

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

December 14, 2017

Members Present: Chair Tom Catalano, Robert Preston, Ed Howard, Katherine Mittelbush, Shawn Farrell, Chris Currier

Members Absent: Neil Duggan, Mimi Fanning, Jay Butler

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Tom Catalano called the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. with a quorum present.

Minutes

Ed Howard made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2017 meeting. Robert Preston seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes (6-0).

Committee Member Reports

Ed Howard reported that at the last Planning Board meeting they discussed the Demolition Delay Bylaw that the Historic District Commission is putting forth. He turned the discussion over to Mr. Catalano, Chair of the Historic District Commission, who explained that of 351 communities in Massachusetts, the majority have adopted a Demolition Delay Bylaw. The point of the bylaw is to protect buildings constructed before 1940 with an up to one-year delay on demolition so as to allow time for an alternative plan and discourage the removal of important architecture. The Historic District Commission worked with Town Counsel to develop a bylaw for Hamilton. They made a presentation to the Planning Board and will appear before the Board of Selectmen in January with a goal to have it on the warrant for spring. The biggest concern is whether it creates additional administrative expenses for the Planning Board; they are looking at those costs in similarly-sized communities. In other matters, the property owners at 587 Bay Road, the new building behind the post office, received approval for solar panels. While the building is within the Historic District, Hamilton is a green community, Mr. Catalano said, and the Commission didn't want to put impediments in the way. Mr. Howard added that many of the older buildings in Town aren't structurally sound enough to support the weight of solar panels.

Mr. Farrell reported that at the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting just after Thanksgiving, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director Tim Olson gave an update. The Patton Homestead parking lot is done. The Town is short about six to eight snowplow truck drivers. Weston & Sampson is mapping the storm water system, which is a state mandate. Water mains are being replaced. They are doing fire hydrant repairs. They are looking at well exploration at Beck's

Pond. Work on the water treatment plant will start in February. A sticker program for the pick-up of bulky items started last week. The BOS is still exploring solar power at the landfill with Ameresco although it isn't as lucrative as they had previously thought. Curbside textile recycling, which Wenham has started, is on the next agenda for discussion. North Shore Nordic Association will look at grooming cross-country ski trails at the Patton Homestead. The Homestead received a grant and an architect has been hired for renovations there. The BOS is researching shared inspector services, perhaps with Wenham and Manchester. David Smith with the Board of Health is working on a Nuisance Bylaw so people may report on a derelict property. The property owner would be given notice and a certain amount of time to rectify the problem. The BOS discussed the Longmeadow Study Committee and citizen's petition to look at property at Longmeadow for use by the Schools, perhaps as a site for consolidating elementary schools or for athletic fields. The Schools have said they'd like Andrew DeFranza of Harborlight Community Partners to keep the option on the property while they consider it. The BOS is reviewing Michael Lombardo's contract as Town Manager. They held a joint meeting with the Finance Committee at which the Board of Assessors reported that the tax rate went down from 16.81 to 16.22. Director of Planning & Inspections Patrick Reffett presented a report/proposal on increasing building and inspection fees, which haven't changed in decades. The fee structure is being cleaned up and made comparable to what other towns are charging that may result in an additional \$20-\$50K per year in revenue. A joint meeting of Hamilton's BOS, Wenham's BOS, the School Committee, and Finance Committees of both towns was held Dec. 7. Each town and the Schools gave an overview on budget parameters, fiscal issues, and opportunities. The BOS would like more communication between the two towns. One of the bigger things they need to talk about are the capital improvement plans of all the entities so they can stagger their plans and not be pushing big projects through all at the same time, for example, the sprinkler system at Winthrop and the new turf field.

Mr. Howard asked if they have resolved the issue regarding whether snowplow drivers are going to have insurance from the Town. He has heard snowplow drivers don't want to assume the liability. Mr. Farrell advised him to speak with Mr. Olson or Mr. Lombardo about it.

Chris Currier discussed recent Conservation Commission activities. They had a couple of orders of conditions on the renovation of properties on Echo Cove and did a site walk. They had to push back a setback, but nothing else significant.

Review of Eligibility Applications

- **Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT)**

Russ Tanzer, Chair of the HAHT, requested \$100K on behalf of the Trust. The Trust has \$600K on hand, but \$300K was committed to the senior affordable housing project at Willow Street and another \$300K will be spent on a project yet to be determined. The Trust is also creating a 10% Down Program, which mirrors a program in Gloucester, to help first-time homebuyers in exchange for a deed restriction placed on properties for

about eight to 10 years to keep the homes in the affordable range and satisfy 40B requirements.

Discussion

Dorr Fox noted that at the last CPC meeting, Jay Butler had questioned whether the CPC was able to fund such a program since it doesn't pertain specifically to building or renovating. In talking with Mass Housing, they determined it would be OK.

