Minutes of the Sandwich Historical Commission
May 4, 2022

SHC members present in person: Lisa Hassler (LH- Chair), Mahlon Peterson (MP), Julia Blakely (JB), Matt Schimmel (MS), Joanne Richardson, Mary Lynch (ML).

Guests in Attendance: June Murphy, Mary Foley (SHDC).

Call to Order: Lisa Hassler called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

1. Review and approval of minutes:
   - JB recommended correction of typographic errors in section 5c- change “unknowns” to “unknown” and in section 5d- change “are part of the Town funds” to “is part of the Town funds”.
   - Motion to approve these corrections and minutes of April 6, 2022 by MS, Seconded by JB, passed unanimously.

2. Correspondence/ Statements/ Announcements:
   - LH provided information regarding the invitation from Sara Korjeff of the Cape Cod Commission to members to attend Roundtable meeting on June 14th from 1-3pm. Members informed to contact Sara if any are interested in attending.
   - LH stated Jennifer Doherty of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (now in the role previously held by Chris Skelly) can offer Virtual Trainings with wide range of topics.
   - Protect our Past- letter from Ellen Briggs of the Protect our Past offers payment for consultation for property assessment.

3. Staff Meeting:
   a. Introduction of June Murphy
      - LH introduced June Murphy (JM) and her interest in becoming a member of the Sandwich Historical Commission. June shared her background, ancestral connections to Sandwich and interest in joining the group. LH reviewed the process of becoming a member of the Commission.
      - Motion to recommend appointment of JM to the Sandwich Historical Commission by MS, Seconded by JB, passed unanimously. LH will send June’s name to Board of Selectman.

   b. Reorganization of Commission
      - LH agreed to act as Chair of the SHC until May 2022. LH nominated JB to become Chair of the SHC starting in May, 2022.
      - Motion to appoint JB as Chair of the SHC by MS, Seconded by MP, passed unanimously.
      - Review of Members including JB, MS, LH, MP, Carolyn Crowell, Jennifer Madden, Brenda Kelly. Alternate Members including Joanne Richardson, ML, Gregory Altman, Maria Nye, Richard Clayton.

4. New Business:
   a. Process for Approval and Architectural Review
There are only a few CPA grants. The restriction runs w/ the land for perpetuity. It is flagged as needing Historic Commission review. There needs to be a process and needs MACRIS sheet pulled up by applicant. A copy of applicant’s restriction come in with the application. Paragraph 3 lists restriction and protected. The end of restriction lists type of things that need to be reviewed.

b. Quaker Meeting House
This is first application for architectural review. There are questions re: handicap ramp/platform on the front. It must go before the Historic District Commission.
The standards are keep, repair or replace w/ closest/ in kind material. It needs to prove it’s not possible to keep, repair or replace. For example, if section of home is so rotted it cannot be repaired, it must be replaced in kind without damaging the rest of the structure.

A member of the Public, Mr. Lee Burns, joined the meeting and provided the following information:
- The windows, roof and doors were just replaced
- Deck- request to replace pressure treated wood on cement slab. Could replace full length or shorter (picture provided by Mr. Burns).
- Behind the green door (see picture), there is an 8.5” step (too high). Mr. Burns suggested the platform could be raised by 1-2 inches or 2 steps could be added in front instead of the platform.
- The doors open by going out. They would need to be replaced or cut to accommodate revisions. It is possible to take 2.5” off the bottom of the doors.
- Ramp handrails have already been replaced
- It is unknown when the front deck was added. It is not attached to the building. There is a 2” gap between the deck and the building. The cement slab extends ~5” beyond the boards on all sides.

LH stated the Commission is developing a process. We requested the applicant return the application to Leanne Drake in the Planning Department. Leanne will then forward the application to the Commission. Members of the Commission will plan a site visit to assess the work that has been done. Protect our Past will display short video of important historic buildings next Wednesday. The plan is to get a photo shoot of Quaker Meeting House for the video.

c. Draft of application

LH presented draft application for review. It was stated the Preservation Restriction is drafted by CPA grant/approval. It was recommended to add CPA approval date to the application. It was recommended to add page regarding CPA funding, projects and process. MS, as CPC representative, will work on getting the application on the site. It will be flagged in the Building Department that the application needs the Commission’s approval. It was recommended to include the file # of the application and add date of CPA approval to application for Architectural review.
Motion to approve the application by MS, Seconded by JB, passed unanimously.

JB will send application to Leanne Drake. The 60-day deadline may need to be extended, if needed.

MS provided information regarding the CPC, Community Protection Committee. He stated there are 7 members of the CPC from other committees. The Committee provides CPA funding for Recreation, Historic Preservation, Open Space and Affordable Housing. There are not been many projects since 2007. Most of the funding was utilized for town owned buildings.

d. Payment for Web Services

LH stated Don Bailey paid the outstanding bill to keep the Commission’s website active. Members have contributed in the past. The Grant from Tourism of $100/month covered the annual cost of the website in the past, but this has ended. The Commission currently has $600 in the account.

