

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

September 14, 2017

Members Present: Robert Preston, Ed Howard, Jay Butler, Mimi Fanning, Neil Duggan, Katherine Mittelbush

Members Absent: Tom Catalano, Chris Currier, Shawn Farrell

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Jay Butler called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. with a quorum present.

Minutes

Robert Preston made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2017 meeting. Ed Howard seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the minutes

Committee Reports

Ed Howard reported that the Planning Board approved Tom Ford's plan to divide his property into two house lots. Great Estates bylaws were discussed and there was a large public attendance. Mr. Howard noted the public was upset about the lack of space for the meeting and that the speaker system doesn't work. It was suggested that bigger meetings be held at the Council on Aging and someone donated a speaker system for future use. The biggest discussion was that three members of the Planning Board (including Mr. Howard) voted against the cell tower at Town Hall. While there is no question that the Town needs the tower, Mr. Howard said, the three members want a better location and feel a proper investigation of locations has not yet been conducted.

Reporting on the Housing Authority, Mimi Fanning said Lamson Hall held its first event, which consisted of Bingo and hotdogs. Only seven residents attended, but it was a good start, she said.

Dorr Fox asked if anyone wanted to give an update on Town Hall. Nobody spoke up.

Shawn Farrell was not present to report on the Board of Selectmen.

Current Status of Available Funds and Bonding Obligations

Mr. Fox had emailed the Committee an estimate of general reserves: \$697,670. If all the projects before the CPC are approved, that will leave \$527,654. The Historic Preservation Reserve would be brought down from \$116,799 to \$70,299. The figure includes projections for surcharge

income plus State match, all the money taken in through June 30, 2018. Then they will receive another \$500K in tax dollars. It is hard to know about the State match, which could be anywhere from \$60K to \$80K, but they have to take into account what's owed for Sagamore Hill and Donovan. Mr. Butler noted there is enough to approve the projects on the table, but there won't be much left after that.

Three Funding Applications

CPC members approved three grants for eligibility at the last meeting. Mr. Butler instructed that they would now be voting on whether to fund.

- **Conservation Commission – Knotweed Removal**

Jim Hankin, coordinator for the Conservation Commission, and Tyler Ferrick of DeRosa Environmental upped their request for funding knotweed (invasive species) removal from \$4K to \$7.5K as was suggested by the CPC at the last meeting. They also asked that funding be available through FY2020.

Questions/Discussion

Mr. Butler confirmed with Mr. Fox that there is \$300 left on the previous grant for this project. He also confirmed that the amount would be \$7,500 per year for each of the next three years.

Ms. Fanning asked if the knotweed would grow back once it is removed. The answer is yes, but it would be hit with an organic herbicide to stop it from growing back, according to Mr. Ferrick.

Decision

Mr. Howard made a motion to fund the full \$7,500 for the project for the next three years. Ms. Fanning seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to fund the project (6-0).

A commencement date of June 30, 2019 (at the suggestion of Mr. Fox) was set and approved. DeRosa Environmental would like to begin the project in early spring, said Mr. Ferrick.

- **Housing Authority – Brooks House**

Kate McGuire recapped the history of the Brooks House. It is handicapped accessible with an elevator and ramps. Because of other issues at the Housing Authority, she said, they haven't been able to put any money into the building in quite a long time. The goal is to replace some of the wood, windows, 20% of the siding and repaint the whole building. Doing so will save on maintenance. (The building leaks and will have a problem if it's a bad winter.) The cupola needs work due to a giant bird's nest. She noted that when she addressed the CPC at the prior meeting there was concern about whether

the CPC can fund painting. She brought photos of similar projects in other towns that she can forward if anyone wants to see them. The amount requested is \$162,516.

Questions/Discussion

Based on his investigation, Mr. Fox said painting can be included because it is part of the larger project and not just cosmetic. Ms. Fanning noted that previous projects by Ms. McGuire came in under budget. Mr. Preston confirmed that any funds not used would be returned. Katherine Mittelbush asked if it were the original cupola. It is.

