

**CONCORD HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**Public Meeting Minutes**  
**July 14, 2022 7:00 P.M.**  
**Virtual Meeting**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's office, the Town of Concord Historical Commission held a virtual public meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. using the Zoom meeting platform.

Commission Members present: Melissa Saalfield, Nancy Nelson, Alan Bogosian  
Associate Members: Francesca Cataldo, Rebecca Lemaitre  
Staff: Ann Clifford, Senior Planner  
Others: Simone Monteleone, Superintendent, Minute Man National Historical Park

Ms. Saalfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. by a roll call vote. She adjusted the agenda in consideration of the guest.

- 1) Minute Man National Historical Park Great American Outdoors Act projects Section 106 Review Package #2

Ms. Saalfield described how Ms. Monteleone had presented information at a CHC Historic Issues Gathering about the influx of Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) funding for the Park. The commission recently received a package regarding the trails and landscapes but a previous package regarding historic structures was lost during transitions in the Town Manager's office and Planning Department. She understood that a response from the CHC is due in late July and requested clarification on the time frame for review.

Ms. Monteleone confirmed that the Commission's response to the current package is due in late July. She explained that it is one of several pieces of the GAOA. Through the programmatic agreement that the Park signed with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) late last year, the Park agreed to share these materials with Mass SHPO and other consulting parties such as the Town of Concord.

In March, the Park shared with the Town the package tied to the buildings and structures. That phase is ready to go out for contract and will be split between contractors and in-house preservation crews. The project is for rehabilitating the buildings according to the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historical Properties and does not include new infrastructure.

The package that is currently in front of the CHC for its 30-day review is for another phase of the GAOA addressing the landscapes and trails. She stressed that they are early schematic designs and encouraged the commission to share its specific concerns about the contents of the schematic drawings now, since a contractor will be taking them to the next design level for implementation and construction soon. She indicated that the Park is conducting its initial internal review concurrently with the Town of Concord during this 30-day time period. The drawings also have been sent to the Mass SHPO and Tribal partners.

Ms. Saalfield asked if there would be another opportunity for the CHC to review the package.

Ms. Monteleone responded affirmatively and encouraged the CHC to inform the Park if there is anything regarding this package on the landscape or trails that they would like to see again.

Ms. Monteleone turned to the contents of the package, noting that it consisted primarily of maintenance. She highlighted areas of particular interest to the Town of Concord, suggesting that the commission pay particular close attention to the North Bridge and the repairs to sections of the 5.5-mile Battle Road Trail. She directed commissioners to Sheet 5 North Bridge Option A. The rehabilitation project will help keep water away from the trail, repair trails, and plant trees along the allée.

Ms. Nelson asked if the Park has informed the Select Board about the North Bridge aspects of the trail improvements. Ms. Monteleone relayed how she intends to present MMNHP plans for the North Bridge at the Concord Select Board meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> [sic, August 8<sup>th</sup>] and has reached out for confirmation about the agenda. Her presentation will be broader than this one, including all phases of the project.

Ms. Saalfield informed CHC members that the land at the North Bridge is Town land, reiterating the importance of commissioner review of that piece. She praised the improvements, mentioning erosion around the monuments. She was pleased to see the inclusion of plantings and mentioned historic postcards that show how magnificent this area once looked.

Ms. Monteleone explained that there was an early 1960s agreement that solidified the unique relationship between the Town of Concord and MMNHP. For this reason, she highlighted the work at the North Bridge and allée.

Ms. Saalfield said that she would work with Ms. Clifford and a member of the commission on a written response.

Ms. Monteleone indicated that she appreciates the Town working with them on their timeline. The project is targeted for completion for the 250th anniversary in 2025, so the schedule is very aggressive.

Responding to Mr. Bogasian's question about start date, Ms. Monteleone explained that there is a prebid conference for the buildings and structures component of the project next week and she expects to have an executed contract by September 30. Congress has set these expectations. They intend to have the landscape components under contract before the end of the Fall. A later phase will include signage—design, fabrication and installation. The last portion of work, for monuments, will be addressed closer to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary with internal conservators.

In order to continue to provide access for visitors and avoid closing off large areas of the park, they have sequenced the phases. Since trail work will create interruptions, they will be considering temporary reroutes.

Ms. Saalfield asked for clarification on the proposed residential use of buildings (excepting those where people are living out their life tenancy). Ms. Monteleone indicated that some buildings are used as seasonal housing for staff: Noah Brooks Tavern and Farwell Jones House. Others are for permanent employees: Elijah Jones House.