- The website will be covered by $5000/year amount in fiscal year 2022, but cannot be approved until July. In the past, charitable events have been held, such as Walking Tours, and some funding from the Town. The members discussed possibly resuming the Christmas Tour and/or the Garden Tour. It was suggested Pocket Site Tours could be part of next month’s agenda. This could possibly be a method of raising funds for the Commission.

Motion to pay Mr. Bailey’s company FYI World Media, $387.76 from the Commission’s existing account by MS, Seconded by MP, passed unanimously.

5. Old Business
a. Demo Application before HDC, 25 Water Street, review of site visit
As background, LH stated Mr. Fred Ecker holds several degrees in Preservation and has worked on many well-known properties/ projects. His assessments/ opinions are considered very valuable. Mr. Ecker stated adamantly in his past report that this building should be saved. He was able to conduct a second site visit. He continued to feel the property could be restored.

The home is plank frame construction with thin exterior. The windows “stand proud” by several inches. There is no room for insulation. Early 18th century build with a lot of original materials are still in the house. A tree fell on the front of the home with an expensive repair in the past.

Mr. Ecker’s observation stated a lot had been taken down, including doors, floor, interior trim. The home was essentially gutted. Mr. Ecker will go to the HDC meeting to answer questions.
The owner's intention was to build a replica using existing materials that were removed. Owner could claim financial hardship if they cannot afford the work. MACRIS report was sent by LS to the Chair of the HDC. Garage was built in the 1980s. The middle part collapsed. The front part remains.

The group discussed that owners need education on managing these vulnerable properties. Also, builders need to be aware and experienced in working on/ restoring these properties. Whether property is worthy of saving, there also needs to be discussion of what is on the interior, whether intact or not.

LH states she is comfortable deferring to Mr. Ecker's recommendation and JB agreed. Pictures were taken for archive documentation.

b. 13 Church Street

On January 11th, pictures were taken and reviewed at the meeting. Pictures showed 2x8 floor joists, sistered floor joists. There was work done on the underpinning at some point.

Previous owner passed away. She had maintained the home. Her signature was on the Building Permit. The applicant has a Contractor's license. The applicant must live or intend to live at the residence. A Contractor is required to provide additional information, such as a license. However, the application was submitted as "Homeowner".

Recommendations of the Structural Engineer, Michelle Cudillo, were reviewed by the group, including inadequacies. The Structural Engineer's conclusion was full demolish and rebuild.

The applicant continued to demo to the point the building was unstable with essentially nothing holding it together. The applicant continued to take interior structure out despite the recommendations. The applicant could appear before the HDC for a financial hardship, but he did not. The initial application wasn't approved. One week later, the windows, siding and roof were approved for removal. A neighbor, Mr. Vander Pyl, noted the work underway and contacted the Building Commissioner in January.

The members of SHC reviewed the timeline of work provided by LH. There were no inspections by the Building Department between December and April, including after the Building Commissioner was contacted by the neighbor, Mr. Vander Pyl, in January. In addition, Mr. Vander Pyl had inspections done on his own property during that time. The importance for the HDC to be aware of the timeline of events was discussed. LH will make a public comment and send letter to the Enterprise regarding the timeline and issues. It was decided individual members can decide how they may want to proceed. There are 2 issues for building inspection: non-compliance and unsafe structure. The need to share this info with the public was discussed.
It needs to go before HDC for approval/appropriateness of demo. If they find it inappropriate to have been torn down, they cannot apply to rebuild. It was discussed this was likely intentional done and whether contractor needs to be held accountable.

MP recommended sending the timeline to address the concerns and how to protect/preserve the process of historic preservation and also inform the State, the MA Historic Commission. LH stated she will make a public comment and send letter to the Enterprise regarding the timeline and issues. It was decided individual members can decide how they may want to proceed.

6. Public Forum

Mary Foley from the HDC spoke in the public forum. She stated she appreciated the discussion that took place during the meeting. She stated there were inconsistencies w/ the SHC timeline. She stated it was important to clarify if it was an inquiry or a complaint when Mr. Vander Pyl, the neighbor contacted the Building Commissioner. She stated an inquiry and a complaint are handled very differently. She was concerned the discussion goes down a negative path and suggested to turn the energy positive. She expressed she felt the interest in contacting the Enterprise was unprofessional. She expressed it was negative energy for the Town. She suggested all should work together. She suggested there was a lot of speculation in this discussion and there is a risk of slander. LH stated she pulled all the information for the timeline directly from public records.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:32pm

Respectfully submitted by,

Mary Lynch