

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

July 13, 2017

Members Present: Robert Preston, Shawn Farrell, Jay Butler, Katherine Mittelbusher, Neil Duggan, Mimi Fanning

Members Absent: Tom Catalano, Chris Currier, Ed Howard

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Jay Butler called the meeting to order (in Tom Catalano's absence) at 7:40 p.m. with a quorum present.

**Minutes**

Robert Preston made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 11 and June 8, 2017 meetings. Shawn Farrell seconded the motion. The Committee voted on the two sets of minutes simultaneously. They were approved unanimously.

**CPC Vacancy Status**

The vacancy is now filled. New members Katherine Mittelbusher and Neil Duggan were welcomed to the board.

**Committee Reports**

Shawn Farrell reported that the Board of Selectmen is looking for wells outside of the Ipswich River Basin, seeking another water source to draw from since the river is often low and this has caused issues. (Not health issues, he stressed.) The Selectmen, together with the police chief and legal counsel, are also looking at a marijuana bylaw. There is a moratorium now, but it might not hold up as this issue is debated in the House and Senate. People can start turning in applications to have dispensaries in town while the issue continues to be debated. The Patton Homestead board has put out an RFP for a director. The Selectman appointed Ms. Mittelbusher and Mr. Duggan to the CPC. They appointed Heather Ford to a new Recycling Committee, formed because the tonnage of waste has gone up significantly while recycling and composting have gone way down. Robert Preston asked why this has happened. Mr. Farrell speculated that it's due to the convenience of weekly service. The new committee will get information out to the community about composting and recycling and work to find a solution. The Capital Improvement plan is being addressed with the Finance Committee and Selectmen goals are being worked on. They are broaching the subject of regional dispatch. The study is not back yet, but it could save up to \$200,000. Due to MBTA summer construction, train service to Hamilton is suspended. The MBTA has a plan for putting up communications towers every mile or mile and a half along the line, which will not help with Hamilton's cell service problems, just those on the train. That project is on hold, though, because they found the technology is not up to date. The Conservation Commission visited Sagamore Hill and is going to be redoing the compost site,

slowly moving it to Manchester. They are cleaning up the current site and will be reseeding it in August. A site walk of the Air Force facility was conducted due to an enforcement order for cutting down some trees. Mr. Farrell discussed that visit.

Mimi Fanning reported on the Housing Authority's recent site walk with CPC members to view their properties on Railroad Avenue, Central Avenue and Harris Avenue. She was pleased with the progress. Trees are coming down, although some weren't touched because of the wires. The big project for the group are the porches that need replacing at 15 and 17 Central Ave. and 14 and 16 Harris Ave. She said they are hoping to get those done. Mr. Butler said that now he isn't sure the CPC can fund the porches due to a letter received a couple of years ago regarding rules governing the CPC. He said that when CPC funds the construction of housing on a property, it can do anything it wants in terms of updating/maintaining it, but if it doesn't fund the original project on the property, it is restricted to *preservation* activities, meaning essential updates, such as electrical, roof, etc., and perhaps not the painting of porches. While Ms. Fanning noted that front steps are essential, Mr. Butler said the porches might not be considered "essential." The CPC has asked Kate McGuire to go back to her sources and get a recommendation from them or to provide examples of projects within the state where CPC money was used to fund a comparable project.

### **Review of Open Grants**

Mr. Butler explained to the two new members that open grants are on the agenda and reviewed every month. Dorr Fox reaches out to each grant recipient for an update.

Mr. Fox gave the following updates:

- **Senior Center Ballustrade:** While the Department of Public Works was moving forward on this project, it is now putting all its resources into the Patton Homestead project because there was a deadline with that project and not with this one.
- **Patton Park Cannon/Wagon Wheels:** They were boxed up and transported to South Dakota where they are being restored by Hansen Wheel and Wagon. Mr. Fox has been communicating with the company about painting the spokes a drab olive, which is historically appropriate. He's also talking to Boy Scout leaders about doing a scout project to research details about the cannons and wheels and their history. For example, he would like to get a paint analysis from Historic New England. Mr. Preston says he knows the history of the cannon and wheels and he can help with that. The wheels should be completed and back by January.
- **American Legion Electrical Work:** The electrician for this project was hired as the Town's electrical inspector and can't inspect his own work. Recently an assistant inspector was hired and was going to get back to Mr. Fox about what is happening. Mr. Butler said that the electrician is in Ireland so most likely nothing will happen until he returns.
- **Historical Society Pictorial Collection:** A \$3,000 invoice was received for additional work on digitizing the photos, which will go on the July 22 warrant. Approximately

\$3,000 to \$4,000 remains on the grant, and the work should be finished within the next few months. Pictures are online for public viewing but not yet searchable.

