

Minutes February 2017
Gloucester Historical Commission

Present: Mary Ellen Lepionka, Bob Whitmarsh, Jeff Crawford, Holly Clay, Sandy Barry, Jude Seminara, David Rhinelanders
Fred Cowan, Pru Fish, David Porper, Ann Rhinelanders, David Dow,
Student: Kathy Giraldo, Visiting Student

1. Public Business Not on the Agenda

A. New Archivist: David reminded those present that Gloucester now has an Archivist on staff. Katelynn Vance will be splitting her time between the Sawyer Free Library and City Hall.

B. Stage Fort Park: David Dow attended to request he and his committee be added to next month's agenda. His committee is working on restoring Stage Fort and the visitor's center there. A CPA grant was awarded for work at welcoming center and surroundings.

In addition, a \$600,00 National Park Service grant was given, then rescinded, because of discriminatory parking fee practices. Parking fees are different for residents v. non-residents. This can't change according to the Mayor, unfortunately, so the grant will not be fulfilled.

The group foresees applying for another approximately \$75,000 in CPA funding, with an eye to planning for the future use of the park. They're thinking in terms of \$60,000 for visitor center exterior.

Restoring the guns is one of the priorities. The committee wants to authentically rebuild the carriages for the cannons. New wheels are to be forged and white oak timbers used. An application for \$31,000 is with "Better Group" in Rhode Island.

Mary Ellen proposed the group apply for an archeological grant to survey and reconstruct the history of the Fort area. Bill Remsen suggested contacting Boston University to see if their Archeology Department would consider making the Fort a field project for archeological students.

2. Report on Correspondence

A. The ADA parking plan for City Hall has been approved. Mass Historical, after their review, determined the proposed plan will have no adverse effect on City Hall or the Historic District.

B. The Sargent Robinson house has been formally accepted for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The owners managed the listing acquisition of their own accord and at their own expense. We will include them among the recipients for this year's preservation awards. Bona Simon

at Mass Historical notes, this project is an excellent example of citizens taking it upon themselves to protect the historic value of a property. Marietta Delahunt. ...Jeff is to get photos of the house.

C. The city has been reimbursed for money expended for the FY 2015 Survey and Planning Grant.

D. Photos of Parsons School (Friendship House) interior. Mass Historical's Peter Stott is interested in this property at 311 Western Ave. It's included in the GHC 2016 Planning and Survey Grant and is called "Girl Scout Hall, Cape Ann Chapter," housed in what was historically the Friendship House. Stott would like images that show how the building was used as a school, beginning in the 1830's.

3. **Sawyer Free Library and Lyceum Expansion Plans.**

Members agreed on distribution thread of the GHC written response to the Massachusetts Historical Commission via a vis the Sawyer Free Library Expansion Plan. Mary Ellen will give copies of the letter, which she wrote, to committee and department heads. Deborah Kelsey, Library Director, will receive a copy and she will distribute to the Board of Directors at the library. Fred Cowan, the Interim President of the Library Board and a member of the Building Committee, will distribute his copy to the building committee members and executive committee members, adding Fran Aliberte. Norton Whittier and Brad Dorr. the Owner's Project Manager (OPM). David Porper will receive a copy and distribute it to the Historic District Commission members. Copies will also go to Chris Sicuranza, Matt Oudens, the archives, Kevin and Ray LeMont.

Mary Ellen's letter states the GHC will not approve the design plan in the form that it was presented to the public, calling for demolition of the Monell wing and jettisoning the Saunders House. An addendum includes updated information: the library building committee and Board have reconsidered their architectural proposal and have directed the architects to explore renovating and preserving the Monell wing. The GHC favors their doing so, as well as adding space to accommodate the library program. WE would like to see them explore possibilities for archive storage.

The GHC looks forward to communicating with both the Library and the District Commission as new architectural plans develop. Collaboration is essential, so as to avoid formally commenting to Mass Historical without a PNF, architectural renderings etc. (as we had to do in this case).

Fred Cowan will consult with GHC and HDC on architectural expansion plans. The next time, next set of plans library board members will meet jointly with the GHC and the HDC.

