

NANTUCKET TOWN AREA PLAN WORK GROUP
Meeting Of January 4, 2022
DRAFT MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Chair Henry Terry called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm

Attending: Liz Almodobar, Mary Anne Easley, Regen Horchow, Mary Longacre, Lee Saperstein, and Henry Terry.

Absent: Marsha Fader, Alison King, and Mickey Rowland.

There was a quorum at all times.

Mary Longacre read the official notice about remote meetings and the fact of the meeting being recorded. Henry Terry reported that the work group will meet, in addition to the first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 pm, on the third Friday at 4:00 pm; thus, the next meeting will be Friday, January 21, 2022, at 4:00 pm.

Approval of the draft minutes for the meeting of December 7, 2021, was moved by Regen Horchow, seconded by Mary Longacre, and approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Henry Terry then asked if there were any subcommittee reports. Lee Saperstein said that he and Mary Longacre had met by Zoom conference and discussed a number of issues connected to circulation, which includes traffic and parking. He acknowledged that there was overlap among circulation and other subcommittees over sidewalks and pedestrian safety open space and recreation, commercial enterprises, and housing. He said that a broad approach was good for initial discussions and that specific issues can be re-assigned as the plan is written.

He noted several key issues that they discussed, including paid parking and forms of payment, parking on sidewalks, and the construction of parking garages. In terms of traffic, they discussed also considerations of street widening, rotaries, and the possibility of additional one-way streets that can be used to direct traffic in loops while reducing the potential for jams and even accidents. Mary Longacre took notes and a copy of them is appended. While not reaching many conclusions, they did agree that there was no support for a parking structure.

At this point, the work group opened a general discussion of the issues. Regen asked if we need to propose codification of rules for parking on sidewalks. She felt that the Town Area Plan should give a high priority to sidewalks, their design, maintenance, and safety. Liz Almodobar reminded the group that the land-use planning subcommittee had submitted a progress report that followed on from her submission at the November meeting; it is attached.

Henry Terry acknowledged that the subcommittee on open space and recreation still had a way to go. He noted that the subcommittee would look at spaces that could be acquired for the public interest or those that exist but are in need of protection. Mary Anne Easley commented that the existing Salt Marsh Center building and grounds would be a good place for a park if the center relocates. Lee Saperstein said that the same potential exists for Our Island Home. Mary Longacre asked about protection for Stone Alley. Lee Saperstein said that the alley is under consideration by the Select Board for taking as a public way.

At this point, Mary Longacre reviewed her proposal to the Select Board on a scheme to change people's driving habits and, thereby, reduce demand on parking spaces. The subcommittee reached no conclusion on the proposal; it is included here for review by the entire work group. She said also that residents should be asked for their opinions on drafts of the area plan. Lee Saperstein concurred and suggested that several open hearings would be in order but that a draft plan needed to come first.

At 4:52 pm, Mary Longacre moved adjournment, Regen Horchow agreed, and the entire group concurred.

For reference: Subcommittee composition.

2. Land Use: Liz Almodobar and Mary Anne Easley
3. Housing: Marsha Fader and Mickey Rowland
4. Economic Development: Alison King and Mary Longacre
5. Natural and Cultural Resources: Liz Almodobar and Marsha Fader
6. Open Space and Recreation Plan: Mary Anne Easley and Henry Terry
7. Services and Facilities: Regen Horchow and Mickey Rowland
8. Circulation; Mary Longacre and Lee Saperstein

TOWN AREA PLAN WORKGROUP TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION, PARKING & CIRCULATION

Mary Longacre, note taker, and Lee Saperstein, Zoom Meeting of December 12, 2021.

PARKING

- no parking garage structures
- paid parking? Any parking restrictions should be easy to understand, not complex
- parking on sidewalks (currently illegal but unenforced)
- should there be parking on sidewalks specifically allowed on certain streets, identified by signage?
- should there be guidelines on how to park on the sidewalk without completely obstructing pedestrian passage?
- could the Town acquire or lease the in-street parking spaces owned by 56 Union St?
- could the Town acquire or lease the parking lot on Cherry St (belongs to the Knights of Columbus?)
- parking shuttle to bring people into Town from satellite parking lots?
- does/should 'Building with Nantucket in Mind' provide design guidelines for parking space on private property?
- using on-street parking spaces for long-term storage of vehicles impacts the residential neighborhoods. (Current regulations prohibit parking for more than 96 consecutive hours.)
- signage

TRANSPORTATION

- what mode of transportation should be prioritized in the Town Area?
 - Pedestrians
 - Cyclists
 - Public Transportation
 - Cars
 - Trucks
- sidewalk improvements
- multi-use paths, including connections/extensions to existing paths
- road width (narrower in some places, wider in others)
- taking of private roads and ensuring public access
 - Stone Alley

-policies for planting trees to not obstruct sidewalks, and encouraging trees to be planted in appropriate locations

-protecting trees already planted in sidewalks and in the roadside right-of-way

CIRCULATION

-are there intersections which need upgraded traffic management?