Mr. Butler asked if Ms. McGuire would be willing to earmark a few hundred dollars of the grant money to pay for a sign advertising the project was CPC-funded. She said she would. His last question was: “Based on our available funds, is this something that we would consider bonding?” Mr. Preston responded that he worries about bonding because he is anticipating a large ask from a government entity.

Decision

Ms. Fanning made a motion to fully fund the project. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to fund the project (6-0).

A commencement date of June 30, 2019 was set and approved. Commencement was defined as the pulling of the building permit.

Ms. McGuire asked when they can start invoicing. She was told after Town Meeting, (set for November 4). She said she expects the project will start in April.

- **OPM/Design for Town Hall Restoration**

DPW Director Tim Olson said that since his appearance before the CPC last month, the Town Hall Building Committee has had a couple of meetings and the chance to look at additional data. Primarily they’ve looked at the new Essex Town Hall’s construction costs and that project seems comparable. Because of this new information, the Building Committee is amending its previous ask from \$46.5K to \$75K. Mr. Olson presented spreadsheets as backup. After the OPM is hired, they will need to hire a designer. The total current estimate for the Town Hall restoration work is \$3 million.

Questions/Discussion

Mr. Preston clarified the money would be used for renovation purposes and has nothing to do with building an annex.

Mr. Butler asked how long the \$75K would pay for the (Owner’s Project Manager) OPM’s services. The answer was just through Phase 1 of the project, which would include drafting an RFQ for design services and being part of the selection committee to choose the designer. He then asked how quickly the project would move. Mr. Olson

replied they would have a draft of the RFQ within a few weeks. He clarified that the OPM would work full-time solely on this project.

Mr. Preston wanted to know how long the Essex OPM was on board. Mr. Olson replied throughout the length of the project.

Mr. Butler commented that at some point, the historical piece of the project needs to be parsed from the rest of the project.

Mr. Preston asked Mr. Olson if he received the funding, could he be ready to present a plan to the Town by Spring Town Meeting. He answered that it would be tight, but yes.

Mr. Duggan noted the cost went from \$46.5 to \$75 and wondered how certain Mr. Olson was about the cost. He answered that the original request was just a placeholder they used prior to their fact-finding.

Mr. Howard noted that the town of Essex had the foresight to lease a building down the street and move their government there for a couple of years during the construction. He asked if such a move had been discussed. Mr. Olson said the Building Committee first needs to determine if using the building is possible, as no structural assessment has yet been done. Then they will determine the best way to handle the details.

Mr. Howard wanted to know if there are professionals, such as contractors, on the Building Committee. Mr. Olson replied yes, but they would be consulting with other professionals for liability reasons.

Mr. Preston noted the CPC could theoretically give \$75K only to find out that the building is not usable. Mr. Olson replied that was possible.

Greg McKenna, 30 Tally Ho Dr., asked if there had been any exploration of spending \$4.5 million on a separate site. Mr. Olson responded that's to be determined.

Mr. Howard invited Mike Toomey, a volunteer on the Building Committee, for his comments. Mr. Toomey said his intent is to preserve the Town Hall as is and perhaps utilize the basement of the building. He thinks there's enough square footage to handle the services that Town Hall provides. The building needs a handicapped-accessible entrance, but that wouldn't meet the historical lines of the building. He says the Committee has an open mind.

Mr. Preston inquired about what the Essex CPC committee chipped in. Nobody knew the answer.

Ms. Fanning said the Town Hall was built in 1897.

- **Decision**

Ms. Fanning made a motion to approve the funding of \$75K for OPM services for the Town Hall. Ms. Mittelbush seconded the motion. The CPC voted unanimously to approve the funding (6-0).

A commencement date of June 30, 2019 was set. “Commencement” in this case is the signing of the contract with the OPM.

Olson estimates the hiring will happen soon after the November 4 Town Meeting.

