



CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Gloucester Historical Commission
MEETING MINUTES

August 31, 2026, at 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Rose Baker Senior Center, 1st floor conference room
6 Manuel F. Lewis Street, Gloucester, MA 01930

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android: <https://gloucester-ma-gov.zoom.us/j/87239165412>; Web ID 872 3916 5412

Called to order: 6:32 pm

Present: Maggie Debbie, Julie Travers, Bob Whitmarsh, Sue Roberts-Wright, Tim Quinn, Ralph Pisaturo (Zoom), Susan Morreale

ADMINISTRATION

- Approval of June 29, 2026 Meeting Minutes
 - Maggie makes a motion, Bob seconds, all in favor
- Overview of the year so far:
 - January: Year in Review for 2025
 - February: Maggie replaced Bob as CPC liaison, Bobby Grady
 - March: expenditures of \$1000 approved, tercentenary markers updated on website
 - April: reduced Google Docs storage
 - May: Preservation Awards, 11 recipients; City Council passed Demo-Delay Ordinance
 - June: Elections, Julie secretary, Maggie vice chair, Susan chair; approved land acknowledgement plaque for DAR; Stephanie Buck researching historic houses; voted for 9 historic projects for CPC funding
 - August: distributed 14 new house plaques so far in 2026
- Website changes, made the most changes possible until city IT can allow us to control our site
 - 7/15/26 Ralph posted Demo-delay docs: city council Ordinance vote and list of eligible houses
 - 7/1 Ralph posted updated list of Gloucester's Historic Designations
 - One more preservation restriction added

DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE

- 7/14/26 Susan sent list to Rob Vicari/Building Inspector
 - As of now, no notification from Building Dept that a demo permit application has been requested
- Need/create description for website (see Mendon <https://mendonma.gov/257/Demolition-Delay-By-Law>)
- Tim – creating list of historical contractors; to be placed on Google Docs under Demo-delay
 - Tim spoke to Gary Uhring of GC Uhring to see if he could recommend other historic contractors, but we need to structure list for scale and budget of each project
 - Other options:
 - Heirloom Builders, Candlelight Construction, GC Uhring, Ted Sarkisian: finish carpentry

HISTORIC HOUSE PLAQUES (Susan)

Currently 73 on Interactive map *Susan takes house photos when plaques are up and adds to interactive plaque map*

New applications for vote:

- 281 East Main St (Daniel A. & Sarah J. Gill, Fisherman, c.1855)
 - Already in MACRIS, research done by Gloucester Archives
- 5 Wiley St (East Gloucester Yacht Club, 1901-1918)
 - Joe Garland's book, *Eastern Point*, Susan and Julie completed research
- 28 Friend St (Eben Brown, Master Mariner, c1850)
 - Deed research done by Stephanie Buck
- 11 Pirates Lane/ NSAA (Est. 1922)
 - Deed research done by Julie and Susan
 - Art Center since 1922, building was built in the 1880s
- 34-36 Summer St (Unitarian Parsonage, 1917-1939)
 - Deed research done by Julie
- 1206 Washington St (Moses Parsons, Yeoman, 1834)
 - Deed research completed by Russell Hobbs

- Maggie makes a motion to accept all houses, Bob seconds, all in favor
 - Susan will contact each owner and give them order form
- First year 9 plaques, second year 8 plaques, this year 14 plaques given so far
 - In total, 31 have been given in the three years since the plaque program was restarted
- All plaque research is currently on GHC Google Drive
- Approved, new plaques delivered in June and July:
 - 1245 Washington St, Lanesville – (Capt. John Woodbery & his wife Susanna Lane, c.1790)
 - 27 Vernon St (John & Frances Bishop, Shipwright/Vincent Cove, 1884)
 - 12 Arlington St, Annisquam (Elias and Dorcas Davis House/ Shipwright, c1835) (NEED PHOTO)
 - 6 Pew Ave (Charles H. Pew, John Pew & Son Wholesale Dealers in Fish, 1883)

2026 MACRIS UPDATES (Julie)

- New list of ongoing status created
- Recent work
 - 505 Washington Street completed
 - 5 Wiley Street completed
 - 12 Wonson Street in progress

TERCENTENARY MARKERS (Tim)

- Tim made a 3D QR code that links to our website. He is taking on the project with an engineering student at Gloucester High School to have the QR code laser-engraved into a stainless steel post.
- The student will present to the group as early as our next meeting on September 28
- Gloucester Education Foundation provided funds for the project, but materials would need to be donated. Tim will look into donations for materials.