-5 corners (Pleasant, West York, Atlantic)

-6 corners (Atlantic, Prospect, Vesper, Surfside, Sparks, Williams)

-Bartlett Rd at Surfside (outside our area but impacts it)

-Monument Square (Main, Gardner, Milk)

-Caton Circle (Main, Quaker, Madaket)

-Francis at Washington

-should we consider loops of one-way streets, such as Gardner-West Chester-New Lane-Main, or Pleasant-Atlantic-Sparks-Williams?

-should any streets be recommended for a change to one-way use?

-Mt Vernon Ave

-truck routes & accommodating truck traffic

-what is the distribution of vehicle trips to Town including: short shopping trips; commuting to jobs in Town; deliveries/services to in-Town locations; and vehicles traveling through Town between other starting and destination points?

-signage

Nantucket Town Area Plan
Land Use Plan Work Group
Progress Report

Mary Ann Easley & Elizabeth Almodobar
1/4/2022

Land Use Plan: Identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location, and interrelationship of public and private uses. The element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land-use plan map illustrating the land-use policies of the municipality shall be included.

- The Town Area Plan seeks to maintain vitality in the Town Area while protecting its historic resources. The Town area is not a vitrified museum, yet life in the Town should respect its history. Residential life should be protected. Many portions of the Town area are built out to capacity.
- The 2009 Master Plan identified the R-1 zoning district as a district to be phased out. The process is to review each property individually and then determine the most appropriate district. Any properties currently within the R-1 zoning district will need to be reviewed and evaluated.
- Planning and Land Use Services (PLUS) is trying to align the Old Historic District (OHD) and the Residential Old Historic (ROH) whenever possible. The timeline for the zoning transition has not been determined. The end goal is to analyze the subject lots and determine which district is most appropriate. Then the properties are moved individually to one of the following zoning districts: ROH, R-5, or R-5L (R-5 is limited to only one structure) depending upon the best fit. These types of zoning changes require the approval from Town Meeting.
- Based on existing conditions the ROH Ground Cover was already reduced from 50% to 40 %. They have discussed reducing the height for the Sconset Old Historic District (SOH), but not the ROH district. There are many two-story buildings both historic and modern, that reach the 30 ft limitation. SOH - village overlay districts are smaller one-story structures and the 25-ft limit is in keeping.
- There is a moratorium on pools in the ROH district.
- In 2021 there was a Planning Board proposal to prohibit pools on lots sizes under 7,500 square feet in the R-1, SR-1, R-5 and R-5L zoning districts, primarily those immediately outside the downtown area and Sconset village, and establish a 10-foot rear-yard setback, passed with a two-thirds majority

For more information on zoning, www.Nantucket-ma.gov click on the top toolbar and search for Code on the side toolbar. Also attached please find the map delineating the Town area, the Nantucket Zones

with Intensity Rules (highlighted accordingly), The Town of Nantucket Zoning Use Chart and the Town of Nantucket GIS Map Sheet with Island Zones.

Nantucket Zoning Bylaw – Chapter 139 of the Code of the Town of Nantucket

<https://ecode360.com/11471474>

- Definitions – Section 2A
- Use Chart – Section 7A
- <https://ecode360.com/attachment/NA0948/NA0948-139a%20reference%20page.pdf>
- Height – Section 17
- Groundcover for pre-existing nonconforming lots – Section 33E(1)
- Residential Swimming Pools – cross-reference use chart and definitions of “swimming pool – residential” and “hot tub/spa”.

HDC misc. info including “Building with Nantucket in Mind” and other resources:

<https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/283/Historic-District-Commission>

- Many Historic homes lie outside of the ROH or the HDC’s OHD. Perhaps TAP should explore broadening the OHD and exploring a new definition of the OHD and defining historic priorities by zone.

Sconset Area Plan

2. LAND USE

The Land Use plan element identifies present land use and designates the proposed distribution, location, and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. This element shall relate the proposed standards of population density and building intensity to the capacity of land available or planned facilities and services. A land-use plan map illustrating the land-use policies of the municipality shall be included. The ‘Sconset land use map and the zoning code can be found in Exhibit 2.

