

NHDHR Survey Grant
Expert Panel Meeting
Center Harbor Town Offices - Cary Mead Room
February 15, 2017

Meeting Notes

Present:

Mae Williams, Professional Consultant
Amy Dixon, NH Division of Historical Resources, Grants Coordinator
Nadine Miller, NH Division of Historical Resources, Preservation Project Reviewer
Kim Roberts, NH Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Field Representative
Witney Welch, NH Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Hazard Mitigation Planner
Mike Izard, Lakes Region Planning Commission
Amy Reardon, GreenTek Mapping Services (GIS Mapping)
Gail Pare, Chairperson, Newington Historic District Commission
Jack Pare, Newington Planning Board
Harry Viens, Chairperson, Center Harbor Board of Selectmen
David Reilly, Center Harbor Planning Board & Center Harbor Heritage Commission
Kim Baker, Chairperson, Center Harbor Heritage Commission
Karen Ponton, Secretary, Center Harbor Heritage Commission

Meeting called to order by Mae Williams at 10:15 am.

Mae Williams shared that today's meeting is intended to be a roundtable discussion with various experts in the fields of survey work, GIS mapping, historical resources, town and regional planning, and hazard mitigation. This discussion will help her create a useful survey model process and engage the community, while keeping costs relatively low. (A town survey of historical resources can cost upwards of \$15,000). She is working towards developing a town survey, similar to what is used for Town Master Plans, with a visual component using GIS mapping. She especially requested help with hazard mitigation.

Comments, Suggestions and Recommendations: (not in order of priority)

1. Focus the survey method around broad themes or eras that helped define a town's history. For example, with Center Harbor, these could be agriculture, tourism, manufacturing (Slab City). Then, identify the historical resources that fit those themes. Also, define the limits of the survey.
2. Most official surveys of historical resources include only those on or eligible for listing on the *National or State Registers of Historic Places*. This model survey could include others that are not eligible for listing but are important to the town.

3. Model survey would not evaluate the significance of these resources, but could suggest priorities and strategies for the future evaluation, for example, pursuing grant funding.
4. Historical maps can be stretched to overlap existing maps. (The UNH Granit System does this with maps from the 1930s onward). This may help show patterns of settlement, transport and development.
5. Five-year or decade layers are possible to show changes or patterns over time.
6. It is important to recognize why historical resources are where they are.
7. Assessing risks to historical resources would tie into local hazard mitigation plans, which are updated every 5 years.
8. Model process could ask to what extent are historical resources already tied into Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Much time was spent discussing how GIS mapping could make the model survey more useful.

9. GIS allows you to click on a site and get a concise summary about the property.
10. Historical maps could be overlapped with flood area maps.
11. Fires are a significant threat to historical resources in Center Harbor. With GIS, you could marry historical sites with the path of fire, hailstorms, floods, tornadoes, etc.
12. It is difficult to get a fire truck into some areas of Center Harbor in the winter, which poses a significant fire risk. With GIS, you could overlay a map that shows, for example, that there is only a dirt road access to a property. (H. Viens referred Mae to Fire Chief Leon Manville for a copy of the protocols for treating fires in different areas of town).
13. With geo-referencing, a map of fire hydrants (all of which are dry hydrants in Center Harbor) could be overlapped with the historical resources map.
14. Anything that can be fixed to a point can be stacked up and overlaid with GIS. Anyone can use a smartphone with geo-location to mark sites. This information can be extracted and put on a layer. Also, with optical scanning, you can get a text of what is being scanned.
15. Culverts in town could be mapped with GIS. (Harry Viens referred Mae to Road Agent Jeff Haines, who has a list of all culverts in Center Harbor).
16. Sometimes staff are hired to do the extracting or mapping, which can be expensive. Some towns that have this staff are letting them go; other towns find they can't do the work themselves and are considering hiring staff. The question was raised as to whether towns could work with the County Planning Commissions on this.