Review of Open Grants

Mr. Fox gave the following updates:

- **Senior Center Balustrade:** Nothing has changed. Mr. Olson said it’s “on the list.” There is currently no deadline.
- **Patton Park Cannon/Wagon Wheels:** The project is moving along, being worked on in South Dakota. They are committed to painting them drab olive. Will be returned in January or February.
- **American Legion Electrical Work:** Contractor Joe Hanson reported on the project. The work is coming along but taking longer than expected. The original electrician moved to Florida and now Dennis Curran is helping them out. The best guess for completion is by the end of the year. Mr. Hanson had a question regarding invoicing, specifically why they need subcontractor bills instead of just the general contractor’s bill. It was explained that this rule came from the Town’s finance director with the advice of legal counsel.
- **Historical Society Pictorial Collection:** Nothing has changed since the last meeting. They’ve been on vacation for the summer. They are starting back today.
- **Patton Estate Roof Replacement:** Although the building permit was pulled, Mr. Olson is including the roof replacement within a much larger project and that project will not be started for some time. The building certificate will most likely lapse before then. Mr. Olson said if so, he would revise the building permit and extend it to include the other work.

Further Discussion:

The Committee members deliberated about whether to make their original grant null and void due to the long delay and require that the grant process be started over. There is no case law for this. Mr. Fox said Donna Brewer, Town legal counsel, issued an opinion that it’s up to the Town to decide how it wants to proceed.

Mr. Olson noted there is only a certain period of time when one can physically do roof work and made his case about why the roof construction should happen at the same time as the rest of the renovations (better pricing, for example).

Mr. Butler asked if the construction would start in the summer of next year. Mr. Olson said that was likely.

In the end it was decided to let the matter rest as it is with the current grant in place.

- **Winthrop School Playground:** Mr. Fox presented a picture showing a lot of the equipment is up. It should be finished by the end of summer.

Further Discussion:

Patrick Waddell, 5 Great Pond Rd., a CPC member at large in Wenham, addressed the Committee. He said about 20% of the population at the school has a physical disability and an important component of this project was having a rubberized surface to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, etc. Instead, wood chips were used. This means kids with disabilities aren't able to use the playground. As a coach and father, he is upset about this and wanted to know if he should pursue it further with the school.

The Committee members agreed it was their understanding that the playground would be inclusive for kids with disabilities and have the rubberized material. Mr. Waddell wanted advice about whether to try to move his case forward with the school. School officials likely were the ones who made the decision.

Mr. Butler commented it appears that when money is gifted to the school by a Friends' group, the details then become up to the school who now owns the project. The CPC decided to reach out to the school and see if they can find out why it deviated from what was envisioned.

- **Pingree Park Playground:** Some of the trees are coming down. Equipment was ordered, and the playground should be completed in six weeks.
- **Buker School Playground:** Money for the playground was gifted to the Hamilton/Wenham school district, but it won't be built this year. Mr. Waddell asked if they can close the road on the side of the playground because kids tend to dart out and it's a safety issue.
- **Hamilton Housing Authority Roof Replacements:** The project is done.
- **Habitat for Humanity House Construction:** Mr. Fox showed slides of 0 Lincoln St. and 270 Asbury St. The Lincoln home is more finished than the Asbury one. Both are moving along well. Money was provided by the Affordable Housing Trust.

Signage for CPC Projects

Mr. Butler said he will find samples of signs and bring them in. He'd like to hand the project off to someone. He will be looking for both a temporary sign for using while a project is being worked on and a permanent sign for after a project is completed advertising that the project is CPC-funded. The point is so taxpayers can see where their money is going.

CPC Presentation at Town Meeting; Appendix to the CPC Budget

Mr. Fox noted some numbers on the PowerPoint presentation will need to change as a result of tonight's votes. He asked for feedback regarding the appendix, which he had emailed to the group.

Mr. Preston had a few suggested changes, including changing "Knotweed Removal on Conservation Lands" to "Ongoing Knotweed Removal on Town Conservation Land."

Mr. Preston made a motion to approve the appendix with the suggested changes. Ms. Fanning seconded the motion. The CPC voted unanimously to approve the appendix with the changes.

Mr. Butler discussed the scoring sheets he received regarding eligibility. He said the scores were in alignment with each other. He will email the results, a 10-page spreadsheet, to the members.

Mr. Fox will be putting the funding applications on the websites. He will ask the applicants to resubmit them with the revised amounts approved this evening.

The next CPC meeting is October 12. The Town Hall fall meeting is November 4.

Adjournment

Mr. Preston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 p.m. Mr. Howard seconded the motion. The members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Mary Alice Cookson

Attest

Date