Responding to Ms. Saalfield's question about whether this was a new use of the structures, Ms. Monteleone noted that several houses, such as the Sam Brooks House, are empty. Part of the purpose is to not only bring these structures up to good condition but to get them back in use. It is

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better to have an occupied building than an unused building. Some will be rehabilitated for interpretation (Captain Smith and Meriam Houses). Stow house will need extensive work to bring it up to a livable condition, but others primarily need repairs (ie, siding, paint). They intend to rehabilitate the buildings, addressing the backlog of maintenance, without major new capital improvements.

Ms. Nelson expressed her regret that the Commission had missed out on its opportunity to review changes to the structures, particularly since there will also be a change in use. She asked about how much flexibility Ms. Monteleone would have in reevaluating previous decisions on use, especially regarding the use of the most prominent and historically important structures like the Sam Brooks, John Brooks, and John Nelson houses. She would like to see more public access and benefit and worries about the Park creating a residential leasing community. People who were displaced from those residences in the past might be upset knowing that they were back in residential use.

Ms. Monteleone replied that under the previous superintendent the Park developed a Strategic Facility Investment Plan that considered use, condition, and income streams. The leasing strategy defined in the Plan helped justify GAOA funding, and the two are intertwined. She has no flexibility since the decisions have already been made. She went on to explain their staffing limitations for interpretation. They currently emphasize Hartwell Tavern and are considering strategies to increase their volunteer corps and open additional houses such as the Barrett House and the Meriam House to the public on a more robust schedule, ideally next season. They may partner with the Town of Concord on The Wayside, for which there is some GAOA funding.

Ms. Nelson relayed how some houses are open only seasonally and asked whether important witness houses like Sam Brooks House would be Park housing? Ms. Monteleone confirmed that Sam Brooks would be included in the Park housing program, as would the house associated with the Inferrara Farm.

Ms. Nelson expressed her concern about the expectations of the American people to see historic resources for which the Park was created and the precedent that this move toward a leasing program would set for the long term. She reiterated her hope that the Superintendent would have flexibility on the uses.

Ms. Monteleone conveyed how she would love to have the ability to open all of structures to the public with staffing that could support a more robust interpretive program. However, the staffing is not in place. She sees this project as an opportunity to bring these very important structures back to good condition with an investment of over \$27 million.

Ms. Nelson agreed and congratulated her on the funding, then asked about the rehabilitation of some of the less important structures in the Park. She assumed that there was an income/benefit analysis to support the decision making and asked whether the Park could consider shifting less important historic structures into the leasing program.

Ms. Monteleone identified the houses destined for the residential leasing program: the East Quarter Schoolhouse next to Meriam's Corner, Joshua Brooks House, Inferrara House, the Stow House and

the George Hall House on corner of Manuel Drive.

Ms. Saalfield relayed how she had worked at MMNHP for five years, during the time when Mass Port expansion threatened the Park. She asked whether there would be strong rules and regulations to protect public views of historic structures in residential use. Swingsets, for example, would be inappropriate.

Ms. Monteleone reassured her that the Park has adopted high preservation standards to protect its investments in historic buildings and that those standards apply regardless of the use of the property or its occupant. The visitor experience from the trails will not be affected.

Ms. Saalfield acknowledged the constraints of the Park Superintendent. Ms. Nelson requested the first package of information regarding the rehabilitation of the historic houses. Ms. Monteleone agreed to send an electronic version to Ms. Clifford. Ms. Saalfield said that she and Ms. Clifford would work with commissioners on their responses.

Ms. Nelson voiced concerns about new parking lots, suggesting that they be better screened, and asking whether there would be another opportunity to comment. Ms. Monteleone said that parking lot screening would be a perfect example of what could be included in the letter from the Town to the Park and that other reviewers had similar concerns.

Ms. Nelson asked whether there would be public meetings as a part of the Section 106 review process. Ms. Monteleone said that there would not be public meetings, but that she would be presenting at the next Select Board meeting in August. She also mentioned that pop-up information panels regarding the project will be installed on the on the trails to keep the public informed.

## 2) Commission Membership – Vacant Associate Member

Ms. Saalfield is drafting changes to the Administrative Code to allow associate members to vote, which she will provide to Ms. Clifford.

Mr. Bogosian nominated Ryan Hanley as a new associate member. Ms. Cataldo seconded. And the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Nelson noted how fortunate the commission was to have three such well qualified candidates, as well as, how important it is to have new prospects in the pipeline as two members will be moving off the board in a year.

