

Siasconset Civic Association Member Meeting
August 8, 2022

President's Report by Lynn Filipski

Lynn welcomed the membership. She was pleased to report that Sconset has a new food truck, Sushi Sean. She mentioned the success of the Sconset Trust's Jog in the Fog, the SBPF's house tour, On the Isle's production of the musical The Titanic and the Chapel's Lobsterpooza fundraiser. She reminded the membership that The Hospital Thrift Shop picks up items on Tuesdays in Sconset. The Marine Mammal Alliance has held informative workshops on the Sconset beach all summer and the SCA held the annual Bike and Scooter Safety Day. Lynn thanked the Casino for hosting the meeting, the Sconset Market for providing some of the food, and all the volunteers. She thanked the invited guests, Leslie Woodson Snell, the Deputy Director of Planning; Lauren Sinatra, the Energy Program and Outreach Coordinator; and Gail Walker, the founder of Nantucket Lights. She also noted special guest Fire Chief Stephen Murphy and his many years of service.

Lynn asked for a moment of silence for those Sconset community members who we have lost but will always be a part of the spirit of Sconset..

Lynn reminded the membership that the Sconset Civic Association's mission is to preserve the residential and historical character of the village while promoting improvements. Member meetings provide a forum to share ideas. Our membership currently consists of 320 households and 430 total members. She urged those who have not renewed to do so online.

Lynn reported that our July annual meeting included the election of new board members, the announcement of our scholarship winner, Caiden Shea, the approval of our 2023 budget, a membership update and the presentation by our Town Manager, Libby Gibson. The minutes of that meeting and the 2023 budget are on our website.

The Civic Association follows many issues concerning homeowners including preservation, noise, traffic safety, coastal resiliency and proposed warrant articles. At this meeting the focus was on projects including Bike and Scooter Safety day, Clean Team, Beautification, and Dark Sky. Lynn then introduced the Board Members: Karel Greenberg as Vice President, Scholarship and Bike Safety; Maggie Boone as Secretary; Wendy Holding as Treasurer, David Bailey as Assistant Treasurer and Coastal Resilience Liaison; Robert Franklin, Membership and Bike Safety; Tom Loughin, Clean Team; Matt Fremont-Smith, Preservation; Betsy Boe, Bylaws and

Beautification; Cindy Nelson, Infrastructure and Special Events; John Shea, Infrastructure and Traffic Safety; Bill Druckemiller, Noise and Special Events; and Holly Pagon, Marketing and Communications.

Lynn announced that she recently walked the village with the Director of the DPW, Stephen Arceneaux, and pointed out areas of concern to him. The tour included subjects such as routine maintenance of the flagpole; the bluff walk; rock, stake and privet encroachments; road conditions; water run off near the beach; the bus shelter and the sidewalk; Middle Gully Road and the retaining walls. Lynn reiterated how grateful we are for the partnership with the DPW. Future projects may include a winterized comfort station and an electric recharging station.

Lynn recognized the generosity of residents who have helped fund improvements. Postmistress Julianna Schultz and fireman Charlie Kymer helped with the replacement of the flag at the rotary. Amy Manning has generously offered her services to the improvement and maintenance of many village properties. Anne Dougherty and Dan Webster have donated two Elm trees for town property on New Street. Lynn encouraged people to get involved and donate their time and talents. She suggested considering the non-resident taxpayer committee and the three at large spots on the short term rental working group.

Lynn asked that we work together to be good neighbors and follow the town bylaws regarding encroachment, noise, outdoor lighting, bike laws, and speed limits. Lynn reminded the members that answers to questions regarding town bylaws can be found on our website or can be sent to sconsetcivic@gmail.com.

Lynn then introduced our current projects. Bike Safety, Clean Team, Beautification, and Dark Sky.

Membership Report and Bike and Scooter Safety Day by Robert Franklin and Karel Greenberg

Robert reported that the SCA picked up 35 new member households since the July Member meeting. We now have 320 member households and 430 total members. There will be renewals and possibly new members at the August membership meeting. These, along with the renewals we expect to receive after our fall mailing to lapsed users will help us to achieve or surpass the goal of 345 households. Robert reminded everyone to make every effort to renew their memberships online with a credit card.