17. It was noted that UNH and Plymouth State have GIS classes. College students are a potential pool of volunteers to collect data for towns, perhaps for work-study, independent study credit or master theses. (Amy Reardon has a contact at PSU and will get the name for Mae).
18. UNH offers GIS classes for the general public. Does PSU?
19. Does PSU allow you to check out GIS equipment or field collection devices? UNH extension does.
20. A map overlay could be developed that allows the general community to input sites. This "crowd-sourced layer" might later be determined an official layer.
21. A suggestion was to look at the NHDHR website *My New Hampshire Photosharing Map*. Using this website, the public can send information about, for example, their favorite place in town to a collection site. Something similar might help with collecting information about local sites that the community identifies as significant.
22. You can also click on a property identified by a pin and get information. For hazard mitigation purposes, this information could be past and future hazards associated with the property or area. For security purposes, there would be a special sign-in.
23. Archaeological sites can also be fixed on a map. A special sign-in was suggested so you don't have unauthorized persons accessing these properties and damaging or looting artifacts. (Incidentally, the foundation of the oldest building in Center Harbor may be buried somewhere on H. Viens property).
24. A suggestion was to google "Smartphone data collection" for more "how-to" information.
25. NHDHR receives many town surveys for review. It might be helpful if the towns received copies of relevant surveys. These town surveys are posted on NHDHR meeting agendas. Anyone can request being placed on the mailing list. (Nadine Miller will follow-up with DHR and let Mae know).

Time was also spent discussing ways to engage the community (see some items above) and enlist volunteers. This is a major task, in and of itself.

26. Suggestion was to hold a large public meeting followed by roundtable meetings with local groups, such as the historical society. Local land trusts might be included.
27. Give a short presentation at Town Meeting to introduce the project to town residents. (Harry Viens suggested that Mae contact the Town Moderator Charlie Hanson to see how she might do this at our March 15 Town Meeting).
28. Develop a list of what you need to get done, including specific tasks.
29. Develop a list of rules and expectations for volunteers, including how long it is expected to take to complete a specific task.

30. Consider that the potential pool of volunteers is different for small towns as compared to large cities.
31. Mae would like helping compiling a solid bibliography for the project. She thought the Heritage Commission might help by gathering biblio information for her from the *Town Master Plan* and the *Town Hazard Mitigation Plan*.
32. K. Baker, Heritage Commission chairperson, asked Mae to write a mission statement and clearly define what she wants from the Heritage Commission. K. Baker would then organize a subcommittee to do the work.
33. English students at Interlakes High School might be a source of volunteers for gathering bibliographic information as part of a work-study program or community service project.
34. Senior centers are another source of volunteers, as well as another venue for promoting the project in the community.
35. Many elder town residents are a wonderful source of a town's oral history. This history is being lost as these residents pass on. In addition to senior centers, *Old Home Days* may be times to gather oral history. This could also be a valuable community service project for students. Smartphones could be used.
36. It is also possible to set up a GIS map that allows an individual to input a property and author their own information. For example, a homeowner could input the history of their property and any anecdotal stories about it. A form or template to be completed by the homeowner was recommended. The information could then be exported to a database.
37. Helping with field data might be an appropriate Eagle Scout project. For example, Eagle Scouts helped identify and map old stone walls for one NH town.

Other

38. An additional goal is to make the survey product useful for Regional Planning Commissions and the Office of Emergency Management.
39. The model survey process could indicate areas where more thorough survey is indicated in the future.
40. Another goal for the survey product may be to help mitigate the threats of development and infrastructure to historical resources.
41. Local surveyors may be another source of information (e.g. David Dolan).

Next Step

Mae will review notes from today's meeting as she continues to work on developing a product proposal for review by NHDHR, the Center Harbor Heritage Commission and the Town Planning Board at their March meetings.

The Heritage Commission will meet March 16; the Planning Board, March 7. If the March 7 date is too tight, it is suggested that Mae ask Charlie Hanson, Planning Board chairperson, if he could schedule a second Planning Board meeting for March 21.

Mae thanked everyone for attending and for their helpful comments and feedback. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ponton
Secretary Pro Tempore