



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

2 Fairgrounds Road  
Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554  
[www.nantucket-ma.gov](http://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, March 5, 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 1:00 p.m. and announcements by Mr. Pohl

Staff in attendance: Cathy Flynn, HDC Compliance Coordinator; Holly Backus, Preservation Planner  
Attending Members: Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver, Welch, Thornewill  
Absent Members: McLaughlin, Dutra  
Late Arrivals: None  
Early Departures: Welch, 2:08 p.m.

Agenda adopted by unanimous consent.

Motion **Motion to Approve the agenda. (Coombs)**

Roll-call Vote Carried // Oliver, Coombs, Camp, Carrie, and Pohl-aye

## I. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Streamlining Zoom meetings.

Voting Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver

Alternates Welch, Thornewill

Documentation Audio-visual presentation; Town Agendas and Minutes website

Concerns (1:04) **Oliver** – HDC members are struggling with the ZOOM format; from her perspective, she thinks if we do a couple things, that will speed up the meetings. First, preparation is key for board members: we get the packets on Friday before the meeting, which allows time to review the projects and make notes; also, she will continue to provide photographs for those who can't get out to view projects. Looking at all items ahead of time will mitigate concerns about new dwellings and additions going on the consent agenda. Second, the Zoom format presents challenges: when someone is presenting their project, what we are seeing doesn't coincide with what's being said; the applicant should take control of the screen during their presentation; changes made due to sub-committee recommendations, should be reviewed at the following meeting because the committee makes a recommendation the representative agrees with but plans without those changes have already been submitted. Lastly, it is imperative for applicants and agents to have everything they need at every meeting, so we don't spend time looking for something we don't have; if the board is repeated requesting major changes, coming back with incremental changes is a waste of everyone's time.

**Pohl** – We are so far behind with a backlog that is getting worse; this could help process more applications per meeting. He would add is sticking to the topic we is in our purview to review: not specific plants, noise, shade, etc.

**Thornewill** – At the beginning of each application, Staff could read the height, color, information off the application.

**Camp** – She's concerned about new dwellings and swimming pools on consent. Though you are looking at items and are conscientious about putting them on consent, she feels bad about approving new dwelling on consent.

**Pohl** – Ms. Oliver's point is that if you have a concern, you can prereview the agenda and the application; if it continues to be a concern, raise that at the meeting.

**Camp** – Regarding our backlog, she's given up trying to race through stuff, so we don't get things wrong. She is looking at how we can best serve the Island during a time of incredible growth.

**Coombs** – She understand what Ms. Camp is saying; we have to give some respect to the application for a new dwelling rather than approving on consent. We should have a chance to talk about it.

**Welch** – He agrees with Ms. Oliver's comments that we would be well served to be prepared; that is showing respect for presenters and the process. Currently, we don't have time to discuss organizational issues which need our attention. Looking at the HDC Agendas & Minutes link on the Town website, explained and showed how to easy it is to open a packet. The problem he sees with the applicant bringing up information and plans possibly introduces new information that is confusing if an advisory board hasn't reviewed it. There is a hosting grant remote control, which allows control over a specific slide; that keeps information to what has been reviewed. Once in a while it is frustrating to prereview an application to find that what the applicant is sharing is different. Designing at the table, our role isn't to redesign at the table; the only time we should do that is if the application isn't understanding the concept we are trying to relate. Another point Ms. Oliver brought up, when

we get applications, our goal should be is that when an applicant comes before us it should be “one (meeting) and done.” With respect to plant materials to the extent we use it as screening, it is important we know what that plant material is.

**Pohl** – He agrees with Mr. Welch’s Leland Cyprus wall point; however, except where a plant material is being used to screen an architectural feature, we have no say over proposed plantings.

**Welch** – He isn’t suggesting including plant material as our purview, at this time; however, if we are approving an architectural element with screening, the expectation is that we are going to weigh in on it. That is a fair and reasonable approach.

**Pohl** – We are able to use landscape elements to screen architectural elements over which we have control.

**Welch** – Another point is cross talk, we need to try cutting down on that and politely encourage people from doing that. In this medium it is very difficult and makes it problematic for a variety of meetings.

