

Minutes of the Gloucester Historical Commission

September 26, 2016 7:00 PM

City Hall, 3rd Floor

9 Dale Ave.

Gloucester, MA 01930

Members present: Mary Ellen Lepionka, David Rhineland, Robert Whitmarsh, Jude Seminara

Members absent: Jeff Crawford, Sandy Barry, Holly Clay-Smith

Guests present: Peter Parsons, David Dow, Rebecca Reynolds

I. Tablet Rock Preservation Grant

Rebecca Reynolds discussed opposition to proposed restoration of Tablet Rock bronze plaque.

Ms. Reynolds left at 7:08 PM

II. Approved minutes of August GHC meeting.

III. Stage Fort Park Restoration

David Dow presented information relating to the proposed restoration of the fortifications at Stage Fort Park. The Friends of Stage Fort Park will advise the Mayor of their plans, and then return to the GHC. Mr. Dow hopes to get a CPA grant to help fund the project. The FOSFP are concerned with the neglect of the fortifications, particularly the overgrowth and the current state of decay. They have been in contact with a military historian about the cannons.

Mr. Parsons left at 7:30 PM

Mr. Dow left at 7:43 PM

IV. Report on City Hall Restoration Committee

The GHC is trying to persuade the CHRC not to destroy the Dale Ave. side of City Hall in its efforts to become ADA compliant. There was discussion of alternatives to excavating the grass area in the front of the building and alternative locations for the two required on-site handicapped spaces. The CRHC is concerned about losing current parking spaces on the grounds of City Hall. The GHC is concerned about the irreversible change to the historic integrity of the building.

V. Cemetery Advisory Committee

Mary Ellen and Bob attended the first meeting of the newly-formed Cemetery Advisory Committee. There was discussion of SHRAP grants relating to the preservation of veterans' history.

VI. Certified Local Government Status

CLG status has been delayed by the City legal department. Peter Stott will advise when we can proceed.

VII. Demolition Delay Ordinance proposal

Currently, the Mayor is opposed to the Demolition Delay Ordinance proposal. Her concerns lie with the eligibility requirement for property (older than 50 years). Members of the GHC are concerned with the lack of general understanding of the proposed ordinance. Mary Ellen wrote to the Mayor to clarify the ordinance proposal.

VIII. Historical District Commission

Bob attended the Historical District Commission. Middle St. house is still an issue. The HDC offered suggestions of alternatives to the homeowner for work she plans on doing. Currently, the work is on hold until the homeowner returns to the HDC. Mary Ellen would like HDC members to attend a GHC meeting.

IX. Grants

FY 2015 grants are over. On September 28, we will receive phase 4. Kenny Costa has necessary materials from Mary Ellen. The City has sent a directive to the GHC with regard to grant writing. Mary Ellen will get proof of purchase and send it in with the final report. For the FY 2016 grants, Wendy signed the contracts on September 25.

X. Other Business

- Annisquam NRHP on indefinite hold
- No more NRHP nominations for districts on Cape Ann
- In 2015, only four building forms were added to MACRIS
- The MHC is experiencing a three month delay
- FY 2016 will decide which projects will be focused on, e.g., Stage Fort Park, Brier Neck, Stacy Boulevard
- MACRIS should be all house forms, no area forms
- Rocky Neck NRHP -- next step is for the MHC to send letters to all residents affected by the nomination

XI. Action Plans for Future Grants

1. Landmarks project: Mary Ellen contacted GHS regarding faculty collaboration. Jude will consult with GHS history teachers Dave Pleuler and Shaun Goulart in the event that they need something.
2. Dogtown Grant: the goal is \$20,000. Future plans to include mapping Dogtown, determining the official boundaries of Dogtown, and conducting an archaeological survey of Dogtown. The GHC will work with other organizations with a vested interest in Dogtown (the Dogtown Advisory Committee, the Friends of Dogtown, and the Cape Ann

Trail Stewards). The Mayor and City Council has to buy into the idea of a NRHP nomination for Dogtown.

XII. New Business

Due to the next scheduled GHC meeting falling on Halloween, the members decided to hold the October meeting on October 24. David notified the GHC that he is stepping down as co-chair. Bob is willing to accept that role. The GHC will vote on this at the upcoming October meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jude Seminara