Saunders House is listed in MACRIS, but it has been formally decommissioned as a library by the Massachusetts State Board of Libraries (no ADA access and lead paint). It was, therefore, not included in design plans as sent to the Massachusetts Board for consideration for a grant; it would have compromised the chance of receiving a grant.

Fred Cowan is investigating making the Saunders House a 501C3. He hopes all or a portion might be designated again as a library, once improvements are undertaken. It is also possible the Library will lease it for administrative offices. It will be private property. The Library Corporation owns the building and land; the City finances the staff, etc.

Bill Remsen noted that de-leading can be accomplished easily, that it is just time consuming. A paint analysis must be conducted and the original paint should be retained in designated places.

The GHC gratefully acknowledges Pru Fisch's two articles on the Saunders House in *Enduring Gloucester*.

4. Status Reports on Grants for Historic Projects

FY 2016 Survey and Planning, Phase 2 has been invoiced. The Manship property is to be included, while other properties are not to be considered for 2016. It consists of six area forms, 135 prop and four building forms. Manship, itself, comprises one area form.

Pru Fish pointed out houses on Leverett Street in Lanesville, particularly the Ahola House, should be listed. This property once belonged to a man by the name of Sylvester, who was a trumpeter in the 1920's and 30's. A film on his life is at the CAM. Mary Ellen asked Pru Fish to alert us to properties that should be in Survey and Planning projects in the future.

FY 2017 Survey and Planning Grant for Dogtown is in the works. The application includes matching grants in the form of \$5k from Dusky foundation, \$5k from the town of Rockport. Greenbelt applied to New England Bio labs for a grant for \$5k and to the Bruce L. Anderson Foundation for \$5k. Hoping these will be interested in future work for controlled burns and restoring artists' haunts. We hear March 17.

The off-cycle architectural survey grant from the CPC for \$9.5k is in process. The City Council will vote on it at its next meeting.

The MPPF grant application to remediate the Legion Building exterior is awaiting submission to Massachusetts Historical. It is due March 24. We are waiting for Bill Remsen's report which will outline work and cost of work

that is necessary. Bill will prioritize the items and he expects expenses to be more than \$200k. Dan Smith (Community Development) said same thing.

Mary Ellen has requested that the City provide the match. We will consult with Steve Winslow in Community Development to answer questions about City finances, classifications for construction jobs, etc.

Holly is to follow up with Sandra and Mark (Legion officers) about applying for a CPC grant for the interior or for specific architectural projects, like restoring windows.

The Rocky Neck submission for listing on the National Register is in process. Letters to residents asking to hear about objections to the Listing will be mailed in June. Residents will then have 30 days to respond, if they do not want to be in a National Register District. In the absence of such letters, the nomination will go through.

The process of nominating Annisquam for the National Register will be next. Another public Hearing on the subject of National Register listing will be required this summer.

Block Grants for Preservation from the federal government, through Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have been explored. The preservation aspect of these grants, which are intended to benefit low and middle income residents, has not been part of Gloucester's statement of need heretofore. Mary Ellen has written the Mayor and Jim Destino encouraging them to request that Community Planning expand the proviso to include preservation, which will contribute to heritage tourism.

5. **Preservation Awards Ceremony.** Saturday, May 6. 2-4 pm.
 - a. Those present briefly discussed the possibility of presenting a Preservation Plan, or rather the fundamentals that might be included in one.
 - b. Holly is to contact CAM to reserve the auditorium for 6 May.
 - c. **Categories for Awards:**
 - Education and Outreach (for example, documentation of Gloucester History)
 - Preservation or Restoration of a local structure
 - Adaptive Re-use
 - Lifetime Achievement
 - Archeology
 - Stewardship
 - Landscape Preservation

d. **Criteria for awards:**

- Historically significant in age, style, or use.
- Restored using traditional materials.
- Preserves historical integrity or appearance.
- Protects from present threat or future harm.
- Completed within the past two years.
- Accomplished by individual, family, group, or community through advocacy, fundraising, or effort.

e. GHC members who are designated as Contacts with award recipients will also take photos.

f. Holly will look into procuring certificates at Staples and possibly having printing done there.. Bill suggests a Gloucester seal on each certificate. Buying a presentation binder is a good idea, as well.

g. Publicity and Promotion: *Gloucester Times, The Beacon, Wicked Gloucester, Good Morning Gloucester, Enduring Gloucester, Cape Ann Museum.*

h. Sandy will attend to videography and will see whether Cape Ann TV can attend and film the event.