**Thornewill** – Asked an appropriate way to have a comment responded to.

**Pohl** – It depends on the circumstances. Allowing cross talk can be discretionary depending on whether or not it is disrupting the meeting. There is a button that says “reactions” that has a hand up.

**Welch** – He wants to make distinction between having a discussion amongst the board members and the applicant and people talking over one another; the second is most problematic. The discussion gets emotional and we lose track of details. There are many applications where people present their case and they are done; the commission then proceeds with their questions followed by discussion. Encouraging that behavior will lead to more productive meetings.

**Camp** – The Arbor Vitae comes up a lot which deer turn into topiary.

**Pohl** – There is a difference between bringing up the points like that and someone’s preference. Also, Conservation Commission has their own set of what is approvable.

**Flynn** – Regarding screen sharing, if the applicant screens off the website, she knows we have than information in the office and is in the posted packet.

**Welch** – One thing he found useful is establishing action items. It might be a good idea that maybe we spend five minutes on that. Asked if anyone feels they can’t be prepared or manage cross talk or other details that they can’t accomplish or if it is a worthwhile goal.

**Camp** – Her brief point was that we spend a lot of time and she skips the views and reviews. She knows certain parts of the Island very well; everyone has the area they know best. Sometimes I don’t know where the project is.

**Coombs** – The ideas are good; we should try some of these ideas. If someone feels strongly about something, they should be able to say that.

**Oliver** – If everyone tries to be prepared, it will make a difference at the meeting.

**Thornewill** – About applications being changed between the advisory board meeting and the HDC meeting and us not having that updated information, suggested a rule, if an applicant decides to change something between the meetings, the application is pulled, and that new information resubmitted, so everything coordinates with what we see.

**Pohl** – The advisory board meeting times related to HDC meeting times is problematic because if an applicant makes changes based on the advisory board, they now have to wait for two weeks. We don’t always agree with HSAB.

**Thornewill** – If they don’t make the changes before HDC sees the application, they get to hear our view.

**Welch** – If it relates to screen sharing, except for de minimis changes, we should be looking at what the advisory board looked at and not the changes. It’s difficult if we’re not all looking at the same baseline. If someone has major changes based upon comments, they need to provide that information to be posted.

**Pohl** – You go to HSAB, they make recommendations, the official file is unchanged; if they make changes based upon advisory board comments, the screensharing allows them to present those changes for all to see.

## 2. HDC review of revisions to HDC Background Summary to finalize for web page including vote.

Voting	Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver, Welch
Alternates	Thornewill
Documentation	HDC Background Summary
Concerns (1:53)	<b>Welch</b> – Reviewed the posted draft of the HDC Background and Objectives, a summary of how and why HDC operates. We’ve all had a chance to review it. He’d like a motion to approve as submitted and posted on the website.
Motion	<b>Motion to Approve Nantucket HDC Background and Objectives Summary Mission Statement as submitted. (Welch)</b>
Roll-call Vote	Carried 5-0//Oliver, Coombs, Camp, Welch, and Pohl-aye

## 3. Discussion of additions and new dwelling added to the consent agenda.

Voting	Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver
Alternates	Welch, Thornewill
Documentation	None
Concerns (1:55)	<b>Pohl</b> – We touched on this earlier, the solution he thinks is most tenable is to allow houses and additions can be reviewed and placed on the Consent Agenda; Board members have concerns. The solution to concerns is to prereview those consent items to see if those concerns are founded or unfounded. <b>Coombs</b> – Something we have to think about is if a house is approved on Consent and the one commissioner who reviews and approves it going on Consent misses something that could be important. <b>Oliver</b> – What is not clear is that you have the ability to review the agenda beforehand, and if you have a concern, we can pull it off. The houses and additions going on Consent are small, tertiary dwellings or bump outs that wouldn’t take months to review.

**Camp** – She still has concerns. Sometimes she doesn't get to see something before the HDC meeting. Rather than stopping the meeting to look at the dwelling, she accepts it. If we were to take this to a vote, her conscience would be not to put dwellings and pools on consent.

**Welch** – He gets the points made, but it goes back to the underlying principal of being prepared. If Staff sends us the Consent link before each meeting, you can look at the pool or dwelling during the opening of the meeting. The use of the website allows that.

