

# Truro Historical Commission

Truro Town Hall

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Minutes Joint Meeting of the Truro Historical Commission and the Truro Historical Review Board September 12, 2015 – Cobb Memorial Archive

Present THC: Matt Kiefer, Richard Larkin, Helen McNeil-Ashton, Robin Robertson, Chuck Steinman (Chair)

HRB: Matt Kiefer (Chair), David Perry, Chuck Steinman (Clerk), Fred Todd

Others: John Marksbury, Jim Summers, Bill Worthington

## 1. Approval of Minutes

HRB minutes from May 17, 2014 and January 4, 2014: it was moved and accepted to approve the minutes.

THC minutes from August 28, 2015: It was moved and accepted to approve the minutes.

Chuck Steinman will file copies of approved minutes at Town Hall.

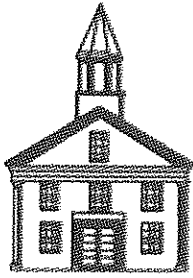
## 2. Highland House Museum CPA Application

Jim Summers, Director of the Truro Historical Society, (THS) presented the draft Preservation and Restoration Plan for Highland House Museum prepared by the THS and Hammer Architects for review and comment by the Commission before a grant application is submitted to the Truro Community Preservation Committee. Highland House is owned by the Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS) and leased to the THS.

Questions were asked about whether the conditions assessment was sufficiently comprehensive to give a complete picture of the building's needs, and was there an estimated cost. Jim Summers noted that the proposed grant application would be for Hammer Architects to produce advanced architectural design, engineering and cost estimates for the whole building for a proposed four-phased project. In addition, a request for funding for restoration of the highest priority at-risk problems on the South side would include estimates for the construction design documents, bidding, and construction of window replacement, new sheathing and some framing that is a likely to need replacement. Mark Hammer would produce these estimates based on some estimates already on hand for the window replacement. Chuck Steinman noted that a contingency figure should be included from the architect and structural engineer for the likely event of finding other problems and structural faults.

As summarized by Matt Kiefer, the goals of the grant application are:

- A. To stabilize a historic building of importance to Truro
- B. To preserve the THS collections under conditions that meet modern museum standards



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- C. To increase visitors, service to the community, and provide disabled access to the entire collection.

Richard Larkin noted that the CCNS had done an analysis of the building, a shorter report 4 years ago, and reference to the deterioration of the building since these reports should be included.

Matt Kiefer moved, and Robin Robertson seconded a motion for the THC to write a letter supporting the THS grant application assuming the above issues are addressed. This was passed unanimously, Helen McNeil-Ashton and Richard Larkin abstaining because they are on the board of the THS.

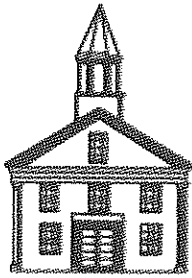
### 3. Draft Amendments to National Seashore Zoning

Bill Worthington, of the Truro Planning Board presented new zoning proposals for the Truro Seashore District involving increased Site Plan Review and size limitations. John Marksbury and Chuck Steinman have participated in researching and drafting this document and have received CCNS input on it. Charlene Greenhalgh has also provided valuable input and assistance in preparing the draft.

The document was reviewed. Among its recommendations are additional requirements triggering Site Plan Review including (1) a 50% increase in aggregate floor area for dwellings and accessory buildings, and (2) a permanent material change to the landscape from clearing, grading, or filling. The size limit for construction has not been decided but is likely to be in the region of 4,600 sq.ft, including the main dwelling and also accessory buildings, enclosed porches, covered decks, and decks more than 5 ft above grade. It would also become the responsibility of the property owner/proponent to submit to the Planning Board a letter of review from the Secretary of the Interior and seek to obtain their approval.

Fred Todd inquired about the Planning Board experience with Site Plan Review and Bill Worthington noted that hitherto it almost always related to commercial development, of which none is allowed in the Seashore District. Fred also suggested that the framers of the amendment speak to Gooz Draz, who drew up the similar but more stringent Wellfleet amendment.

The purpose of the presentation is for information sharing and to obtain feedback before the amendment is finalized to present to the Planning Board and then to Town meeting in April 2016. When the amendment is finalized the support of the THC will be sought.



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Helen McNeil-Ashton and others recommended that it is important to emphasize the benefits already enjoyed by property owners within the National Seashore and the protection these amendments will offer them against untrammelled building next to their properties. It was discussed that property owners in the Seashore District have a responsibility to the entire community to protect this important resource, which may limit what they can do to their property. The threat of removal of a non-condemnation certificate was judged to be largely ineffectual since the CCNS lacks the funds to purchase and demolish properties.

Matt Kiefer made a motion, seconded by Robin Robertson, to commend Chuck, John and Bill on their drafting of the amendment; the motion passed unanimously.

#### 4. Other Business

##### Timing and coordination of reviews that involve the Historical Review Board:

Helen McNeil-Ashton asked whether there has been progress with proposals to streamline the permitting process for major renovations and demolitions by placing the Historical Review Board earlier in the process. David Perry reported that he had spoken to Bob Weinstein in Bob's role as Board of Selectmen liaison to the THC and that Bob had been in favor of this idea, but nothing else has been done.

##### Truro Conservation Trust:

Bill Worthington reported that the Truro Conservation Trust is reviewing its policy to not accept built properties in the light of recent offers including the Kisliak property at Ballston Beach. The THC had discussed this property at its previous meeting and since it is an iconic late Victorian Beach cottage with an intact interior the Commission hopes it can be preserved. It as noted that this property generates an excellent rental income and could be managed by an agent. "Money is always attractive," remarked Bill Worthington and it was felt that the meeting could end on that note.

Helen McNeil-Ashton moved and Robin Robertson seconded, a motion to adjourn, which was unanimously accepted. The meeting adjourned at 12:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen McNeil-Ashton