Karel announced that Bike and Scooter Safety day was successful with approximately 50+ children turning up to learn the rules of the road and practice on the course set up by the NPD. The children received t-shirts and bicycle lights courtesy of the Civic Association, NPD badges from the NPD, and coupons for ice cream cones thanks to the Sconset Market.

They thanked Cassie Thompson and Renee Bushard of the NPD for doing such a fantastic job with the children.

Clean Team Report by Tom Loughlin

The Sconset Clean team participated in the island-wide Nantucket Litter Derby on April 2. We held pre- and post-picnic clean-ups during the Daffodil Festival on April 23 and 24. We held a clean-up along with the Nantucket Clean Team and visiting members of the USS Nantucket on June 18 which was followed by a reception for the visiting crew members hosted and organized by Lynn Filipski and Cindy Nelson. We held a Clean Team event on July 16. We have a clean-up planned for this Saturday August 13, as well as September 10 and October 8.

Beautification Report by Betsy Boe

The Siasconset Civic Association oversees three public spaces in the village: the Rotary garden, Larsen Park's new native plant and butterfly garden and the planters at Pump Square. Plantings begin in April with some spring touches of Daffodils in time for the Daffodil parade and then are followed by spring plantings of annuals and perennials.

In the past three years, Amy Manning Landscape has overseen these spaces as well as adding Daffodils to the triangle at Coffin Street and Sankaty Road. I think you will agree that the village looks beautiful due to her team's efforts and diligence. Although we have an irrigation system at Larsen Park and water is provided free of charge by Wannacommet, the gardeners do have to hand water the other spaces.

Amy donates much of her staff's time at the rotary and we are forever grateful for her attention.

Nantucket Lights by Gail Walker

Gail Walker, former Civic Association Vice President, gave the following updates about her work as founder and president of Nantucket Lights (<https://nantucketlights.org>), a citizen advocacy group exclusively dedicated to combating light pollution on Nantucket to preserve its dark skies.

Nantucket Lights is hosting another public forum on Tuesday September 20, 2022, at the Atheneum. The topic this time will be all the ways that light pollution is harmful, to humans as well as wildlife, and the guest speaker will be an officer of the

Massachusetts Chapter of the International Dark Sky Association.

In partnership with the Maria Mitchell Association, Nantucket Lights has launched a Sky Quality Monitoring Program to measure the brightness of the sky at night at eight locations around the island on specified days. This will allow light pollution on the island to be tracked over time and will also satisfy one of the requirements for Nantucket being certified as an International Dark Sky Community by the International Dark Sky Association.

The Town of Nantucket has retained a consultant who specializes in the conversion of municipal streetlights to LED, to study and report on the feasibility of Nantucket doing that and what the cost savings would be. Nantucket Lights has provided recommendations for the most dark-sky friendly options and is hopeful that those will be considered in the study and ultimately chosen by the Town. For those eager to have broken streetlights in Sconset repaired or replaced, she urged patience, to allow the Town to complete its investigation. This is a critical decision point because, if not chosen wisely, LED streetlights can make light pollution a lot worse. The current fixtures are high pressure sodium (HPS) which are becoming obsolete. If a repair is insisted on now, you might end up with an LED fixture you will regret.

In addition to monitoring developments on the streetlight front, Nantucket Lights will also be working with Leslie Snell, the Deputy Director of Planning, to draft an updated outdoor lighting bylaw for consideration at next year's annual town meeting. The existing bylaw (Chapter 102 of the Nantucket Code) was adopted in 2005 and is no longer consistent with current best practices. But until an updated bylaw is passed, it's important that the existing bylaw be complied with, so Gail is also in discussions with Ms. Snell about how that could be better promoted and enforced by the Town.

Gail ended her remarks with reminders about how each of us can help preserve our dark skies: (1) make sure your own property is dark sky friendly, which means not only complying with the existing outdoor lighting bylaw but also following the principles for responsible outdoor lighting explained in the brochure that was distributed at the meeting (also available at the Sconset rotary, beneath the Civic Association's bulletin board); (2) help educate others by distributing the brochure, putting a "Save the Night" bumper sticker on your car (available from Nantucket Lights at no charge), and learning more about the harm from light pollution so that you can tell others about it; (3) make a donation to Nantucket Lights via its GoFundMe campaign; and (4) join the Nantucket Lights mailing list to get updates and calls to action directly to your inbox.

