

TOWN of TRURO
Truro Historical Commission
Truro Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Location: Via GoTo Meeting Video

Date and Time: Thursday, August 27, 2020, 4:00 pm

Members Present: Matthew Kiefer, Chair
Chuck Steinman, Vice Chair
David Kirchner, Secretary
Richard Larkin
Jim Summers
Beth Chapman

Members Not Present: None (Bart Mitchell pending approval)

Attending: Barbara Carboni, KP Law, Acting Town Planner
Susan & Wesley Chapman, 42 Great Hollow Rd, applicants
Nancy & Peter Rhodes, abutters
Anne Greenbaum, Chair, Planning Board
Judy Paprin, abutter
Ambrose Donovan, abutter
Tracy Silver, abutter

Welcome: Chairman Kiefer opened the meeting, welcomed the attendees and asked them to introduce themselves. Mr. Kiefer formally acknowledged and thanked former members of the Commission, Fred Todd and David Perry, for their service to the Commission and welcomed Beth Chapman as a new member of the Commission. Bart Mitchell is expected to also be joining the Commission once approved by the Select Board.

Public Hearing and Vote: Proposed Demolition of 42 Great Hollow Road: Chairman Kiefer opened the public hearing and explained the purpose of the meeting and the applicable historic preservation bylaw. The Chair, after consulting with the Vice Chair, determined that the existing structure at 42 Great Hollow Road is significant according to the criteria of Truro's Preserving Historic Properties bylaw, given its age and history, and scheduled the hearing to determine whether the building would be preferably preserved and subject to a demolition delay of up to one year outlined in the bylaw. The structure is not architecturally notable and is not included in the Truro Historic Survey; however, research by the Vice Chair indicates it is associated with an important local resident, formerly housed a notable research institute and was built in the 1930's—before the 75-year time frame outlined in the bylaw.

Chairman Kiefer briefly reviewed the criteria for determination of significance, and turned the meeting over to the applicants, Susan & Wesley Chapman. Mr. Chapman explained that they had been residents of Cape Cod for over 20 years, and that they are currently residents of Truro. Mr. Chapman went on to explain that the primary reason for wanting to demolish Cottage #1 is to build a larger dwelling so that they could use it as their year-round home. He also indicated that they intended to rent out Cottage #2 on the same property.

Mr. Chapman explained some of the history of the property and provided several photos of the buildings on the property. There are currently two cottages as well as a garage structure that have undergone several alterations. The property was originally owned by Frederick S. Hammett, who established and directed the Marine Experimental Station which occupied the original 1930's cottage (Cottage #2) on the property. It was an outpost of the Lankenau Research Institute (a cancer research hospital in Philadelphia, PA) and a cancer research facility during the summertime that accommodated numerous scientists at its peak. The property was subsequently subdivided and sold as part of the Sunset Cottage Community.

Mr. Chapman explained that they had consulted with both an architect and engineer about Cottage #1. The foundation of Cottage #1 is cinder block and had settled and the roof supports were inadequate to accommodate any real expansion. He provided photos to support these conditions. He also shared the plans for the proposed new structure which would be a year-round residence that would increase the footprint of the structure from 1160 sq. ft. to 1650 sq.ft..

Commission members asked about which cottage on the property was the original structure that housed the Marine Experimental Station. Mr. Chapman confirmed that Cottage #2 was the *original* structure and that this cottage was *not* going to be demolished. When asked when Cottage #1 was built, Mr. Chapman replied that the assessors report indicates some time in the 1930s, although possibly later

After confirming that the Chapmans do not intend to demolish the original Cottage #2, Mr. Kiefer invited abutters to speak. There were no questions or comments from the abutters who were present.

Mr. Larkin asked whether the property was included in the Truro Historic Survey, and Mr. Steinman replied that it was not. Mr. Chapman told the Commission that they would be willing to put a plaque on the property to memorialize the existence of the former Lankenau Research Institute Marine Experimental Station. The Commission members expressed appreciation for the offer.