Land use recommendations for ‘Sconset include:

-2-

2.1 Zoning changes in 2013 and 2019 created a VN (village neighborhood) zone to preserve the commercial core of the village. SAP recommends exploring additional ways to strengthen this essential commercial core by encouraging owners to ensure through deeds, easements, restrictions, or bequests that buildings keep their commercial status.

2.2 The Siasconset Old Historic zoning boundary issues on Broadway, Front Street, and Codfish Park were clarified at the 2020 Annual Meeting (as requested in the 2007 plan) with the endorsement of the ‘Sconset Trust.

2.3 SAP recommends making the boundaries of ‘Sconset consistent on the maps to be used for Planning and Land Use Services (PLUS), Sconset Advisory Board (SAB), and the Historic District Commission (HDC) is defined to be the area bounded by the North, East, and South by the shoreline of Nantucket Island and on the West by a straight line running from the eastern edge of Sesachacha Pond to the eastern edge of Tom Nevers pond.

2.4 SAP recommends the use of height restrictions in zoning guidelines depending on density and neighborhood architectural characteristics. SOH height restrictions should be 24 feet.

2.5 SAP recommends retaining the standards including the density of the SR-1 district when changed to SR-5.

2.6 SAP recommends square footage of swimming pools be included in ground cover calculations for all

zones. SAP endorses the existing prohibition of pools in the SOH zone and lots under 7,500 square feet. All lots should comply with the 10-foot side and rear setback requirements.

2.7 SAP understands that the Town Master Plan recommends the denser built portions of 'Sconset be considered a Town Overlay District (SOH, SR1, SR10, SR10) and keep the larger properties of 40,000 square feet (LUG-1) on the perimeter of the village as a Country Overlay District. A subarea of the Country Overlay District could be labeled a Village Overlay district where limited commercial activity may take place, where infrastructure may be available and where there are dense developments of less than one acre than other areas in the Country Overlay District.

DRAFT

DOWNTOWN PARKING MANAGEMENT CONCEPT FOR NANTUCKET

A Proposal from Mary Longacre

Select Board Strategic Goal: “improve parking turnover in our vibrant Old Historic District”

- Launch a Downtown parking management system based on demand management principles that achieves (or is measured by) 85% occupancy of public parking spaces.
- Shift the mode of choice of commuters from driving alone to using other modes by 6%.

The paid parking via kiosk system currently being examined has the drawbacks of being incompatible with our historic character and the risk of putting the burden on all taxpayers to pay for the installation and ongoing cost of software, equipment, and maintenance, as well as collections costs for the parking fees, if the parking fees aren't able to cover the cost of the system. Thus, even someone who doesn't drive in Town could be paying for the costs of Downtown parking management, which seems unfair.

I have an alternative proposal that does not carry significant up-front costs or require any special equipment and can be easily tested in a pilot next summer to determine whether it is effective. It is also not paid parking – parking remains free, a big plus for ease of adoption.

Parking Management by alternating restricted days when cars are permitted in the Downtown parking zones. (footnotes at the end)

Most¹ cars have inspection stickers. This plan would restrict cars² to certain days for parking in the Downtown parking zones³ based on their month⁴ of inspection renewal as shown on their inspection sticker.

SUNDAY	No restrictions
MONDAY	Group A no parking during parking enforcement hours
TUESDAY	Group B no parking during parking enforcement hours
WEDNESDAY	No restrictions
THURSDAY	Group A no parking during parking enforcement hours
FRIDAY	Group B no parking during parking enforcement hours
SATURDAY	No restrictions

People would be encouraged to combine their errands and plan their trips for the days which their car is allowed to park, resulting in fewer trips into Town, which also has the benefit of reducing traffic island-wide. On days when their car isn't allowed to park, they have the option of coming to Town using alternate transportation – bus, taxi, rideshare, carpooling, cycling, etc. In a 2 car household, there would still be an incentive for the 2 drivers to ride together in whichever car was eligible⁵ that day for parking. People who work in Town could buddy up with someone who has a car with the opposite schedule and agree to cooperate by using only one car at a time instead of each driving their own car. However, since no-one would have to give up more than 2 days a week of parking, it's hard to see this restriction as a significant burden. Note that the restriction doesn't prevent you from driving Downtown, only from parking during the existing parking enforcement hours of 8 am to 7 pm. So you would still be able to drop off and pick up passengers during the day, or park in Town in the evenings. While dropoff/pickup doesn't reduce trips or traffic, it does reduce parking, so that choice is still a

positive effect. People who work in Town might also schedule to work from home on their 'no-parking' days if their job allows that.

