



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Resilient Nantucket

2 Fairgrounds Road
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554

www.nantucket-ma.gov

Commissioners: Raymond Pohl (Chair), Diane Coombs (Vice-chair), John McLaughlin, Abigail Camp, Vallorie Oliver,
Associate Commissioners: Stephen Welch, Jessie Dutra, Carrie Thornewill

~~ MINUTES ~~

Friday, February 12, 2021

*This meeting was held via remote participation using ZOOM and YouTube,
Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Regarding Open Meeting Law*

Called to order at 1:06 p.m. and announcements by Mr. Welch.

Staff in attendance: Cathy Flynn, HDC Compliance Coordinator; Holly Backus, Preservation Planner; Terry Norton, Town Minutes Taker
Attending Members: Coombs, McLaughlin, Camp, Oliver, Welch, Thornewill
Absent Members: Pohl, Dutra
Late Arrivals: Camp, 1:09 p.m.; Coombs, 1:23 p.m.
Early Departures: None

Agenda adopted by unanimous consent.

Motion **Motion to Approve as drafted. (Oliver)**
Roll-call Vote Carried 4-0//Oliver, Thornewill, McLaughlin, and Welch-aye

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

II. REVIEW & POSSIBLE ADOPTION

Documentation Draft Building with Nantucket in Mind (BWNIM) Resilient Nantucket: Flooding Adaptation & Building Elevation Design Guidelines
Consultants Phil Thomason, Thomason & Associates, consultants
Lisa Craig, The Craig Group
Kimberly Rose, The Craig Group
Public Speakers Hillary Rayport, Chair Nantucket Historical Commission Chair
Mary Longacre, Coastal Resiliency Advisory Committee Chair
Discussion **Backus** – This is pursuant to an MVP grant.
Craig – Provided information on the forum, which is the last activity tied to the grant. Further information will be posted on the Town website.
Thomason – Provided a detailed walk-through of the draft guidelines for protecting structures from sea-level rise. Looking to have the final form for a meeting next month.
Opened to questions, changes, and comments.
Welch – Suggested focusing on pages 90-95, which are elevations and strategies. If there is time, we can discuss format and timeline. It would be nice to have 5 more illustrations of additional and hybrid strategies.
Oliver – Calling this BWNIM makes me think it's the HDC guidelines; asked if it is to be integrated into HDC's guidelines.
Backus – This is to be an addendum to BWNIM and follow National Park Service guidelines.
Rayport – Whatever goes into the guidelines, should be buildable; she's concerned about broad statements. Raising the elevations will be attractive because it will enhance the owner's views; but it might become an issue because they will overpower their neighbors. Asked if the commissioners want to take a stand on wet or dry flood proofing over raising the structure.
Welch – He's hopeful that there will be broader discussion into what and how this is integrated into BWNIM. It's a good strong start and Ms. Rayport's context is relevant.
Thornewill – In terms of having choices in certain zones; FEMA requires certain elevations depending on where you are.
Welch – Base on Massachusetts Building Code there are certain requirement with respect to the flood zone. The topic will come up that we as a commission will want to visit in more depth, outside the grant funding timeline, to determine if supplemental funding is available so that this is quality of product driven and not driven by a timeline. One thing that would be helpful is to have what's required under State building code and what of that has latitude available in the core district and old historic district (OHD).
Thornewill – Thinking about the OHD, you can't raise all those structures; but she loves the bulkhead idea, especially on commercial buildings.

Welch – There are areas we can strengthen information gathering.

Coombs – We aren't considering the importance of cost and how the owners will pay for what is being asked. There doesn't seem to be any relief; we have to be careful not to make it impossible to do this. We need to know the ramifications of what we vote on.

Welch – We at the HDC don't have the authority to mandate changes to an existing structure unless it is an application before us. He would hate for people to think the purpose of this is to subscribe to a certain performance by a certain date. These are guidance on how to make aesthetic, historically appropriate changes with resources to help defray costs. This is a complex problem. That's why he wants to spread out the deadline for discussion on some of these broader topics.