1. Joseph Nepalitano. Lifetime Achievement Award. Holly to confirm.
2. Sarah Dunalap (She can acknowledge her team) Archive volunteer. Lifetime Achievement. Jane Walsh got a City award for her services there when she retired. Holly is contact person.
3. Marietta Delahunt. Stewardship, Sargent-Robinson House, 972 Washington St. on the National Register-- Jeff to contact
4. Harold Burnham. Lifetime Achievement. Builder of schooner, *Thomas E. Lannon* and pinky schooner *Ardelle*. He is currently working on the *Ernistina*. David will contact.
5. Catherine Ryan's boys for restoration of the Civil War Coat. Twin Boys got SHRAB grant to restore Coat. David will contact.
6. The Olson Library. Charlie Olson collection. Judith Nast is librarian under director Ferrini. Olson's widow, Maude, gave the library. 108 E. Main. The collection includes primary sources on Native Americans that Olson Used in his *Maximus* Poems. Stewardship and Preservation of Gloucester history. Mary Ellen to contact.

7. Bing McGilvrey. Education and Outreach. His Facebook feed constitutes a remarkable collection of Cape Ann-related art work, primarily paintings. Plus, the award acknowledges the art he has catalogued at CAM as well as his work on the Joe Garland papers. Jude to contact.
8. Captain Ray Bates. Education and Outreach. For his new publication on shipwrecks. Jude is to contact
9. Christine and Paul Lundberg. Restoration and Preservation.... of their family home on Bridgewater Street in Annisquam. Holly and Bill are the contact people.
10. Melanie Murray-Brown for Rehabilitation & Restoration, of the Amos-Rackliffe House at 7 Fremont St., Rocky Neck—David to contact.

Other candidates to be determined:

Erkkila. Photographic book on Lanesville. Historic Lanesville. People and places. Jeff to investigate with Pru Fish's assistance.

567 Essex Ave.

Ellery house for leaded glass window front door?

Babson Inn. Inn was saved from demolition, thus eliminating a preservation threat. Owner agreed not to go forward with demolition. It was the developer's decision. Residents of the neighborhood presented their case to save the structure to the developer and city council. GHC members consulted.

6. **Other Business**

Cemetery Advisories Committee (CAC), Sandy Barry, Chair

The CAC meets at 5/5:30 in City Hall, just before the GHC, on the last Monday of the month. They either meet on the first or third floor. All are welcome to attend, the agenda is published one week before the meeting. David is our official liaison.

The committee has been awarded \$6,326 from SHRAB Preservation Grants for Veteran's Collections. The money will be used for veteran headstone repair and restoration. The grant has to be matched with cash and/or in-kind funds. The Mass Historical Commission's project notification form (PNF) for cemeteries (Clark and First Parish) restoration project has been accepted.

Mass Historical is very interested in the ongoing work in the historic cemeteries.

The committee has been in contact with Richard Clark about Clark Cemetery.

Sandy says the CAC is hoping for a \$9.5k grant from the CPC to restore many historic gravestones that do not belong to veterans.

Sandy also reports the committee met with Mike Hale in the DPW. As a result, they are exploring the idea of developing a five-year plan with the CPC, so they don't have to do grant applications every year.

A lot has been accomplished at Clark and First Parish cemeteries. An end of year Mayor's report was sent to the DPW, GHC, and all City Councilors. Mike Hale will attach this report to his own and send to the Mayor. The report covers the 5 months since the committee has been in session (September 2016 through January 2017).

Kettle Cove Cemetery came up. Jude will explore, find out more about it. It's thought to be in Magnolia.

There are 3 people on the committee and a 4th person wants to join, she'd like to be appointed as Alternate to Comm. She will write to the Mayor since the committee has approved. She's building us a database that will be searchable on-line.

Jude Seminara has given the committee a lot of historical data which they'd like to include on the CPC city website. They are still working out the site layout. When the CAC works out the design and loads content they will share with the GHC.

7. Stalled Initiatives. Will be added to next Agenda.

Landmarks

Demolition Delay

Meeting House Green signage

New House Plaques