

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Hamilton Town Hall, Memorial Room, 577 Bay Road, Hamilton

October 12, 2023

Members Present: Chair Jay Butler, Kim Dietel, Robert Preston, and Sandy Coddington
Members Absent: Shawn Farrell, Rick Johanson, and Michelle Horgan
Coordinator: Laurie Wilson

Call to order and roll call

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) lacked a quorum. Four members were present: Chair Jay Butler, Kim Dietel, Robert Preston, and Sandy Coddington. (Five are necessary for a quorum per State statute.)

Approval of meeting minutes of August 10, 2023

No vote was taken due to lack of quorum.

Committee reports

Coordinator Laurie Wilson discussed work being done by the Conservation Commission. She and others are handling some of the duties typically done by the Conservation Agent, whose position has not yet been filled. She also reported on the Town employees' move to the Patton Homestead. All departments are moving there except for the Building Department and Department of Public Works. Ms. Wilson discussed office configurations at both locations, as well as the planned reconfiguration for Town Hall after renovation. The upcoming Special Town Meeting (STM) warrant includes the CPC's \$500K grant for the renovation as well as a \$2M Free Cash transfer.

Committee vacancies—Historic District Commission and Planning Board representatives

The CPC is still running with only seven (of nine) members. Currently, there are only three members of the HHDC (Hamilton Historic District Commission) and none have offered to serve as reps to the CPC. Ms. Wilson detailed some current HHDC projects and listed its membership. Ms. Dietel expressed interest as she has experience in working on this with other towns. Other potential candidates for the HHDC were suggested, as well. A current Planning Board (PB) associate member has offered to serve as the PB rep to the CPC, but it is uncertain whether an associate member may serve. No regular PB members want to take on this additional responsibility.

Status of CPA reserves

The CPC has just over \$2M in total reserves. After \$800K comes out for the athletic facilities improvement grant and \$500K for the Town Hall renovation (if both are approved at STM, CPC reserves will total about \$712K. However, a State match (of about \$200K) is expected in mid-November in addition to payments that will be coming in with the quarterly property bills. This means the CPC will have about \$900K to spend on grants next spring. One potential grant project is building a shed to house the Town's antique firetruck on the site of the Public Safety Building. It was discussed that the purchase of the shed likely will not qualify under Historic Preservation since the building itself would not be considered historic. Town Counsel's opinion will be sought on this. The firetruck was rehabilitated and on display at Public Safety Day.

Town Counsel comments on CPC actions

Mr. Butler had forwarded (to the CPC) some questions he has for Town Counsel, such as: If no funds remain in the eligible reserve category, can funds be used from the general reserves? Mr. Preston suggested also submitting these questions to Community Preservation Coalition Executive Director Stuart Saginor and then comparing the answers. Mr. Butler will make his questions more generic and send them to Ms. Wilson for handling.

Warrant article for Town Hall CPA grant at 2023 STM

Due to the lack of quorum, the CPC was unable to vote on the language for the CPC's STM warrant article regarding the \$500K grant for Town Hall. At the bottom of each article, the respective board's vote is printed. Ms. Wilson said the CPC's April vote of (6-0) will be printed. It was discussed that Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary has decided to remain on the campus. The situation there is in flux with the PB in on the discussions of details; therefore, the matter of potentially rezoning that property is not on the warrant. Due to cost, postcards with a QR code (rather than the actual warrants) will be mailed out to residents. STM will take place on a Monday evening this year (November 6 at 7 p.m.) rather than on a Saturday.

Review of status of approved grants

- **Town Hall Restoration, Addition, and Renovation Project:** STM will vote on the \$2M Free Cash transfer and CPC \$500K grant. If approved, bids will then go out. Upgrading the HVAC system and other energy-related items are to be done through energy-saving programs. Ms. Wilson said the warrant appendices, Finance and Advisory Committee recommendations, and other supporting materials will be included with the warrant. It was discussed that the Finance Director is working on re-bundling some of the CPC's existing bonds.
- **HWRSD (Hamilton Wenham Regional School District MS/HS (Middle School/ High School) Athletic Facilities Improvement Project:** Mr. Butler had forwarded the schedule of milestones to be met that had been prepared by Gale Associates. The project is expected to be bid out in January with groundbreaking in March. They decided to flip the locations of the home stands and visitor stands and add a smaller set of stands where the home stands are. The Press Box will be completely renovated with an ADA-compliant ramp added. The MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between the donors and School Committee just went out, which will negotiate naming rights. The amenities building will include both the concession stand and public bathrooms. The main field will have artificial turf. There has been some debate about whether the tennis courts will be lighted. In the past it had been a point of contention with abutters and the ZBA (Zoning Board of Appeals) came up with regulations, but since the project never came to fruition previously, they were never imposed.

Other business as necessary

Mr. Butler met with the Wenham CPC's chair Rick Woodland who has said he is amenable to holding a future joint meeting with Hamilton's CPC. Wenham's contribution to the athletic fields' project is \$400K and it was discussed that their donation might go just toward the tennis courts. Neither CPC may fund the turf field as this would be considered a maintenance item. It was discussed that recent testing was done regarding turf field chemicals and passed all regulations.

Next meeting date

The next meeting will be held in December (because the date for a November meeting falls close to STM).

Adjournment roll call

No vote was taken. The meeting ended at approximately 8 p.m.

Prepared by:



Mary Alice Cookson
Minutes Secretary

Date

1/11/2024

Respectfully submitted at the 1/11/24 meeting.
Laurie Wilson, Coordinator

Documents Discussed at Meeting:

- * Jay Butler's draft of questions for Town Counsel
- * Gale Associates' milestones schedule