Craig – The point about affordability is well made; but sometimes historic properties have the option for exemption from meeting substantial improvement to FEMA flood requirements. If you're doing improvements valued at more than 2% of the value to a structure, you are required to meet the base elevation above freeboard plus 1 foot. If a structure is contributing, it is exempt; but if you want a more reasonable flood insurance premium, you have to meet that FEMA guideline. The next phase is to look at policy changes you might need to put in place locally and financial aid.

Oliver – Loves the renderings of houses before and after; it reads very clearly, especially for people who have trouble visualizing the changes. We were talking about hard surfaces for parking and accessibility, which is a conundrum in itself; however, she feels this is another reason not to have pools within a certain circumference of Town as another hard surface that creates issues. She will email her suggestions.

Welch – Suggested that if we submit comments, we send them to Ms. Backus, who is point on this project.

Camp – She likes addressing the Island as a whole. She doesn't understand why the whole Island isn't being considered for armoring especially the harbor waterfront. Asked how much the Town is considering and helping.

Backus – This is why she is very happy the Craig Group is part of the coastal resilience process; the guidelines will be integrated into the overall Coastal Resiliency Plan (CRP). The Town has set aside funding for that. We have had community outreach and gone through charrettes. She'd like to see commissioner comments on the draft.

Camp – It's nice to know the Town is listening. There's a trend we are seeing, over hardscaping; no one wants a lawn anymore. This provides us backbone for requiring more permeable surfaces.

Oliver – Appreciates this has been in the process; but if it is under our auspices, we need more time to digest it. We should discuss this as a board.

Welch – That is what he was trying to say; there should be additional input. If we need to finalize or tweak or expand things, we would need to continue the discussion to provide more input.

Backus – We have until the end of June under the MVP Grant. That gives us time to flesh this out before it has to be formally adopted by the HDC. The State has been helpful in allowing us to revise our timeframe and scope; our consultants have been very understanding with that.

Thomason – We wanted to get to the Island by late Spring, early Summer, but the quarantine interfered. The draft can be looked at for as long as you want. The intent was to provide an opportunity for an initial review to see what type of content is in the guidelines; in weeks to come, we can move to discuss it in a more detailed manner as to additions or deletions. This is a work in progress.

Longacre – The CRP is in development and covers the entire Island to include Tuckernuck and Muskeget. Encouraged the HDC commissioners to participate in the CRP process; Ms. Backus can send out the link to their webpage where commissioners can sign up to receive notifications of meetings, which will continue through the Summer. Only looking at the OHD for flood prevention is not sufficient; we have to look at protecting the entire historic downtown, so we don't have to raise structure 5 to 6 feet.

Thornewill – We're looking for hard and fast answers; the suggestions are great at providing answers to hard questions. It's a good start.

Coombs – One thing that's important to keep in mind, when we're reviewing applications, is the responsibility being placed on HDC. A month ago, she filled out a survey on resilience; she hoped that was included in the consideration of the CRP.

Longacre – There are multiple organizations addressing coastal resiliency at this time. ReMain produced a survey, for which we are trying to schedule a presentation at one of our meetings; its results will be revealed to the public. The Advisory Committee will be putting out its own surveys through an app.

Welch – There is appetite for further discussion on how to tie this into the existing structure of BWNIM and there is a request for additional illustrations. Asked if it's possible to do another meeting in early March.

Backus – Another meeting is scheduled for March 12. If there is interest, she can look for another timeslot for a meeting in which to work out the details.

Welch – Asked Ms. Backus to do that. This is a topic with far reaching affect. We appreciate the work of our consultants to create a foundation. We can fortify that foundation and come up with solutions.

Continued to a date to be determined.

Motion
Roll-call Vote

n/a

Adjournment:

Motion **Motion to adjourn at 2:35 p.m. (McLaughlin)**

Roll-call Vote Carried unanimously//McLaughlin, Oliver, Thornewill, Camp, Coombs, and Welch-aye

Submitted by:

Terry L. Norton