2027 PRESERVATION AWARD NOMINEES

- Need to begin thinking and watching for 2027 nominees
 - Some new options proposed by Bob Whitmarsh:
 - 118 Prospect Street
 - 225 Washington Street
 - Need volunteer to maintain list - Bob will keep the list.
- Need volunteer to schedule venue
 - Ask CAM to host, library as a back up
 - Thursday night priority, May 13 or 20
 - Ralph will contact Kathleen at CAM to find out if either date is available.
- Request from Robert Aspe to replace his 2025 certificate; Susan duplicated, he rec'd it 7/12

CPC UPDATE (Maggie)

- Review CPC-mandated qualification criteria for CPC-funded historic projects
 - Former criteria was inclusion in MACRIS
 - New criteria: One or more of these designations - Local Historic District, Local Landmark, MA Archaeo/Historic Landmark, National Historic Landmark, Preservation Restriction OR applicant needs to attend a GHC meeting to verify historic significance
- Brief update on 10 applicants requesting historic funding
 - **Hammond Castle** – Replacing severely deteriorated windows on the ocean-facing side of the castle with historically accurate replicas fabricated by the same company that fabricated the original windows when the castle was built nearly 100 years ago (Hope's Windows, Inc).
 - **Schooner Adventure** – Replace planking and top timbers and side rail. They have already purchased (some with prior CPC funds) the wood needed and it will be available and properly dried and seasoned in advance of the work to be done. They are very conscious, knowledgeable, and experienced about their historic asset and its appropriate treatment.
 - **UU Cemetery** – Conservation of gravestones. "This work will be done by a conservation professional and carried out in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and its treatment for rehabilitation." (from their application)

- **Maritime Gloucester** – Rehabilitation of the marine railway. They will be replacing chain links and other specialized pieces of equipment. It will be managed and overseen by qualified professionals.
- **VOTE on Burnham Marine Railways: Bob makes a motion, Susan seconds, all in favor**
- **North Shore Arts** – Looking to replace, on the second floor, six windows and add a window where there is now a door, historic plaque application approved tonight.
- **Saunders House Reading Room** – Adding an accessible bathroom, addressing structural ceiling issues and replacing outdated ceiling tiles with historically appropriate plaster, reconstructing sub-flooring to make it level with the adjacent Matz Gallery, removing non-historic wall shelving and cabinets and prepping and repainting walls. Some of this work is within the historical portion of the building. The budget for the project was developed from cost estimates prepared by a contractor and through the Spencer Preservation Group
- **RNCC** – The RNCC currently requires significant restoration to include floor, front entry, and window frames due to years of continuous public use and challenging weather conditions. The front gateway to Rocky Neck Art Colony's 1877 Cultural Center is the first impression visitors receive, reflecting the care, vitality and historical significance of this beloved cultural landmark. Restoring the Cultural Center's original historic window sashes preserves a defining architectural feature of the building while maintaining its historic integrity without replacing the windows. Confirmation of the preservation specialists' involvement is needed.
- **Gloucester Stage** – The funds are to be used for repointing brickwork, as the mortar has deteriorated in many areas due to the proximity to saltwater. It has been over 40 years since the building was last repointed. An expert mason has assessed the building and identified visible damage, although more may be found once the cracks are opened. Repairs could involve simple mortar work or may require replacing several courses of brick. One large wall is completely obscured by decades of ivy and vine growth and needs further examination.
- **Wellspring House** – The original clapboard siding of this 1709 structure has deteriorated significantly and is in need of replacement and repair, along with rot repair and restoration of period trim and decorative corner pieces. Maggie will obtain more information about the experience of Heirloom Builders and their specific plans for this building.
- **Manship** – The larger project is the renovation of the Ox Barn complex, the former studio and exhibition space used by Paul Manship. As the first phase of a larger campus revitalization effort, this phase will restore the heart of the Manship landscape – the West Arbor. It is currently not able to be used due to a safety issue. It will be recreated to Paul Manship's specifications thereby expanding opportunities for artists and the public to use and enjoy the space. MARS will use the detailed project cost estimate prepared by Applewood Enterprises as well as recent Historic Structure Reports to engage appropriately qualified contractors with experience in historic renovation projects.

