

**Gloucester Historical Commission**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**29 January 2018**

Present: Mary Ellen Lepionka, Bill Remsen, Jude Seminara, Sandy Barry, Holly Clay

1. Acceptance Of 18 December Minutes: Approved unanimously  
November 14 HDC/GHC Meeting Minutes are posted on GHC site
2. Public Business not on Agenda
  - a. GHC received official notice of reimbursement to City for its \$15,000 advance on expenses of FY2016 Survey and Planning Grant
  - b. GHC received an initial archeological data report on PAL's (Public Archeology Laboratory) study of the Marine Railway, granite walls, etc. The report is also posted on the National Grid website.  
*Link: Gloucestermgpsite.com.* The final version is upcoming. The GHC will endeavor to share the report/link with stakeholders like Maritime Gloucester, DPW, Community Development.
  - c. American Legion Building/Old Town "house" Hall. A meeting is scheduled for 30 January with DPW's Mike Hale to discuss grant applications for repair and preservation of this historic structure. Legion officials Mark Nestor and Sandra Key will attend. The state Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) grant asks applicants to list the city's architect; attendees will discuss this and other details related to the application. Legion will apply for CPA grant.
  - d. Tercentennial Signs to be found as per request from Mary Hafferty at DOT: Three of four have been located. (Annisquam, Champlain's on Rocky Neck, Stage Fort Park Mass Bay Colony (settlement) Sign. #23, "first house," is missing.
  - e. Health and Safety versus cultural landscape in public spaces. Bill brought up thoughts about public markers and barriers for hazardous situations, asking how these can be both effective and aesthetically/historically in keeping with built environment. A missing guard rail between River Road and Lobster Cove could be replaced by a stone wall. Federal guidelines and engineering specs will most likely dictate a steel or jersey barrier. Mary Ellen suggests the DPW will make the best, middle of the road decision
3. Update FY 2017 Dogtown Archaeological Survey. PAL, the archaeological firm contracted to conduct the survey has received the official permit from MHC.
4. Stage Fort Park & FY 2018 Survey and Planning Grant matching funds. The MHC did not grant the GHC funds for FY 2018 Survey and Planning, however GHC did receive matching funds which could be returned or put to use for archaeological work in Stage Fort Park.  
  
+Matching Funds. Robert Babson and Matt Babson gave the GHC \$7,500 in matching funds and are willing to repurpose the money for a report and National Register nomination application. Mary Ellen will bring their check to Kenny Costa to set up account with \$7500. The GHC will contract

with historic preservation expert Wendy Frontiero who previously conducted much of the relevant research.

+Mary Ellen will discuss use of the second half of the matching funds, \$7500, with the anonymous donor.

+The GHC is meeting with Mass Historical on Feb 23 to learn why the MHC did not grant Gloucester funds for FY 2018. MHC also did not accept Stage Fort Park as eligible for National Register nomination; MHC stated an archaeological survey is required as the foundation of such an application.

+An archaeological study of Stage Fort Park is nevertheless planned. The RFP (request for proposal) for the project was posted. Work should start on Apr 6 and finish Oct 1. The study was triggered by concern about landscaping plans (CPC grant to Stage Fort Park Committee) that could move earth without attention to the foundation and successive layers of valuable historical material.

+ National Register Nomination for Stage Fort Park. The February meeting with the MHC will determine whether Wendy Frontiero must wait until the autumn completion of the archeological survey to submit National Register nomination papers for Stage Fort Park.

+Holly (CPC rep) will ask Debbie Laurie (CPC and Community Development Department) to set up a meeting for all Stage Fort Park stakeholders to discuss goals, plans, and concerns.

5. MPPF Grant for Legion. At 30 January meeting with DPW, GHC, Mark Nestor and Sandra Key will discuss pros and cons of applying for the state grant. The City will need to complete the technical portions of the application and front the funds that the grant will ultimately reimburse.

Bill suggested that the MHC's refusal of survey and planning funds may be related to Gloucester's ability/inability to follow up with preservation efforts. For example, unlike other Massachusetts cities, Gloucester has no paid preservation staff. GHC members concur that a preservation commitment letter/document from the City and/or the DPW may be in order.

Mayor Romeo-Theken forwarded grant opportunity information from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to the GHC. An NEH challenge (capital) grant allows for up to \$175,000. March deadline. Complications related to the application, as well as required technical information, would make writing such a grant difficult.

5. Meeting Landmarks & Website subcommittee. Sandy and Mary Ellen. Website: categories will include Survey & Planning Reports ('15 and '16 are up), Preservation Awards ('15, '16, '17 and criteria are up), National Register Districts and reports for Rocky Neck and Dogtown, Links.

GHC members will review current website as exists. IN the meantime Sandy is still populating the site and will let us know when published. +Landmarks Word templates were developed using pictures of buildings with numbers to point out features. Mary Ellen is considering applying for a grant to get assistance on photography and/or page layout. Application would be made for roughly \$2,000 from Essex National Heritage, with a \$2,000 match.

6. Updates.
  - a. Candidates for 2018 Preservation Awards: There are six possible nominees at present.
  - b. Candidates for new single-property or streetscape local historic districts. No ideas
  - c. Cemetery Advisory Committee meeting minutes distributed. The National Park Service is returning for another two-day, hands-on workshop.  
Gloucester Schools projects: AP English teacher wants to incorporate cemeteries.
  - d. Dogtown Advisory Committee meeting. Did not meet.
  - e. Community Preservation Committee meeting. CPC notes that a meeting of Stage Fort Park stakeholders would straighten out confusion about archaeological study, CPC-funded landscaping project and plans for the 400<sup>th</sup>.
7. The GHC is recruiting new members. Potential new members include Peter Lawrence & Richard Jabba.

Adjourn

Next Meeting: Tuesday February 27, 2018