

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

December 8, 2016

Members Present: Tom Catalano (Chairman), Peter Britton, Jay Butler, Chris Currier, Mimi Fanning, Shawn Farrell (8:34 pm), Ed Howard, and Robert Preston.

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

This meeting was called to order by Tom Catalano at 7:30 pm with a quorum established.

Minutes

Motion to approve the September 22, 2016 minutes made by Ed Howard

Seconded by Robert Preston

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

Committee Member Reports

Ed Howard announced the two most prevalent things from the Planning Board were the approval of the cell tower at Asbury St. and the approval to build a parking lot at the Patton Estate. The RFP for the Patton Estate went out this week and was due March 1, 2017. Mr. Howard wanted to wait until a tenant was chosen before the parking lot was built. Tom Catalano wondered where the funding was coming from, to which Mr. Howard said it was out of the Patton account. Anytime there was cell tower activity, the Historic District Commission was informed even if it was outside the district, according to Mr. Catalano. Mimi Fanning had not attended the previous Housing Authority meeting but an application might arrive for work at Lamson Hall and would be accepted at the next meeting. Chris Currier discussed Conservation Commission violations and determinations of applicability for projects around town.

Peter Britton said there were three potential sites that had gone to the Board of Selectmen, which were deemed suitable for affordable housing. The Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) was trying to make a site available for one of the partners, Harborlight or Habitat for Humanity. 560 Bay Road would come before the AHT. The property was in the Historic District. The 38 acre property behind Town Hall was also for sale. Mr. Britton had spoken with the owner and noted it had two accesses, Paddock Lane and Kinsman Lane. The larger parcel was under 61 but the other 10 acre parcel, which abutted Town Hall, had a house on it and featured pine and oak trees, indicating uplands. The issue, according to Mr. Britton, was what kind of money the AHT would try to ask for from the CPC. Mr. Britton said the AHT didn't need to come solely to the CPC as the site was of a legitimate Town interest even for the DPW and Cemetery so the General Fund could be a part of the contribution.

Eligibility Applications

270 Asbury Street. Affordable Housing (Habitat for Humanity NorthShore).

The representative said Habitat for Humanity provided housing for families and had completed 30 homes on the North Shore. Habitat for Humanity had acquired the proposed property and tore down the under-performing home and would replace it with two energy efficient, barrier free homes for working families (young families or seniors) earning between \$27,600 and \$59,100. The density increase had full support of the Selectmen and AHT. There would be local preference for families who live, work, or were going to school in Hamilton. The majority of people in attendance at the informational meeting, fit the local preference guidelines. The market rate unit conversion to two deed restriction homes would count toward the Town's inventory. Habitat for Humanity had secured funding from the Local Home Consortium and received a grant from the Danvers Charitable Bank Foundation. They had submitted an application for the Federal Home Loan Bank. They also received a grant for solar thermal and hot water with estimated costs for hot water being about \$500 per year.

Habitat for Humanity was requesting \$30,000 per home. Habitat for Humanity said they were unique in that they looked for donated services and material in the construction so they could sell the homes for as little as \$135,000 per home. The taxes, mortgages, and insurance for these homes should be a little under \$800 per month while a two bedroom home would rent for \$1,800 to \$2,000 per month. Benavento was donating one of foundations and a form company was donating the forms. A local architect donated the design work, while roof and tree services were also donated. Essex Technical High School planned to donate landscaping services and would help build one of the homes. There were many services which needed to be paid for and there were materials that needed to be purchased. Each home had a \$260,000 cost for construction. A profit developer would build the home for over \$550,000. The representative asserted that affordable housing had to be subsidized to be affordable. The AHT helped with the acquisition by using funds obtained via the Inclusionary Zoning By-law. Now Habitat for Humanity was requesting construction funding from the CPA.

Affordability ratios were 40 to 60% of the median income, which were lower than others, but higher than the Housing Authority. In response to Peter Britton's question as to how the deed restriction was measured in terms of the marketplace, Habitat for Humanity answered that if they had first refusal, it would stay within the 40 to 60% range, but if Hamilton took over, it would go to 80%. DHCD would issue the deed restriction.

It was asked why Habitat for Humanity was asking for CPA funding rather than AHT funding. \$235,000 had been turned over to the AHT. Dorr Fox said Habitat could go to both. Tom Catalano wondered why not consider the AHT first. From the affordable housing portion of CPC funds, some was used on the COA and some for Town Counsel, according to Mr. Fox. Jay Butler said when the CPC gave money to the AHT, it was for them to spend on things like this, not just replenish their funds. Mr. Butler believed the AHT might be sitting on funds while the CPC was getting a request that the AHT should have been able to fund. Peter Britton responded that the AHT didn't have any asks for the money. There was a consultant to look at Town owned land which was the only thing that needed funding.