- **Patton Estate Roof Replacement:** CPC members believe that the building permit for the project was pulled, but that is not yet verified.
- **Winthrop School Playground:** Mr. Fox talked to the school superintendent and found out that the playground is under construction and should be finished by the end of summer.
- **Pingree Park Playground:** Mr. Fox said the grant agreement was signed but he doesn't have an update. He will reach out for one. Mr. Farrell said he talked with Sean Timmons and thinks it should be in by fall.
- **Buker School Playground:** According to a letter Mr. Fox received from the Buker Friends Playground Committee, the work should be completed next summer. The funding to complete the job is in place.
- **Hamilton Housing Authority Roof Replacements:** The group came to Town Hall to inquire about building permits. Ms. Fanning said Ms. McGuire hopes to get the work started shortly. It went to bid and they hired a contractor.
- **Habitat for Humanity House Construction:** There are two houses being constructed. One is on Lincoln Avenue and the other retains an Asbury Street address. In one house, the electrical and plumbing are in. On the other house, the electrical and plumbing will happen in the fall. The people who will be living in these homes have been chosen: a woman from Town with three children and a couple from Beverly with one child.
- **High School Fields:** The majority of the project is done and will be undergoing review by the Planning Board. Mr. Butler said the grant money given to them for their engineering study has been spent.

### **Proposed New FAQs for the CPC Webpage**

Mr. Butler proposed adding two new questions to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section on the webpage to clarify what the CPC can and cannot fund. For example, unless the community housing was originally acquired by a CPC grant, only grant requests that address preservation activities may be considered eligible and not rehabilitation or maintenance activities. Also, grant monies received by the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) from the CPC can only be used by the AHT under the same guidelines required of the CPC. Mr. Butler's proposed new questions are:

- Are there any restrictions on CPC grants for Community Housing?
- Since CPC grants are the primary source of funding for the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT), are there any restrictions on how these grants may be used?

Mr. Farrell made a motion to add the new questions to the webpage. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in favor of adding the questions. It was also decided to add a link to a reference document on the webpage for people wanting more information.

### **Revised Future Anticipated Projects List**

Mr. Butler explained to the new members that the Future Anticipated Projects list was created because the CPC was challenged about its activities in the past and in response, created the list

and held an open meeting to which all committee members were invited. There are three categories on the list (A, B, C) based on how likely the project is to be approved and whether it has all the components needed to make the decision.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to accept the Future Anticipated Projects list as it appears now. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. The members voted unanimously to approve the list with the understanding that it can always be modified.

### **2017 CPC Plan**

Mr. Butler explained that every year the CPC reviews the content of this lengthy document to see if changes are needed. Included in the CPC Plan is a list of all the grants given to date as well as the open grants. He noted the revisions that have been made to the document in recent years and the items that were deleted and added this year. For example, 10 copies of a grant proposal are no longer required. The names of the new members of the committee will need to be added. Mr. Butler also noted for the benefit of the new members that if they miss a meeting they will need to review the minutes and listen to the tape of the meeting before being able to vote on a matter that was discussed when they were absent.

Mr. Preston made a motion to accept the 2017 CPC Plan into the record. Mr. Farrell seconded the motion. All voted unanimously to approve it and post it on the website.

### **Project Commencement Dates vs. Sunset Clauses in CPC Grant Warrant Articles**

Mr. Butler discussed his thoughts regarding project commencement dates vs. sunset clauses. He also presented them in a handout distributed to the group. He explained that Legal Counsel Donna Brewer had suggested imposing commencement dates with the grants, so that a project would need to start within a certain period of time to receive CPC money. If the project didn't commence, the grant money would need to be refunded. Mr. Butler said he had originally been a proponent of sunset clauses, but if progress payments are made for the project, it would be too difficult, even impossible, to return the funds if the sunset clause was invoked. So this is why he now favors commencement dates. These can be set by mutual agreement by a specific action, such as the pulling of a building permit, purchase of the raw materials for the project, initiation of work, etc. He posed the question to the group: What happens if the project gets started and then it stops due to an unforeseen problem. If the receipts dry up, what happens? The members discuss that there is no way around this, but if there is money left after a project is finished, it needs to be refunded to the CPC. Ms. Mittelbusher asked what happens in cases where the project is receiving funding from other sources (in addition to the CPC) and for some reason the grant recipient isn't able to secure that other funding. In such a case, they would need to "draw the project in" to be able to afford it or else refund the grant money.

### **New or Other Business**

It was mentioned that Selectman Jeff Hubbard, who is a member of the Town Hall Renovation Committee, made an appearance at the last meeting saying the Committee needed to hire an OPM (owner's project manager), a full-time position for the length of the project. The CPC can only fund the historic preservation aspect of Town Hall, it can't pay the OPM's salary. A document now on the Town website describes the requirements of the position.

Mr. Butler had a question about payments for the signs that are stuck onto a lawn to advertise that a project was CPC funded. He wondered if the \$600 approximate cost might be built into the grant amount or if it should come from administrative funds. It is inconvenient to have to go to Town Meeting for the cost of the signs. Ms. Mittelbusher suggested using a small plaque instead of the sign, which would be less expensive. Ms. Fanning suggested using one sign while the project is underway that can be moved to each new site as projects are completed. Mr. Farrell said the sign could be plastic. It was decided that Mr. Butler will come back with a proposal regarding the signs. He gave a “homework assignment” to the other members to come up with the wording for the sign.

The next CPC meeting will be the second Thursday of the month, August 10, 2017. Ms. Mittelbusher said she will not be able to attend.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Preston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:50 p.m. Ms. Fanning seconded the motion. The members voted unanimously to adjourn.

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Mary Alice Cookson

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Attest

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Date