## 3) Review Draft Rules and Regulations for the Administration of the Scenic Roads General Bylaw

Ms. Saalfield noted that there will be a Planning Board meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> and that the Planning Dept would appreciate comments by August 4<sup>th</sup>. Certain sections of the draft Rules and Regulations were then discussed.

Ms. Saalfield and Ms. Nelson addressed Section 1.4.2 Right of Way Maintenance, voicing their concerns about the maintenance of roadside plant material, especially the use of machinery which shreds trees and anything else in its path. Maintenance should involve proper pruning of trees, removing vegetation, managing invasives, training, etc. Ms. Nelson noted how she is the CHC liaison to the DPW which has an existing policy for maintaining roadsides. She suggested tying the language in the Bylaw back to that policy.

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Another section relates to historic character and values, and scenic and aesthetic characteristics. The street must appear on the Walling map of 1852 and must include structures. She suggested adding language that limits modern traffic devices such as blinking traffic lights and raised crosswalks.

Discussion continued regarding Section 4.1 Tree replacement enforcement. Some towns impose a fine while others replace it in kind. Tree decisions would be made jointly by the Planning Board and Tree Warden. The material would come back to the Historical Commission, DPW, the Planning Board and possibly other stakeholders. Ms. Cataldo suggested possibly including both options to allow flexibility, leaving the final decision to the Tree Warden. Ms. Nelson noted how roads lined with certain tree species, like the Sugar Maple, have become iconic of New England. Visitors flock to New England in the Fall to see the spectacular fall foliage of Sugar Maples planted by village improvement societies. Ms. Cataldo asked for clarification, that is, does the commission wish to replace trees in kind? Native trees are desirable, but it would not be appropriate to replace some existing trees, like invasive Norway Maples, in kind. National Park Service staff developed a document on the treatment of historic roads that might be helpful. Ms. Cataldo suggested striking the words “Gatehouse Media” from the legal notice section since there may be a replacement news outlet soon. Others suggested retaining the words “Gatehouse Media” while adjusting the language to allow other news outlets to run legal ads as well.

Ms. Saalfield encouraged all commissioners to attend the Planning Board meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> when the Scenic Road Bylaw will be next discussed.

#### 4) Historic Resources Master Plan

Ms. Cataldo reported on a recent meeting regarding the Historic Resource Master Plan update with Ms. Saalfield, Ms. Clifford, Library Special Collections Curator Anke Voss and Town Archivist Nate Smith. The concept is to create a dedicated and privately hosted website, similar to the website that was created for Envision Concord. The first phase could be the narrative and survey/content piece, and the second phase could be the development of the interactive and dynamic portal or webpage. It would serve as both a tutorial for researchers and a gathering place for links and resources.

Ms. Saalfield went on to describe the project as a portal to Concord’s historic resources, linking to documentation that already exists both within and beyond Concord. She sees it as a collaboration between the Historical Commission, the Library and the Town Archives. Ms. Clifford will draft thoughts for an application to the CPC. Who manages it is still to be determined, probably Mr. Smith, the town archivist. Mr. Smith, who has been with the Town for three years, has already developed a Town Archives page which includes fascinating material like a video the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle in 1925.

Ms. Saalfield’s plan is to submit an application to CPC this Fall, and possibly match it with a grant from the Mass Historical Commission. Ms. Nelson asked if Diane Proctor is aware of the proposed project. Ms. Cataldo noted how it was interesting to hear how the tool would also be useful to Town employees, opening up Town resources.

Ms. Nelson noted that the Commission should be very careful about how the project is described because it must be a preservation project that meets eligibility requirements for Community Preservation Act funding. However, the Historical Commission can make a direct finding stating that the project is appropriate.

Ms. Cataldo added that they were discussing adding resources that have not been documented (Conantum and archaeological resources), revising narratives to be more comprehensive and inclusive and adding pieces on Lost Concord and on historic preservation in Concord. She noted that perhaps the Commission would not be adding completely new surveys but would be reviewing and updating some of the older surveys. It may not include additional survey work, but it could be described as additional preservation work. Ms. Saalfield confirmed that preservation work begins with identification. Ms. Nelson asked if it would include finding the untold stories and resources, such as the history of slavery in Concord. Ms. Saalfield responded, yes, that would be part of the rewrite of the history.

