

APPROVED MINUTES

Organizational Focus Committee

Wednesday, June 6, 2018

Community Room @ 4 Fairgrounds Rd, Nantucket, Ma

Board Members Present: Stephen Welch (Chairman), Val Oliver (Vice Chair), John McLaughlin

Staff Present: John Hedden, Land Use Specialist; Cathy Flynn, Administrative Specialist

Guest Presenter : Brian Pfeiffer, Architectural Historian

I. Procedural Business

- a. Stephen Welch called the meeting to order at 1:12PM
- b. Audio/Video Announcements: Stephen Welch
- c. Adoption of Agenda: Motion to Approve voted unanimously

II. Minutes

Review:

Approve:

Motion to Hold (Oliver)

III. Public Comment : None

IV. Unfinished Business

1. Discussion of **Building with Nantucket in Mind** and related topics with Brian Pfeiffer.

A brief description of the OFC's goals and primary focus was discussed. The group is hoping to hire him as a major resource in re writing BWNIM. The OFC is hoping that he will:

- a. Provide insight on specific subject matter that is credible and accurate.
- b. Insight chapter by chapter
- c. In-depth of subject matter knowledge with respect to the commission.

Mr. Pfeiffer gave a brief description of his background. He has surveyed buildings, set-up historic districts, advises non-profits by enforcing

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preservation. Worked as a consultant/project manager. He holds an interest in materials as it relates to historic preservation. Advises developers and entities such as the Nantucket Preservation Trust and the Sconset Trust.

Mr. Pfeiffer agrees with the direction the OFC is headed. They are all in agreement that the guide book is too long.

A brief explanation of the discussion between The Madaket Advisory Board (MAB) and the OFC as it relates to establishing an “historic district” and adding specific to the guidebook was touched upon.

Ms. Oliver said that the MAB seems to be more concerned with scale and heights of buildings. However, the Madaket area residents took action for change. They brought changes to town meeting by restricting pools and changing zoning.

Ms. Oliver wanted Mr. Pfeiffer’s feedback as he has worked with different towns.

The guidelines need to be clear so that personal input is not part of the decision. She questions the validity of some of the advisory boards. They seem to be composed of a group of neighbors who have decided what they “do” and “do not” like.

Mr. Pfeiffer’s responded by saying the cleanest way is to base everything on historic value. Most local historic district commissions add community development property enhancement and beautification. It should be said to those groups that the board is open to hearing their ideas but there must be some historical identification and justification.

Look at tradition as part of the culture of the HDC.

What is the historic fabric and what are we trying to protect? Suggested engaging in an Historic District Study commission comprised of builders, historian, realtor, etc.

Mr. Pfeiffer also gave an example of Provincetown, Massachusetts. It is a very densely built town. They enacted restrictions to building additions in their historic area by using a ratio calculation. They take an average of the building mass or open space average it out and give a ratio of what the homeowner can add-on. Something similar has been discussed by the OFC members to the MAB members as a way of “rewarding” home owners with massing to ground cover ratios.

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Ms. Oliver stated that zoning isn't protecting us and sited mid island as an example. It used to be an area of mostly farms, unfortunately zoning has made it more-dense.

The character of what mid-island was, is gone.

Mr. Welch mentioned that the zoning changes were all part of the Master Plan, overlay districts, etc. The changes the Planning board has been making are to reflect the Master Plan.

Problematic issues should be coordinated with zoning to get rid of future problems. Zoning should support the mission.

Mr. Pfeiffer made a point of the question of reversibility. There are concessions in the modern world and they are reversible. For instance, original sash preservation, the consolation is insulation, but with reversible options. This is where the importance of materials comes into play. Modern repair has failed.

Ms. Oliver stated that we, as the HDC, presently make homeowners in the OHD install the inefficient single glazed windows and storms as opposed to more energy efficient windows.

Mr. Pfeiffer stated that the historic district is "under attack". Repair do not destroy. Replace damaged portion with better quality materials. He gave an example of damaged corner boards at the bottom, quite possibly caused by downspouts, just replace what is rotted. It's easier as a builder to construct that way.

Aluminum triple track w/TDL's. Are they approvable because of "usage"? This is an example of history being under siege with building codes. We might have to make concessions. Costly to the home owner to repair and/or replace.

Certain historic boards require justification, before demolishing certain materials. That way, the HDC could maintain some control in the materials preservation.

The question was asked about an applicant doing the exact opposite of what was approved. Mr. Pfeiffer said that some organizations have a substantial endowment for a legal fight. However, their rules are clear, so as not to be challenged.

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Draft a preface, a simple statement listing goals and purpose of district preservation. Then the group can refer back while going thru the guidebook. Re-think periods for one “anomaly”, for example the house located at 31 Starbuck Road designed by Frederick Stahl. What does it mean to the community?

Do we need to redefine “significant and contributing”? Historic surveys began in 2008, a part of the National Historic Landmark update. Needs to be viewed through a preservation lens.

Another concern is roof shingles Ms. Oliver asked how to control roof shingles, without naming a specific brand? The problem is with the manufactures.

He advises many historic associations with a limited budget to use asphalt. It's inexpensive and durable. Then they can use their money for more other restorations. The weather will give them another chance to re-think, at a later date. The difference in Nantucket is that the owners are able to afford more durable shingles.

Discussed the boards timeline. Maybe work one chapter per week as it relates to a user manual.

The person tasked with rewriting the guidebook should come to the meeting and take notes.

Phase 1: funding module review, chapter review, user manual
Phase 2: will take a parallel track, rewriting with separate funding.

The notes will form the final text, with added detail.

Mr. Pfeiffer reiterated that a philosophy statement should be first priority.

Next week we are discussing FEMA regulations, coastal resiliency, and mitigation. Review today's meeting and report back to HDC

- V. New Business:** none
- VI. Committee Comments/Announcements:** none
- VII. Date of Next Meeting :** June 13, 2018
- VIII. Motion to Adjourn :** Made by John McLaughlin at 3:19pm. Carried unanimously

Submitted by Cathy Flynn