

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
February 7, 2008**

Attendees

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Leigh Keyser, Ray Whipple, Peter Britton, Peter Dana, and Lindle Willnow. A quorum was present. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator, Bob Bullivant as liaison with the Finance Committee, and Jean Nelson as Planning Board Coordinator were also present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the January 10th meeting were approved.

FY09 CPA Final Application Review

Town-Wide Survey as follow up to Master Plan and Open Space Plan Survey

Jean Nelson was present to discuss this proposal on behalf of the Planning Board. This proposal requests \$2,500 in funds to conduct a follow-up survey as part of the Master Plan Implementation. In winter of 2002, a town-wide survey was sent out to residents as part of the Master Plan process. The expenses related to that survey were paid by the Planning Board and the Open Space Committee/Conservation Commission.

A follow-up survey would cover several of the CPA purposes and bring public officials up to date with the opinions and viewpoints of residents, and help to determine next steps in planning and other actions. It is the hope that several more Master Plan initiatives will have been approved by then, and the survey will lead us in the proper direction for future initiatives.

Jean is very interested in exploring ways to conduct this survey electronically. Concerns were expressed about those residents who would not have access to a computer as well as how to get a comprehensive list of residents' email addresses. Jean said she would conduct public outreach to get the word out about the survey and she would be willing to schedule times at the Senior Center or Library to illustrate how to complete the survey electronically. Tom offered the assistance of Boy Scout Troop 35 to assist with delivery of the survey to households.

Jean would like to begin the survey this Fall. The CPC was interested in starting the survey earlier. However, it will take some time to develop questions, figure out how to tabulate the data, and conduct a public education campaign about the survey.

The Committee voted to accept this application for administration funds not to exceed \$2,500.00. It was also suggested that the CPC give an accounting of CPA administration funds at Town Meeting.

HW Community House Portico Preservation Project

Melissa Elmer, Executive Director of the Community House, was present to discuss this proposal. The Community House is requesting \$120,000 from Hamilton CPA funds for an \$180,755 project. They are requesting \$60,000 from Wenham CPA funds. The Community House has struggled with water infiltration in its portico area dating back to the 1960s. The portico acts as the main entrance and egress to the building. The Community House received funding in FY08 from both Hamilton and Wenham for Phase 1 of the portico preservation project which included preparation of preliminary architectural plans, development of drawings, and cost estimates.

The Community House has a long history in Hamilton and has been used actively by many community groups over the years. The building is eligible for the State Register of Historic Places, and the Community House has begun the process to have the building formally added to the Register.

The new design for the preservation of the portico addresses handicap accessibility. There will be a new ramp and double-doors that will be accessible. Gray Architects, the firm hired to do the design, specializes in historic buildings. The historic integrity of the existing columns on the portico will be maintained. Assuming funding is secured, the Community House hopes to break ground in a year on this project.

The Committee voted to accept this final application for CPA funds. A recommendation for funding will be made at the next CPC meeting.

Preservation of Weaver Pond at Patton Park

Jim Weaver, Coordinator for the Conservation Commission, was present to discuss this proposal. This proposal requests \$10,000 in funding for the rental of a commercial pump to dewater the pond during the winter months to freeze the nuisance vegetation that has been destroying the pond.

The dredging project that was undertaken at the pond several years ago failed to address the nuisance vegetation. In addition to the drawdown of water planned for this winter, the current Vegetation Management Plan also calls for the use of herbicides in the spring to address the weed population. If the herbicide is successful, CPA funds for the pump may not be necessary.

The Fire Department has a pump capable of drawing down the pond, but not at the rapid rate that is needed for this proposal. The rental is a 6-cylinder pump that will be able to drawdown the pond in 24-48 hours. There is currently no plan to maintain ice surface for recreational use.

There is no guarantee that this will be a “cure all” to the existing problem at the pond, and the geese population does contribute to the issue, but it should solve the problem for a number of years.

The Committee voted to accept this final application for CPA funds at not to exceed \$10,000. A recommendation for funding will be made at the next CPC meeting. They also asked that

Wenham be approached to jointly fund this project and that other contactors be approached for cost estimates for the pump rental.

First Congregational Church of Hamilton

Reverend Dorington Little and David Hart were in attendance to discuss this proposal. The Committee had previously discussed a willingness to consider funding only the clock work which is estimated to be \$71,218. David Hart discussed the work that is proposed for the clock repairs. Balzer Clocks, based in Maine, would dismantle, take down, repair and reinstall the clock. The bell and striker may need modification and the striker is corroded. The \$71,000 project cost is an estimate. Balzer wouldn't be able to give a firm cost until they actually took a look at the clock. The \$71,000 is on the high side and includes the cost of a carpenter. This company has done similar projects in Rowley, Salem, and Newburyport.

The clock is currently operating, but does need to be modified from time to time. The clock also must be reset after a power outage. Dave Carey had contacted Verdin, another possible contractor with the ability to repair the clock. Verdin provided three additional options for the clock repair. Those estimates did not exceed \$13,000.

Concern was addressed about the public benefit of this proposal and possible conflict with the Anti-Aid Amendment. It was discussed that the Church is one of the jewels of the historic district and that the clock serves as an important timepiece.

The Committee voted to accept this final application for CPA funds. A recommendation for funding will be made at the next CPC meeting.

Admin Fund Request – Community Preservation Coalition 2008 Membership Dues

Since 2007, the CP Coalition has moved to a membership-based organization. The fee is based on a sliding scale that is calculated based on the town's CPA surcharge. Hamilton's 2008 fee of \$1,500 would remain the same as the 2007 fee. This fee is due every calendar year and can be paid for using the Town's CPA administration funds. The CPC provides tremendous support to communities and has been a valuable resource. The Committee voted to approve funding this membership.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 14th at 7:30pm in the Memorial Room at Town Hall.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15pm.