Members briefly deliberated about the fact that the original Cottage #2 would actually be preserved and the Cottage #1, which was built later, would be demolished. Mr. Kiefer asked if there were any further questions. There being none, Mr. Kirchner made the motion that Cottage #1 at 42 Great Hollow Road did not warrant a preferably preserved designation; the motion was seconded by Richard Larkin and all members, through a roll call vote, voted in favor. The Chair will inform the Building Commissioner of the decision that demolition may proceed.

Mr. Larkin and the abutters left the meeting at 5:05 pm

Election of Officers and Representatives to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and the Comprehensive Plan Committee: Mr. Kiefer opened up the discussion and told the Commission members that the bylaw states that the Commission will elect a Chair and Vice Chair. Mr. Kiefer and Mr. Steinman indicated that they would be willing to continue in their current positions as Chair/Vice Chair, respectively, and that no other Commissioners had come forward to volunteer for either position. The Commission has also traditionally designated a Secretary to take meeting minutes. Mr. Kirchner agreed to step into this position, formerly held by Fred Todd.

There was a brief discussion about whether there should be term limits for officer positions and the general consensus was that Commission member's 3-year terms allowed for sufficient turnover in the officer positions and therefore no further limits were warranted.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Steinman made the motion that the following be elected to serve in the following positions, each for a one-year term: Matthew Kiefer, Chair; Chuck Steinman, Vice Chair; and David Kirchner, Secretary. The motion was seconded by Mr. Summers and all members, through a roll call vote, voted in favor.

The discussion then moved on to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Mr. Summers indicated that he would be willing to serve as the Commission's representative to the CPC. Mr. Steinman made the motion that Mr. Summers be elected to serve as the Commission's representative to the CPC; the motion was seconded by Ms. Chapman; and all members, through a roll call vote, voted in favor.

Mr. Steinman said he would be willing to serve as the representative to the Comprehensive Plan Committee. A motion was made by Mr. Kiefer to elect Mr. Steinman to serve as the Commission's representative to the Comprehensive Plan Committee; the motion was seconded by Ms. Chapman; and all members, through a roll call vote, voted in favor.

Mr. Summers asked about the upcoming September 26, 2020 Town Meeting and the proposed vote on a CPC grant to fund the update of the Truro Community-Wide Historic Survey to include structures that were not included in the original survey. Ms. Chapman and Mr. Summers indicated that they would be attending the Town Meeting and could present this item. The Commission asked them to develop a plan to encourage voters to support this initiative to illuminate and protect Truro's historic fabric, to be discussed at the Commission's next meeting.

The Commission then noted the recently published Historic Truro Self-Guided Tour Booklet. Copies have been placed at the library and Chamber of Commerce, and it has been included on the Town's website. There has been much enthusiasm amongst the Commission and the Truro community about this new resource, and the Commission commended Mr. Steinman for all of his hard work in making this happen.

The Commission then briefly discussed the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) supplemental submission for determinations of eligibility for the National Seashore districts. Mr. Kiefer indicated that he would follow up with MHC and the Commission could take this up at a subsequent meeting.

While most written correspondence is now done electronically, the Commission needs to periodically check the mailbox at Town Hall. Mr. Summers agreed to periodically check the Commission's mailbox.

There was a brief discussion about the Walsh Cottages property, purchased by the Town and the subject of a study committee. The property is not included in the Truro Historic Survey. The Commission agreed that it should follow the progress of the discussions but that there was no need to take any immediate action.

Mr. Larkin rejoined the Meeting at 5:49 pm.

Mr. Kiefer raised the Commission's role in the context of the demolition review process in reviewing the design of a proposed new structure to replace an existing building proposed to be

demolished. Mr. Larkin expressed his belief that it should not be part of the Commission's demolition review process and suggested that the Commission consult the Secretary of State's guidelines for local historic commissions. Mr. Steinman indicated that while this certainly is not the primary role of the Commission, consideration of the compatibility of new construction with its historic context and setting is important to maintaining the character of Truro, is contemplated by the demolition delay by-law and is consistent with good practice. As a consequence, making suggestions and/or providing assistance regarding the design of a new building is in the community's best interest. Mr. Steinman provided some examples.

The Commission tentatively set the next meeting for September 21, 2020 at 4:00 PM.

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Larkin and seconded by Mr. Summers and approved by all members.



David Kirchner, Secretary