Retirement of Fire Chief Stephen Murphy

Lynn introduced Fire Chief Stephen Murphy and thanked him for his 31 years of service by introducing him with these remarks:

In March, Nantucket Fire Chief Steve Murphy announced he was retiring September 1st after 31 years in the department. Chief Murphy joined as a junior firefighter in 1991 after working at Nantucket Memorial Airport following his graduation from Nantucket High School.

When first named Chief in 2017, Mr. Murphy said his main focus was to “strengthen the skills and abilities of the people who work here.” That meant investing in advanced skills and training of firefighters and upgrading the ambulances with paramedics. He oversees a \$4 million capital investment plan that replaced ambulances and two fire engines as well as added advanced life support equipment, self-contained breathing apparatus, PFAS free gear and more.

The Fire Department is busy and in July alone this year responded to 587 Fire and EMS calls versus last year’s July total of 475. We all saw how incredible the department handled the Veranda House fire and how the three-alarm fire at the Summer House in August 2019 was contained, potentially saving the south side of the Village. Fire safety is crucial as we all know.

In his letter to Libby Gibson requesting retirement, he said: “In a small town, the fire chief needs to be both political and function on the ground so that when there is an ambulance call you can be there.” He clearly has been both the administrative leader of the department overseeing the completion of a new fire station as well as a leader in a crisis when people are suffering the worst days of their lives.

On behalf of the Sconset community, Lynn thanked him for his service. She wished him a very happy retirement and asked him to say a few words.

Chief Murphy mentioned that he started full time at the department in 1991. He started in 1984 as a junior firefighter under Snooky Eldridge. He recognized that there are a few unfinished projects including a new fire station in the east end of the island. The Town will continue to research options. He said that he appreciates the support of Sconset and asked that Sconset give his predecessor the same.

Lynn Filipski introduced Leslie Snell, the Deputy Director of Planning.

Leslie began her career twenty years ago as a town planner for the Town of Nantucket. A graduate of Eastern Kentucky University majoring in geography with an emphasis on urban planning and a minor in natural resource analysis, she earned a masters from Ohio State University in city and regional planning. Accredited by the American Institute of Certified Planners, Leslie was promoted to Deputy Director in 2012. Her current work is managing the operations of the Planning and Land Use Services including working with the areas of planning, zoning, the HDC and Building departments.

Leslie Snell began her remarks by thanking Lynn Filipski, Betsy Grubbs and Gail Walker for their collaboration. She mentioned that the Planning Department assisted with the Sconset Area Plan which is a subset of the Town Master Plan. Other projects that they are working on include the noise bylaw update, landscaping, construction, and non-voting taxpayers concerns. They changed the hours of operation of mechanical equipment. They are working on further regulations on swimming pools; better public access to beaches; replacing beach stairs off Magnolia Street; rethinking the intersection of Sankaty and Coffin Street; better management of North Gully Road; finding an out of town location for the fire house, perhaps creating a community space in the existing fire house; Low Beach Road parcels and outdoor lighting bylaws.

She thanked the members for their ongoing engagement with her office.

Questions:

What do we do about landscaping noise violations? Call the police department.

Linda Holland commented that she felt that the Planning Board and Board of Selectman are failing us. Lynn respectfully responded that this was a broader issue that we could not address at this meeting.

There was a question about whether gas powered leaf blowers are banned. Lynn responded that they are for commercial use but not individual. She went on to remind people to encourage their landscapers to use electric powered tools.

Helmet Weymar gave an update on the SBPF

The Geotubes have been working since 2013. They are designed to withstand a 100 year storm. The breaching of Baxter Rd would result in the loss of an historic community. The legal process for alternate access would be difficult for taxpayers and cost tens of millions of dollars. The Select Board signed an agreement to go ahead with the project and the original memorandum of understanding was that this was a trial before expansion. Opposition groups have been successful in convincing ConCom not to provide an extension. The State courts have overturned ConCom before. The Arcadis group was hired by the Town and thinks that the project is successful. The Town is now willing to create a new memorandum of understanding and there are behind the scenes discussions regarding the permit.

Lynn thanked everyone for their attendance.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie Boone, Secretary