Mr. Catalano asked Mr. Tanzer why it was important to receive the \$100K now since it still has \$300K. His response is that it's a question of being liquid since there's likelihood that in 2018 the second project will be funded. Mr. Catalano asked Mr. Fox for an accounting of CPC reserves. Currently the reserves for housing only amount to \$10. There is \$42K in historic preservation and \$62 in open space. However, there is enough money to cover the \$100K request.

Decision

Robert Preston made a motion to approve the Trust's eligibility. Mr. Farrell seconded the motion. The CPC voted unanimously in favor of accepting the project's eligibility (6-0).

- **Patton Homestead**

John McWane, who represents Patton Homestead, Inc., made a request for \$200K, but the number is a placeholder. He hopes to have a more definitive cost in place by the time the CPC votes on funding. Right now they are only voting on eligibility. Architects Spencer & Vogt Group have been hired for the Homestead renovations.

Discussion

Mr. Catalano inquired about roof repairs and if that might be a problem this winter. Mr. McWane said they think it's secure.

Mr. Preston wanted to know if the grant request included moving the Historical Society out of Town Hall and into the Homestead. Mr. McWane said the Historical Society needs to determine how much space they need and which part of the building they will use. Mr. Preston said the archive room seems an obvious place for them.

Mr. Farrell noted the Patton Family is in the process of gifting the archives to the Wenham Museum, which will rent space there and give tours. Mr. Lombardo is in the process of putting together a lease agreement to generate revenue.

Mr. Fox said one of the grant requests that will come in January will be for relocation expenses. Mr. Farrell said he foresees some shuffling of monies that have been granted and that haven't been granted yet. So far the CPC has given \$45K for repairs. They also paid for digitalization of the archives.

Mr. Catalano said his company would be grooming a loop of cross-county ski trails and connecting Mrs. Patton's land to Bradley Palmer State Park.

The CPC meeting to review funding applications will be the second Thursday of January. Mr. Farrell said he expects there will be private donations made and fundraising done for different aspects of this project. The more money the CPC puts in, the more they will have to deal with people's expectations. Mr. Preston and Mr. Farrell commented that it would be good to get the word out to the community about this project, and to report early and often.

Decision

Mr. Farrell made a motion to approve the Patton Homestead's preservation project's eligibility. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. The CPC voted unanimously in favor of accepting the project's eligibility (6-0).

Mr. Howard made a comment that what he finds missing from a public standpoint is a business plan for the Homestead's success. He said he would encourage Mr. McWane to show this plan and how much it will cost the taxpayer. Mr. McWane replied that to some extent that has been done in the report to the BOS. One of the things they are showing is how the property will be self-supporting with many events, such as weddings, held there.

Meeting Time

The CPC decided to change the meeting time from 7:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. This will make it easier for some of the CPC members. However, it will mean moving the Historic District meetings to 6 p.m. or holding them on another evening.

Publicizing CPC Successes

Jay Butler (absent this evening) had sent an email regarding CPC signage and projects needing signage. Mr. Preston asked about going back and retroactively signing projects, for example, the Town pool and community house. Mr. Catalano mentioned he wanted to see if Essex County Greenbelt would give the CPC signage at the Sagamore Hill kiosk.

There was discussion about whether to give credit on the sign to the Town of Hamilton, the citizens, or to the CPC. Mr. Farrell is exploring wording options. Mr. Fox has been looking at sign companies and gave an update.

The CPC asked that a sign be made for the Town pool and given to the Recreation Department to install. Mr. Fox mentioned he had spoken with Sean Timmons, who said the Recreation Committee was voting about putting up a plaque. He wondered if they were also thinking they had to fund it. He will check with Mr. Timmons.

Review of Open Grants

- **Senior Center Balustrade:** Mr. Fox said he was told that the project was put out to bid, but nobody was found who would do the job within the range that was appropriated, which surprised CPC members. He will investigate further.
- **Patton Park Cannon/Wagon Wheels:** The wheels arrived last Thursday. They are currently being stored in the building in Patton Park. Mr. Fox will inspect the package.
- **American Legion Electrical Work:** The cost for the work came in at \$10K that Jay Butler signed off on. The work is being done.
- **Historical Society Pictorial Collection:** The scanning is complete although the database is still not searchable, which is the last step.
- **Patton Estate Roof Replacement:** Previously discussed this evening.
- **Pingree Park Playground:** Completed. No money had been paid out yet.
- **Buker School Playground:** No update.
- **Habitat for Humanity Houses:** Construction is coming along slowly.

Other Business

None

Adjournment

Mr. Howard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously (6-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Mary Alice Cookson

Attest

Date