



TOWN OF TRURO Truro Historical Commission

P.O. Box 2030, Truro, MA 02666-2030

**Historical Review Board and Historical Commission Joint Meeting
Town of Truro**

Meeting Location: Cobb Room, Truro Public Library

Date: July 29, 2017, 10:00 am

Present: Matthew Kiefer, Chair, Historical Review Board
David Kirchner, Member, HRB
Fred Todd, Member, HRB
Richard Larkin, Member, Historical Commission
Chuck Steinman, Chair, Historical Commission
Helen McNeil-Ashton, Historical Commission

1. Vote to Approve Minutes: Minutes of the June 10, 2017 meeting were approved and will be submitted to the Town Clerk.
2. Attorney General Review of ByLaw Revision: Approval of the bylaw combining the Review Board and Commission is still pending.
3. Historic Districts: The Community-wide Historic Properties Survey, completed in 2013, identified 53 properties as potentially eligible for individual listing on the National Register and four residential areas as eligible for historic district designation. The three are Higgins Hollow/Longnook Road, Depot Road and the Pamet River valley (North and South Pamet Roads, referred to as the Pamets). The Pond Village area was previously determined as eligible (2002 Letter from MHC). The next step would be the submission to Mass Historical Commission (MHC) of a formal eligibility request including the survey materials, which may require some updating of photographs. Based on MHC staff review and recommendations, the Commission would vote formally whether the areas and individual properties are eligible for National Register listing. Properties in eligible historic districts are protected from adverse impacts of state or federally funded or permitted projects by MHC reviews and recommendations for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating potential impacts on historic resources. Individual properties determined eligible cannot receive tax credits and other federal benefits that would only come with formal acceptance of the property by the Department of the Interior. However, individual properties that have been determined eligible

can seek exemptions from the State Building Code to preserve character-defining historic elements. We noted that the demolition or addition (in excess of 25%) to an eligible historic house can be referred to the Cape Cod Commission for discretionary review as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). Pursuant to their enabling regulations, the CCC will not use the DRI process for a single family property unless it has been determined eligible for listing by the MHC.

4. Strategies for Submission to Mass Historical: We discussed how to move the process forward. Submitting all 3 districts and 53 recommended properties with their associated materials could potentially delay review and approval. Based on the Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS) house size zoning bylaw approved by Town Meeting (awaiting formal approval by the Attorney General), we decided that our priority should be to submit for the two residential area along with their individual properties that are located within the Seashore (Higgins Hollow/Longnook and the Pamets). Given the size of the Town vote in favor of the Seashore bylaw, we felt those areas were of primary importance. We agreed to submit the Depot Road/Pamet Harbor area after getting feedback from MCH on the Seashore submission materials. We discussed the pros and cons of whether to submit all of the recommended individual properties within each district for an eligibility determination along with the district. The more expeditious alternative would be to submit them only when they are at risk of demolition and subject to the demolition delay review process. We also discussed how best to communicate this effort, whether through letters to owners or a press release, and agreed upon the latter. Matt Kiefer and Chuck Steinman agreed to draft a press release.

We voted to approve a motion to update the July 27, 2017 draft eligibility request letter to MHC based on our discussion and submit it with supporting documentation for the two Seashore District areas. Richard Larkin moved and Helen MacNeil Ashton seconded. Chuck Steinman, Helen MacNeil-Ashton, Matt Kiefer, and Richard Larkin, voted in favor; David Kirchner and Fred Todd did not vote because as members of the HRB, the transfer of the HRB responsibilities to the THC has not yet been approved by the Attorney General.

5. Follow Up for Historic Districts and Properties: For actual listing on the National Register of Historic Places for the districts and individual properties that are judged to be eligible by MHC, individual owners would have to agree to have the Truro Historical Commission submit a nomination through MHC to the Department of the Interior. For a district to be listed, a majority of owners have to agree. Nomination to the register is typically a 2-year process with additional documentation and public hearings required. To elicit interest, we discussed ways to inform owners about the potential benefits of National Register listing in terms of code, tax credits, and limiting impact of state or federal projects, as well as mandatory Cape Cod Commission review of certain types of projects. We also agreed to evaluate alternatives to listing on the National Register such as by creating Local Historic Districts under Chapter 40C, subject to prescribed local reviews as approved at Town Meeting, such as exists in Provincetown. Chuck Steinman reported that to date, approximately 25-30 owners had requested historic plaques for their property in response to Truro Historical Commission/ Historical Review Board letters sent to all 500 (approx.) bylaw qualifying properties (over 75 years old). To further encourage owners to order historic house plaques, we agreed to posting instructions for ordering the plaques on our Commission's website.

6. Comprehensive Plan Update: The *2005 Truro Local Comprehensive Plan* is now in the process of being updated. The Board of Selectmen is appointing a Comprehensive Plan Committee. The plan includes a chapter on historical and cultural resources entitled *Heritage Preservation and Community Character*. The members of the Historical Commission all agreed that we should be actively involved in drafting the update of this section. It is important to summarize steps taken in response to the 2005 version of the plan such as passage

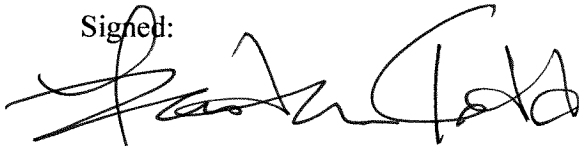
of the Community Preservation Act and the number of historic properties that have benefited from CPA funding (Cobb Library, Castle Hill Center for the Arts, Congregational Meeting House, Historical Society Highland House Museum, and Edgewood Farm), the Seashore Bylaw, etc. Fred Todd has been designated by the THC to be the liaison with the planning group.

We discussed a range of issues relevant to the comprehensive plan and agreed to continue to review them and establish some priorities. Among the recommendations, were: to follow up on the survey and file for determination of eligibility of the three residential areas; to seek town approval for CPA funding for formal MHC documentation of the Mid-century Modern house inventory; to continue updating the THC website; to develop specific criteria for use by the Planning Board for site plan review (required for residential projects in the Seashore zoning district; to review Truro's Community Preservation Act program based on the past 5 years experience; to focus CPA attention on the restoration of historic grave stones and cemeteries; to see if additional policy recommendations are warranted regarding historically significant open space (either in conjunction with structures or independently); to support the renovation of the Historical Society Highland House Museum; to initiate a policy of referral for MHC determination of eligibility during demolition delay and/or referral to Cape Cod Commission for review as DRI..

7. A motion to adjourn was moved, seconded and voted unanimously.

8. The next meeting will be September 16 at the Cobb Room of the Truro Public Library , exact time to be determined.

Signed:



Frederick Todd, Sect.

