Seppala, Peter Parsons, Denise Nichols, Bob Whitmarsh, Jeff Crawford

#### **I. Recap of May 2016 Preservation Awards Event**

We all appreciate the mayor's speaking and staying for the entire event.

We will try to include more houses on next year's list. Combining our efforts with those of the Historic District Commission should lead to more residential nominees. Steve LeBlanc (Ward 3 Councilor and O&A Chair) will also keep an ear to the ground as he meets with restoration and construction people. This way we can develop a list of domiciles under construction. Bob Whitmarsh will be in touch with the Building Inspector for leads.

As we enter properties onto our list of candidates for preservation awards, we will contact owners (get names and phone contacts from the Clerk's Office or City Directory).

The 2016 preservation awards event was not covered by the Cable station. Sandy Barry will be the GHC "official photographer". She has also agreed to undergo training at the Cable station to videotape in the future. Sandy will also submit tapes to the cable outlets for airing.

#### **2. FY 2015 Survey & Planning Grant (MA Historical Society)**

Phase 3 is complete. Architectural Preservation Specialist Wendy Frontiero submitted the inventory forms for relevant buildings in Gloucester. (We will keep adding to list). She received \$10,000 of her grant. The city will be reimbursed once the final report (forthcoming) is submitted.

#### **3. FY 2016 Survey & Planning Grant (MA Historical Society)**

The contract for the next year will be entered soon (in Auditor's Department's Procurement Officer Donna Compton's hands). From this year forward, grants will cover 138 properties, as opposed to 150 previously. The "RFP" for a local consultant will be placed on July 8, with bids due a month later.

#### **4. Certified Local Government**

Approval has been granted and Gloucester is now eligible to apply for large grants that are available only to municipalities which have earned the status.

(Grants equal to \$10.5 million dollars were distributed to CLGs in Massachusetts alone last year.) One requirement is for the GHC to meet with the Historic District Commission (HDC) once a year, which will hopefully lead to collaboration between the two commissions, and to provide a comprehensive annual report.

Sandy Barry is collecting data for next year's annual report. The GHC must continue to build the historic architecture inventory and evaluate properties and landmarks for Historic Register eligibility.

### **Demolition Delay Proposal (Bob Whitmarsh)**

Bob Whitmarsh reviewed the purpose of the proposed ordinance. A one-year delay is preferred; other communities have demolition delay ordinances that range in duration from six months to two years. Steve LeBlanc said the ordinance proposal will be placed on the O & A meeting agenda so O & A committee members can discuss it. GHC will prepare a slide show for the committee, prior to the presentation to the City Council.

The Demo Delay ordinance should require City Council to provide a budget for personnel to monitor and take action during the delay. A modest budget of as little as \$500 would be helpful. Stephen LeBlanc will ask City Auditor Kenny Costa about making an inquiry with the Mayor's office regarding a budget for the GHC.

### **5. Cemetery Advisory Committee (Sandy Barry)**

A mayoral appointment is necessary and no official committee exists yet. Steven LeBlanc reported the DPW has requested permission to increase burial fees. Such fees might be used for maintenance, or they might be allocated elsewhere. Important historical (closed) cemeteries include: First Parish, Second Parish, Clark. The Lanesville Cemetery serves as a model to follow.

In the past the DPW has had summer job duties that include keeping cemeteries tidy; Sandy Barry and Jeff Crawford will follow up with scout leaders and will investigate summer hires' assignments. Steve LeBlanc will ask Mike Hale about summer hires.

### **6. East Gloucester waterfront development (David Rhineland)**

The East Gloucester Marine Industrial Zone is open for re-zoning. Discussions revolved around the multiple uses currently existing. Attendees focused on the poor condition of the Americorp waterfront and the political/business/development impact of the contiguous Designated Port Area. Many are concerned about keeping the current 'feel' of the area and avoiding "casual destruction" of existing structures.

## **7. Report on Walking Tours for Land Marks project (Holly Clay)**

Holly Clay and Mary Ellen Lepionka met with CAM (Cape Ann Museum) administrators to discuss including historic tours in the publications. CAM-developed art history and architecture walks will remain in the CAM domain and the Land Marks publications will refer readers to the museum for information

### **Historical Commission Records and Archives**

Meeting Friday night September 9 for Potluck/File organization at home of Mary Ellen Lepionka.

The Library has run out of room for storing our archives; one box remains in the library. We are waiting to hear if the Post Office has room to store records.

## **8. Stage Fort Park Restoration**

Residents (represented by J.D. MacEachren) would like to add beach restoration to already existing restoration plans in advance of Gloucester's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary (2023). If application for CPA funds is made, the restoration plan will come before the GHC and we will weigh in on the historic merits of a beach restoration project.

**Next Meeting Monday, July 25 2016, 6:30 pm, third floor conference room, City Hall.**