#### 5) Preservation Restrictions

Ms. Saalfield listed the historic structures in Concord that have Preservation Restrictions--Thoreau Farm Trust, West Concord Depot, Our Lady's Church, Garfield Road/Thomas Mott Shaw House and eventually Wright Tavern—and noted how the regular monitoring of these properties is an important responsibility of the Historical Commission. She suggested that each commission member select one property with a preservation restriction, perform a site visit, and report back to the Commission. Preservation Restriction monitoring was assigned as follows:

Thoreau Farm Trust-Ms. Nelson; Wright Tavern-Mr. Bogosian; West Concord Depot (owned by MBTA)-Ms. Saalfield; 317 Garfield Road-Mr. Bogosian, Our Lady's Church-Ms. Cataldo.

When Ms. Nelson asked if the Commission has been relieved of its responsibility for the Wheeler Harrington House, Ms. Saalfield responded that she would check with the Director of Planning and Land Management Marcia Rasmussen, who at one time had discussed holding a charrette regarding the House.

#### 6) Demolition Delay Bylaw

Ms. Saalfield described how she and the former Senior Planner, Heather Gill, had discussed two possible adjustments to the bylaw. One related to expanding the bylaw to cover partial demolitions as well as complete demolitions; however, that change may be too large of a task at this time. She is also researching whether it would be more desirable to adjust the bylaw to run with the owner of the property rather than with the land. In theory, this could extend the length of the delay, should there be a change in ownership. She reached out to communities across the state, received 14 responses, and found that the slight majority have shifted their bylaw so that the demolition delay would run with the owner. Mr. Bogosian noted how people working the building trades are used to this sort of deadline. In their case, they have project completion deadlines that are tied to updates in the building code. If contractors miss the deadline, they have to abide by the new code. When Ms. Nelson wondered whether the climate was right for a change, Ms. Saalfield said that it could be tabled until next year.

#### 7) Historic Marker Program

Ms. Saalfield noted how a recent application to this program introduced a question about the names highlighted on the historic markers. Typically, only men are acknowledged on the marker. Should the markers tell a more inclusive history? Should the commission ask that a wife's name be included as well? Her sense was that it should be decided on a case-by-case basis.

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Ms. Cataldo suggested adjusting the application form to encourage research on more occupants of the house. Ms. Nelson noted that the National Park Service must have standards or guidelines on the naming of houses. Ms. Clifford relayed that house markers in other communities often choose the name on the deed when the house is constructed, but may also include later occupants who are historically significant.

8) Preservation Awards

Ms. Saalfied reported that she intends to reach out to Annette Bagley and Valerie Kinkaid, former commission members who launched the Preservation Award program about five years ago, regarding the possibility of a Request for Proposals and an event next spring.

9) Battle Road Scenic Byway

Ms. Nelson reported that the Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee submitted a grant application for nearly \$1 million. The Committee includes four communities plus the Minute Man National Historical Park. She described the various components of the project scope, which varied from community to community. Mr. Bogosian asked whether the scope of Great American Outdoors Act project described earlier in the evening overlaps with that of the proposed grant project. Ms. Nelson indicated that there may be some overlap since the information regarding the GAOA project only recently became available. The Cape Cod Commission submitted an application as well.

10) Thoreau Street District

Ms. Saalfied said that there was no update on Ms. Dahlmann's presentation from the last meeting, encouraging the commission members to share their views. Ms. Nelson asked whether the project was part of Ms. Dahlmann's college program and said that the commission could not be responsible for overseeing student work. Ms. Saalfied said that she believed that it was an independent project, unrelated to school, and that the project would need to have the support of the property owners. Would the commission have recommendations on next steps, such as reaching out the owners? Ms. Clifford mentioned that historical survey work could be done. Completing or updating informational survey forms (Form B's) would not require the permission of the owner, but applying for National Historic Landmark status requires owner permission. There was some discussion on whether the Commission should take a stance one way or another, particularly considering the community response to proposed activities in that area at the most recent Town Meeting.

11) Minutes and Other Business

Ms. Nelson motioned to approve the minutes from June 9, 2022, provided that the "Minute Man National Historical Park" is properly referenced. Mr. Bogosian seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Saalfied concluded the meeting by encouraging Commission members to attend the August 9<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting.

When Ms. Nelson asked about the status of the Wright Tavern preservation restriction, Ms. Clifford responded that the Town attorney is in the process of reviewing her comments. She offered to share those comments with Ms. Nelson.

Ms. Nelson also inquired about posting the Battle Road Scenic Byway grant application to the website. Ms. Clifford reported that she had not seen the application but would check in with Ms. Hughes.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:46 PM.

Minutes Approved: August 11, 2022

Respectfully submitted by:  
Ann Clifford, Senior Planner