Chris Currier recalled that the AHT fund was present to jump quickly on acquisitions. The AHT was established to do these kinds of things so when they would come up, they could do that with the money that the CPC gave them. Mr. Britton said there was a range of needs upcoming and the AHT needed to see how they would connect together. Tom Catalano suggested voting on the eligibility but would like a report on where the CPC was on what the AHT was needing for housing. Currently there was \$10 in reserves for housing. Mr. Catalano recalled that the CPC had spent more than the minimum on housing the previous year and the CPC would need to know historically where it was in the budget.

Motion made by Chris Currier that the CPC accept that this particular project was eligible for consideration funding by the CPC

Seconded by Mimi Fanning

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Pingree Park Playground, Wenham, MA.

Lisa Fall (Wenham) described the Richard Brown Memorial playground in Pingree Park which was used by Hamilton residents including Hamilton Recreation Camp, LaCross, JV tennis, baseball, and soccer. Ms Fall said it was a value to both communities. The Friends Group filed for a 501-3C and held a fundraiser which raised \$8,500 in ten days. Local businesses had been contacted and the group intended on targeting smaller donations after Christmas. They had the support of the Hamilton Wenham Mother's Club.

The playground, as proposed had no hard surfaces, only natural bark mulch due to funding as they wanted it up and running quickly, ordering the equipment by Memorial Day with the community building it on Labor Day, 2017. Their goal was \$125,000. There would be a 2-5 year old structure and a larger structure for 5-12 year olds. Lisa Fall noted that the benefits of play were well known.

The Wenham CPC did not have a two-step process, according to Lisa Fall. January 6, 2017 would be the deadline. Ms Fall said the Friends Group was applying to both towns for the same amount of money. Chris Currier and Tom Catalano agreed that the CPC had already been approached by both elementary schools, with Patton Park being done, Winthrop School having been approved, and Cutler considering applying. Typically in the past, the CPC dealt with percentages such as when a school was in Hamilton, they did a split as Wenham residents would use it. It was suggested that the Wenham CPC lead with a proposal from them to see how they would contribute before approaching the Hamilton CPC.

Lisa Fall stated that both applications were due on the same day, so she didn't know how she could get Wenham to approve the proposal before Hamilton would. Tom Catalano said the CPC would need to see a dollar commitment from the Wenham CPC before they could vote on it in the next round. Jay Butler wondered if it was eligible if the property was in Wenham. Dorr Fox

said it might be eligible, even if it was in Wenham because of the joint recreation program, so he would investigate.

Motion made by Jay Butler to approve based on eligibility on this project, contingent upon a reading from the CPC coalition.

Seconded by Ed Howard.

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Jay Butler added a postscript that Patton Park was given \$25,000 and Winthrop School was given \$20,000. Chris Currier added that Buker and Winthrop had both asked for money and playgrounds were not built yet. The school said the Buker playground was out 3 to 5 years. Peter Britton recalled that there was no public statement that recognized explicitly that there was an importance of playgrounds as education for children.

Hamilton Historic District sign

Tom Catalano said one of the signs had disappeared and it would cost \$680 to replace it via Jen Wright. The Historic District Commission voted to send the request to the CPC. The replacement of the sign was the first thing funded by the CPC and it took five years.

Jay Butler made a motion that this project was eligible.

Robert Preston seconded.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

Mimi Fanning asked if anyone had approached Penny Bernard about doing the sign. Jen Wright did the signs for the Patton Homestead.

Council on Aging Building, 299 Bay Road, Hamilton, MA

It was reported that the applicant/Director decided not to move forward. Jay Butler suggested that the Director obtain an endorsement of approval from the Town Manager before she applied.

Surcharge Increase Plan

Tom Catalano said they did not have a plan. It was on hold. There was a grim article that not everyone had seen in the Hamilton Wenham Chronicle. The FinCom said the Town had lowered the tax rate and to take this moment to ask for more, now that the tax rate was under 17%, would be adverse, according to Peter Britton who added that the FinCom was against the proposal. The State match was \$81,000 in the 20% range while it was 27% the year before.

2016 CPC Plan Update – Procedure Changes Voted Last Meeting

Dorr Fox described the paying of bills through the treasurer's office. Tom Catalano wanted to know how the spending compared to the proposed. Mr. Fox gave a verbal report on all approved projects. Mr. Butler said the American Legion had done nothing. An update on the high school fields and Sagamore Hill was given.

Plan for Meeting with Wenham CPC.