**Pohl** – We might want to put this to a vote. He doesn't believe there is anything that prohibits pools, houses, and additions from going on Consent. In theory, anything can go on Consent. In terms of practice, it is like an agreement that houses and additions would not go on Consent. For the benefit of those doing the Consent review, they should have a clear idea of what they should or should not be doing.

**Camp** – We won't always be the Board and she wants to be in a safe place.

**Welch** – Wonders if there might be further discussion in the future; there is nothing preventing them from being on Consent and nothing prevents commissioners from calling them out at the meeting. Suggested new dwellings in the core district don't go on Consent or pools don't go on consent would be worthy of further discussion.

Motion **No vote at this time.**

Roll-call Vote N/A

4. Review policy of Move/Demo in relation to new dwellings.

5. Discussion of Resilient Nantucket meeting

6. Hardscaping

Voting Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver

Alternates Welch, Thornewill

Concerns Concern expressed these three items will take time to discuss.

Motion **Held for discussion on Other Business**

Roll-call Vote N/A

### III. OLD BUSINESS

<u>Property owner name</u>	<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Scope of work</u>	<u>Map/Parcel</u>	<u>Agent</u>
1. 450 Green Park, LLC 09-1785	2 Stone Alley	Addition	42.3.1/102	Link

Voting Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver, Thornewill

Alternates None

Recused None

Documentation Architectural elevation plans, site plan, photos, correspondence, historic documentation, and advisory comments.

Representing Victoria Ewing, LINK

Chris Skehel, Castle Group

Paul Curtis, James D. Smith Architect

Public Sarah Alger, Sarah F. Alger P.C., for 1 Stone Alley

Ginger Andrews, 1 Stone Alley

Linda Williams, for Ginger Andrews

Steven Cohen, Cohen & Cohen Law P.C., for the Crosbys at 9 Union Street

Mary Bergman, Nantucket Preservation Trust Executive Director

Concerns (2:08) **Ewing** – Reviewed changes made per previous concerns.

**Backus** – Circa 1853 to 1871, originally a barn and converted to a house by Eliza Codd, MIT female architect; revisions don't provide previous submittal for comparison; footprint seems to be pushed back but the addition dramatically alters the north elevation and should be very simple; grading plan is not clear; north elevation 3<sup>rd</sup>-floor dormer is odd. Read into the record, emails of comments from HSAB members: Micky Rowland, Brook Meerbergen, and Angus MacLeod. Read into the record a comment about the Landscaping. Read into the record comments from Mary Bergman, Nantucket Preservation Trust. The comments are available in the office.

**Williams** – The presentation ignores that over the past 3½ years with a lack of attention to requested changes: move to the south, simplify, oversized, 3 floors of glass, over fenestrated; cutting the grade, and sunroom not in original location. Asked this go back to HSAB for a formal recommendation so the public can participate. The history that the original building is wrong; this is the original barn; the house has remained untouched since Ms. Codd converted it. Feel many assertions the representative made are not accurate. They need to go south and do something more sympathetic to the original structure.

**Alger** – This application is an example of where changes have been incremental and not responsive to commission concerns. It should be denied. The proposed changes are not responsive to previous concerns. The addition overwhelms the original structure and Stone Alley and Union Street. It doesn't mirror the simple architecture of the original structure. As a whole, it is inappropriate for this location and the historic structure.

**Cohen** – The HDC has asked repeatedly that the addition go north to south and the existing structure preserved. This goes east to west and overwhelms the original structure. It has been a shameful waste of everyone's time with no concerns for HDC and neighbors. The addition should not go downhill and interfere with the original structure. Feels the application should be denied; they can always reapply.

**Andrews** – The applicant has failed to understand the wit and cleverness Ms. Codd used to design the house so that as you come up Stone Alley, it still presents as a barn. Asked the Commission to consider the place Ms. Codd played in Nantucket

architecture. The house this is compared to is an 18<sup>th</sup> century double house and not an appropriate comparison. This has been mostly unchanged since 1848. Feels the setbacks as delineated on the plans is incorrect.

**Bergman** – No additional comments.

**Curtis** – He’s here to answer questions.

**Skehel** – According to the Library of Congress, the barn was taken down and there is no attributed architect to what is there. We’ve worked with HDC for 3 years, and the owner feels he has worked with the board and taken in everything people have said with a detriment to his living space.

