

Historical Commission Minutes 12/19/17

FINAL

Present for the Historical Commission and attending the meeting were: Jane Slater, Chairman, Lenny Jason, Jim Malkin, John Flender, Steve McGhee and Chuck Hodgkinson. Mark London and Pam Goff also attended. Barbara Armstrong did not attend.

Ms. Slater opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

Mark London – Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC) discussion: Ms. Slater welcomed Mr. London to the meeting and asked him to explain his proposal. Mr. London said he has been working with the island's historical commissions and historic district commissions to produce an updated inventory of historic structures in each island town. He said the working definition of historic is a building that is at least 100 years old. He added that once the inventory is documented each town would then review its list of historic structures to determine those that have value. He then said with each town's agreement a professional service could be hired to identify, research and catalogue each historic house that is at least 100 years old. Also, each town would have its own contract. He added CPA historic preservation funds could be used to fund the study. Mr. London referred to the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) website which has forms to fill out for a structure to be entered into their database. The lists are organized by county. He said the MHC link is "MHC MACRIS" (Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System).

The Commission asked several questions regarding the choice of a structure being 100 years old to qualify. This suggests the cutoff year would increase by one year every year. Perhaps picking a fixed date such as "Houses built before 1900" would be easier to track and organize. The Commission further asked what is the purpose of compiling the lists or, how will they be used. They specifically inquired how they will be used by the MVC. It was then pointed out that the MVC has a checklist regulating the demolition of historic houses. This essentially takes the decision-making authority away from the local historical commissions when determining what's best for the homeowner and structure. It was also mentioned Chilmark has a Town bylaw regulating the demolition of historic resources that are identified in the Town's Master Plan. After much exploration of the concept and discussion Ms. Slater asked Ms. Goff if she might be interested in representing the Town on this initiative and keep the Commission up to date on its progress from time to time. Ms. Goff agreed but, asked for staff assistance. The Commission thanked Ms. Goff and agreed Chuck H. will help. Ms. Slater then thanked Mr. London for taking the time to explain his project. Best wishes for the holiday season were exchanged.

Administration: The October 17, 2017 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as presented by consensus.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 16, 2018 @ 4:00 PM.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Chuck Hodgkinson, CAS.