The pilot program (and any parking management program) should have a measurement system to determine if there is better parking availability or reduced traffic on the M/T/Th/F days when parking is restricted. Weekends are unrestricted for the pilot since so many activities are only on one day of the weekend. Wednesdays are unrestricted to encourage people to shift their activities to mid-week, away from the peak Mondays⁶ and Fridays for traffic (and also to provide a balance between the two Groups.) If the pilot is successful, the restrictions could be expanded to more days of the week.

Other than the measurement system, all that would be needed to launch the program is public education and sign modifications⁷. Violations would be clear-cut for any vehicle in the wrong Group parked Downtown. Time limited parking zones and other infractions would continue to be ticketed as well, with no changes to existing regulations. The Police Chief could advise on which category of violation this restriction would fall in, using the existing schedule of fines.

I envision the pilot running from June 1st to Sept 30th, 2022, during the summer parking enforcement season, with a two week 'warning' period from June 1-14 where instead of a ticket, a flyer explaining the parking system is placed on cars in the wrong Group parked Downtown to remind them of the restrictions. (Conveniently, June 15 is a Wednesday, so the enforcement starts with a balanced week.) Real Estate agents could be encouraged to communicate the system to tenants, car rental agencies to tell their customers, and property managers to notify their seasonal clients. If the parking restriction information could be added to maps (maybe by providing stickers to go on the maps so the maps don't need to be re-printed) that could be helpful too.

In contrast to the Parking Management System concept by Nelson/Nygaard in 2011, this system is easy to understand and doesn't require the driver to monitor what regulations are in effect at different times of the day, track the amount of time their car has been parked, or move their car. You either get to park using the familiar time limits already posted on the signs, or you don't get to park at all on the two days a week your Group is not allowed to park in Town. There are only two Groups, and drivers can easily determine which Group they are in. The identifier can't be moved from one car to another since the inspection sticker is semi-permanently attached and required to remain in place. The inspection sticker is also easy for the parking enforcement personnel to find and check. Also, many city-dwellers are familiar with not being able to park on certain days of the week to allow street sweepers or trash trucks to come through, so this would be a familiar concept for some visitors.

This proposal is simple to understand, it tests whether people will change their behavior, and it can be implemented without capital expenditures, without making changes to Nantucket's historic environment or way of life, and without adding infrastructure and bureaucracy. If successful, it should result in less competition for parking spaces on 4 weekdays, and hopefully also help shift people to non-auto transportation.

FOOTNOTES

¹ All of the northeastern states require vehicle inspections. 18 southern and western states do not, most notably Florida. Cars with license plates from those states that don't have inspection stickers would be exempt from the pilot. If the pilot is successful, ways to include these cars can be added (for instance simply assigning the car to a Group based on the state could work.)

² Commercial vehicles would be exempt from restrictions during the pilot. The pilot would be limited to non-commercial vehicles to avoid disrupting trades and businesses. The intent is not to perfectly identify apply the concept to every car, but to test whether applying it would make a measurable difference. The initial idea is to target personal vehicle use only, but if successful, the program could be expanded to add passenger vehicles with commercial registrations (including pickup trucks and SUVs) since many of them are used in a personal manner. Vehicles with trailers (i.e. landscapers) might continue to be exempt.

³ If the pilot program includes the 2 hr. parking zone, and I think it would have to, then cars with residential parking stickers (including temporary Guest House/Hotel parking permits) would still be able to park on any day in that zone, as they are now, ignoring the Group A/Group B restrictions too.

⁴ Initially it might be easiest to pick the 'even' months for one Group and the 'odd' months for the other Group. However, it would be worth checking to see how many local cars have inspections in each month of the year so that the Groups could be balanced for the number of cars in each. Perhaps the RMV or Don Allen could provide that data.

⁵ If a person needed to have an opposite schedule from what their car was eligible for, it would be an easy matter to simply get their car inspected in the correct month for that schedule. It wouldn't be a cost burden because they would have to pay for the inspection annually anyway. It might only result in an accelerated inspection. At the same time, it would be impractical to try to game the system by frequently getting new inspection stickers to switch Groups.

⁶ The only Monday holiday in the Summer is Labor Day, which does not usually have parking problems Downtown. If this system were in place year-round, the prevalence of Mondays as holidays might cause an adjustment to keep the restrictions balanced between Group A and Group B. Or the unrestricted weekday might be changed from Wednesday to Monday so that Monday holidays are always free days.

⁷ For sign modifications, I would add something like "Group A: No parking Monday & Thursday; Group B: No Parking Tuesday & Friday" to each parking sign that is already in place. It might be done with a sticker for the pilot so that it wouldn't be a permanent alteration.