**Coombs** – East-west elevation, there isn’t a roof pitch that isn’t the same; that is ridiculous for a historic home to have 15 different roof angles. The addition is almost 3 times as large as the original house; it hasn’t been sufficiently set back from Stone Alley. No attempt has been made to go to the south as we have asked repeatedly over the past 3 years.

**Camp** – Appreciates the design, which is a nice attempt at as renovation if it weren’t in the old historic district. The proposed is over twice the size of the original house; an addition to a historic house should be secondary additive massing. The approach to the landscaping is much better as naturalistic without terracing.

**Thornewill** – The program has to change. The whole 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is massive; the 2<sup>nd</sup>-floor plate is higher than the existing dormer plate on the main mass. First-floor plates don’t add up. There are unnecessary jigs and jogs in the roof plain which will be visible coming from Main Street. This should be a 1-story addition with livable basement space.

**Oliver** – Agrees with what’s been said. Try as they might, it’s been 3 ½ years too long with no significant addressing of our concerns. The original house needs to be the focus and any addition must be secondary. She’s disappointed that they haven’t arrived at a solution that fits into the spirit of the neighborhood without promoting their own ambitions. She would motion to deny this.

**Pohl** – South elevation, there is a lean-to roof intersecting the ridge of a very shallow-pitched gable; it is not a hipped roof element. The over-arching issue since day one has been the telescoping of this building down to the east as opposed to the south. That was not addressed in the initial presentation of all items that were remedied. That has been his largest issue all along.

**Williams** – Town Counsel has said that when you make a denial, findings have to be on the record; staff can’t do that.

**Skehel** – Feels they are entitled to a response.

**Pohl** – They already had an opportunity to respond.

**Motion to Deny due to lack of response to expressed concerns. (Oliver)**

Carried 5-0//Coombs, Camp, Carrie, Oliver, and Pohl-aye Certificate # **HDC2020-09-1785**

**Oliver** – Recalls there is a caveat that when a project is denied, it cannot be resubmitted for a specific amount of time. Asked what that time is.

**Coombs** – That is 2 years.

**Camp** – Asked if they need to detail the reasons this has been denied.

**Pohl** – Those are in the record.

Motion  
Roll-call Vote

<b>2. 450 Green Park, LLC 08-1545</b>	<b>2 Stone Alley</b>	<b>Hardscape</b>	<b>42.3.1/102</b>	<b>Ahern, LLC</b>
Voting	Pohl, Coombs, Camp, Oliver, Thornewill			
Alternates	None			
Recused	None			
Documentation	Landscape design plans, site plan, photos, correspondence, historic documentation, and advisory comments.			
Representing	Miroslava Ahern, Ahern Design, LLC Victoria Ewing, LINK Chris Skehel, Castle Group			
Public	Sarah Alger, Sarah F. Alger P.C., for 1 Stone Alley Ginger Andrews, 1 Stone Alley Linda Williams, for Ginger Andrews Steven Cohen, Cohen & Cohen Law P.C., for the Crosbys at 9 Union Street Mary Bergman, Nantucket Preservation Trust Executive Director			
Concerns (2:55)	<b>Pohl</b> – The representative will have to make a decision on this application. Not opened at this time.			
Motion	<b>No action at this time.</b>			
Roll-call Vote	N/A		Certificate #	

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

Approved Minutes	None
Review Minutes	None
Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No HDC Meeting next week</li> <li>• Reminder: Resilient Nantucket: Draft Guidelines review meeting, <b>Friday 3/12/21, 1:00pm-2:00pm</b> <b>Backus</b> – Asked that any comments commissioners have be sent to her ASAP so that she can forward them to Mr. Thomason.</li> <li>• Next HDC Meeting- Old Business <b>Tuesday March 16, 2021 at 4:30pm</b></li> </ul>
Commission Comments	None

List of additional documents used at the meeting:

1. None

Adjournment:

Motion **Motion to Adjourn at 2:56 p.m. (Coombs)**

Roll-call Vote Carried 5-0//Camp, Oliver, Carrie, Coombs, and Pohl-aye

Submitted by:

Terry L. Norton

Historic Structures Advisory Board