REGISTER OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

- Ultimate goal is to create a central database for the city of all historic buildings
- Subcommittee: Susan, Ralph, Julie
- *1900 and 1920 year of build was arbitrarily assigned, these need to be corrected*
- *Start with determining actual build year of 3,200 houses listed as 1900*
 - Russell & Melissa Hobbs are researching 126 Lanesville houses built 1900 per city
 - Stephanie Buck is working on a list starting near Eastern Point built 1900 per city
 - PROGRESS – slow but moving forward
- Benefit of making corrections: expands Demo-delay list; corrects Tax assessment records + MACRIS
 - CORRECTIONS TO CITY YEAR OF BUILD: inform Tim Good of changes
 - SUBMIT CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO MACRIS WHERE NEEDED: Julie
 - UPDATE DEMO-DELAY LIST: Susan/Ralph to update list and keep Building Dept informed

PRESERVATION RESTRICTIONS APPLICANTS, Historic New England:

1. **RIGGS HOUSE** - Preservation Restriction approved by City Council in June 2026

2. **WILLIAM HASKELL HOUSE**

First period, 1680, 11 Lincoln St, owner Richard Samuelson

8/24/26 Phone message to Susan inquiring about promotion of historic homes in Gloucester
Converting property to a family trust, and applying for Preservation Restriction through Historic New England. Bob Booth talked to Richard about forming a family trust based on his experience creating one for Pickering House in Salem.

3. **TUCKER House -HAYDEN Cottage**

First period, c1720; MACRIS GLO.443, 64R Eastern Point Blvd, Eastern Point

Pursuing a Preservation Easement with Historic New England; GHC notified by David Rosen (per 9/1/26 email to Susan) whose firm, LandVest will represent seller/Grantor when it is sold

DEED RESTRICTION

- 140 Wheeler St – house and shed cannot be demolished, Salem Deeds Bk 42718, pg 081

LANESVILLE/Lane's Cove NATIONAL REGISTRY DISTRICT APPLICATION (Ralph)

- **First step:** Letter created by Ralph and emailed 8/20/26 to MHC seeking approval for a nomination; Reply from Ben Haley/Nat Reg Director at MHC 8/24/26:
"Evaluations for National Register eligibility are undertaken by reviewing recent Inventory form documentation. In the case of Certified Local Governments like Gloucester, the historical commission of that municipality undertakes the first evaluation and provides its opinion on a specific form and then provides that to us along with whatever Inventory form(s) were used for the evaluation. The MHC then reviews the material and concurs, disagrees, or requests additional information. I have attached the CLG NR opinion form. I see the 2016 Inventory form for Lanesville. As a ten-year-old form for a couple dozen properties, that can form the basis for an evaluation, but since quite a lot can change in ten years, the existing conditions there will need to be reviewed by someone (the historical commission, a consultant) and updated on Inventory Continuation Sheets (the template for that can be found here: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/mhc/mhc-forms.htm>). This new documentation must include new photography and any information on demolitions, new construction, and additions/major alterations to previously documented resources. If you wish to propose a smaller area, I recommend that the commission create or fund the creation of an Area form specifically for this smaller area. Please note, however, that National Register district boundaries are not chosen based on potential property owner support. They are determined by the extent of historic thematic/functional relationships. A property related to one or more themes for a proposed district cannot be omitted because an owner objects to inclusion. I hope this is helpful."
- Due to concerns and uncertainty in obtaining funding, Ralph volunteered to take a first pass at completing the form for the smaller area of Lanes Cove, landing, Fish Shack, cemetery + others

LANES COVE PLAQUE (Ralph)

- High-level research document sent to GHC 8/24/26 by Ralph
- Update on project: place a plaque in the original location of John Lane's original house
- Research by Russell and Melissa Hobbs
- Need a letter of recommendation from Historic Commission; Ralph to draft letter
- Russell and Ralph will meet with Mike Hale to see if they can put the plaque on public property
- Plaque is \$2500, small amount of landscaping dependent on how much money they can raise
- Bob makes a motion to have a letter written in support of the project, Maggie seconded, all in favor

Next Meeting: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Rose Baker Senior Center, 2nd Floor conference room, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Adjourned 7:57 pm

Bob makes a motion, Maggie seconded, all in favor