Dorr Fox and had been emailing back and forth with Harriet Davis who said they did not have much interest in getting together with Hamilton. Wenham would not be funding anything from Friends' groups, only recreation committee or schools. Wenham did not anticipate any joint projects. Jay Butler said he had a meeting with Sean Timmons asking him about the turf field activity and Sean said they were getting their plans in. When asked what would happen with Wenham, Mr. Timmons reportedly said the Patton Estate Fund of \$500,000 match would need Wenham to kick in their fair portion in order to use that money. Peter Britton added that if the project failed because that money wasn't available, The Town would return for another source of funding. The School stopped the playground construction at Winthrop School and it was debated whether it would be legal for the Schools to ask for the money. Jay Butler thought it was the School Committee's decision.

Postcards to Advertise Surcharge Exemptions

Dorr Fox had been working on the postcard that would be inserted into the tax bill in order to have people call the Assessors' Office rather than the Water Department if they had questions. The Selectmen's guidelines for insertion included not increasing the postage. The Selectmen would need to approve what went into the tax bill.

Town Hall CPC Grant Request

The Committee reviewed the history of the request. They had previously approved the initial grant for the analysis money and made a suggestion that a citizen advisory committee be formed. Subsequent to that, the Town Manager decided that he didn't want a citizen advisory committee. He also instituted a warrant article to ask for money not only for the analysis but also the bid documents, which was something the CPC didn't want to do because it was too much money. The Town Manager went ahead and did that without CPC comment. As this was a Special Town Meeting, the Town Manager was allowed to present his own article.

Jay Butler recalled that he wrote a personal letter to Shawn Farrell that the CPC was the biggest champion for the project, but wanted to make sure it was done the right way, but the Town Manager unilaterally decided to move forward. The articles were together so Mr. Butler said he got up and spoke to the article for the CPA grant and people noticed that the very next article had the same wording for an enormous amount of money so the discussion went to the entire amount.

There was no presentation from Town Hall. No one knew the technical details. Citizens stood up and said there was a need for a citizen advisory board. Jay Butler said he didn't know how to proceed. It was suggested that next time, if this came up again, the Town Manager should present the article. Peter Britton offered that, as a condition of awarding funds, a presentation process should be included.

Ed Howard thought the Town Manager, by law, could not be involved in policy as his job would be to carry out the direction from his bosses like the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen, CPC and the Board of Health. The COA endorsement would be illegal if it was from Town

Manager as it should be the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Howard asserted that if there was an application for CPC funds to rehabilitate the Town Hall, it needed to be an act of the Board of Selectmen. Tom Catalano said the CPC were reasonable people who, like this project, went down in flames because they didn't know what the other side was doing. Peter Britton said the Board of Selectmen should offer the presentation of what they would be supporting. Shawn Farrell said the Board had given the power to the Town Manager. Jay Butler responded that he had two pages of technical details but the Town Manager and Planner didn't choose to read them

CPC Member Vacancy

Tom Catalano said he was speaking with someone the next day regarding the Member at Large vacancy.

Filing of Meeting Minutes with Town Clerk

There was a requirement that the Minutes be filed with Town Clerk, but now that the minutes were on-line, no one ever asked for them. Dorr Fox and Shawn Farrell said they did not think there was a policy.

Review of Open Grants

Patton Homestead. Patrick Reffett had reported that he had two bids back, but needed three before someone was hired to do the dormers.

Affordable Housing. The \$250,000 of AHT money was still there and it was sure there would be a project. Suitable sites had been discussed in all meetings, but the allocation of money could not be discussed until a site was chosen.

Sagamore Hill. Chris Currier said the Town was still working with Mr. Donovan and the State, putting together a Conservation Restriction, which should be finalized in January.

Winthrop School and High School Renovation. Shawn Farrell said \$24,154.36 of \$44,647.00 had been spent by Gale Associates to conduct design background testing and evaluation (90% complete), schematic design (100% complete), and design development (20% complete). The remaining funds would be used to complete the design as well as get through the review process with Hamilton land use boards. There would be an All Boards Meeting with the BOS and Schools where Gale Associates would present their findings and discuss next steps in January.

Historical society. Dorr Fox had met with Ray Whipple to digitize their files and make them accessible through a webpage. The digitizing was complete but needed to be categorized.

COA Bathrooms. The Council on Aging bathroom bills were on Dorr Fox's desk but were estimates rather than invoices, which could not be paid. In FY2014, the CPC had approved money for bathrooms, which were just now completed. The balustrade project was going out to bid, but the Director had made a statement that, if the building was not going to exist, why complete the work. The Director requested composite, but cedar had been approved.

Patton Park. The cannon wheels were discussed as having an estimate of \$15,000 based on inquiries eight months ago. Estimates were needed to fix both wheels, including the recently found one.

American Legion. The Legion needed to give the CPC a detailed schedule, which Jay Butler had asked about every month. The Legion needed to come before the CPC or e-mail a report to justify the delay in project construction.

Other Business as Necessary.

Motion to adjourn made by Jay Butler

Seconded

Vote Unanimous to adjourn at 9:10 pm

Prepared by:

Marcie Ricker

Attest

Date