

HAMILTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

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Meeting Minutes

2025 MAY -9 AM 9:15

Hamilton Council on Aging – Senior Center, 299 Bay Road, Hamilton, MA

March 13, 2025

Members Present: Chair Jay Butler, Robert Preston (participating remotely),
Kim Dietel (participating remotely), Darcy Dale, Michelle
Horgan, and Shawn Farrell

Members Absent: Bill Wilson, and Sandy Coddington

Coordinator: Cyndi Farrell

** In-person meeting with Zoom component*

Call to order and roll call

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Chair Jay Butler called the Zoom meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. and took a roll call with four members in person: Mr. Butler, Darcy Dale, Michelle Horgan, and Shawn Farrell, and two members participating remotely: Robert Preston and Kim Dietel.

Committee Vacancy – Historic District Commission Rep

The seat remains vacant. The Select Board has been announcing the opening at its meetings.

Approval of meeting minutes of Jan. 9, 2025

Ms. Dale made a motion that the CPC approve the minutes from Jan. 9th. Mr. Farrell seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with “ayes” from Mr. Preston, Ms. Dietel, Ms. Horgan, Mr. Farrell, Ms. Dale, and Mr. Butler, (6-0) unanimous among those present.

Committee member reports on items of interest to the committee

Ms. Dale reported the Planning Board (PB) is working on bylaw amendments that will be on the April 5 Annual Town Meeting (ATM) warrant. Details included changing language to protect ground water and refining the Inclusionary Housing Bylaw, which went into effect on Feb. 2. A Site Plan Review bylaw will also be on the warrant. The Master Plan is complete and ready for the public to view. The 3A requirements for MBTA communities is now an unfunded mandate, according to the State Auditor, and Towns are looking to the courts for relief. Ms. Dale also noted she took a tour of Town Hall (renovation project). Mr. Butler commented, and CPC members discussed that the PB section of the warrant was quite lengthy (66 pages).

Mr. Butler commented that near the end of the Master Plan under “Implementation,” the CPC was assigned to review the 2005 Hamilton Reconnaissance Report for potential CPC-funded preservation projects. Ms. Dale said she would review the 2005 plan, which is on the CPC’s webpage.

Ms. Horgan reported the Housing Authority received a new roof and windows. The State has increased the budget for all housing authorities by 12%. Hamilton currently has ten units open with four ready to go online for applicants. The others need extensive renovation. There may be a delay due to circumstances pertaining to Hamilton sharing its director with Ipswich. Hamilton seniors, veterans, and disabled persons will have local preference for the Hamilton units.

Mr. Farrell did not have anything to report.

Coordinator Cyndi Farrell noted there was a great article in the *Salem News* regarding the Town Hall renovation. The anticipated completion date for the project is mid-2026.

New Community Preservation Act (CPA) Eligibility Application

- **Hamilton Wenham Library, Historic Preservation, Digitalization of Hamilton Wenham Local History—withdrawn by applicant**

Mr. Butler reported that both Town Counsel and the Community Preservation Act Coalition executive director declared this project ineligible for a CPC grant. When informed of this, Wenham withdrew its grant approval. Therefore, applicant Kim Butler of the HW Library withdrew her application.

Review of open CPA Grants

- **Town Hall Renovation, Addition, and Preservation Project:** The project is progressing fine. It cleared Planning Board and Conservation Commission hurdles.
- **HWRSD (Hamilton Wenham Regional School District) Athletic Facilities Improvement Project:** Moving along well.
- **Fire Department Model T Building:** Nothing will be happening until Spring.
- **Housing Production Plan Update:** The project is ready to go out for an RFP (request for proposal) to hire consultants to update the five-year housing plan. However, with all that is happening now, such as uncertainty regarding 3A and the school project, Mr. Butler said it might be best to wait to update the plan.
- **Asbury Commons Affordable Housing Project:** Mr. Butler attended a recent Affordable Housing Trust meeting at which a presentation was given on progress for the project. Harborlight Homes received the State funding it had requested and now has enough to start the project. Harborlight has not approached the CPC with an additional \$250K ask, although they are reserving the right to do so in the future.

Ms. Horgan inquired if School Superintendent Eric Tracy had reached out to request the grant money for the athletic field project yet. Mr. Butler replied that he did not think any of

the applicants had requested their approved grant funds yet, which is managed directly through the Finance Dept.

Mr. Butler updated the CPC about new plans for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The Seminary has proposed to sell 209 dorm units and make 25% of them affordable units. Then the Town can ask to have all the units included in its SHI (Subsidized Housing Inventory). The plan has seven conditions, such as a conservation restriction on the flat part of the land at the bottom. Zoning changes will be needed. There was no mention of pursuing a CPC grant. Mr. Preston inquired about whether students will still live there and was told that the students would live in the dorms at the top of the hill and that classes would be attended mostly by commuters as well as online.

Approval of CPC Warrant Articles for Annual Town Meeting April 5, 2025

Mr. Butler explained there are four internal financial transactions that will be on the ATM Consent Agenda:

- **Internal transfer of 5% of Total CPA revenues to the Administrative Expenses account:** A transfer of \$30,294.71 from Unreserved to the Administrative Budget.
- **Sagamore Hill bond repayment:** Annual debt repayment of \$102,100.
- **Town Hall bond repayment:** First payment in the amount of \$340,650 for the Town Hall \$4M bond.
- **Internal financial transfer of 10% of Total CPA revenues to the Community Housing account:** Moving \$70K from Unreserved to the Community Housing account.

Decision:

Mr. Farrell made a motion that the CPC approve the CPC warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting, April 2025, as read by Jay Butler. Ms. Dale seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with “ayes” from Mr. Preston, Ms. Dietel, Ms. Horgan, Mr. Farrell, Mr. Butler, and Ms. Dale, (6-0) unanimous among those present.

Status of CPA Reserves

Mr. Butler referred to the detailed spreadsheet received from the Finance Dept. Unreserved: \$435K; Open Space: 336K; Community Housing: zero; Historic Preservation: zero. The total is \$778K. The surcharge amount received by the Town is about \$605K and the annual bond repayment is \$601K, which means the CPC does not have much money for future grant requests and may need to focus on smaller rather than larger projects for the present time. The Sagamore Hill bond will not be paid off until 2032. The Town Hall bond will be complete in 2043/2044. Ms. Horgan commented that this means the CPC is doing its job in making use of its funds to benefit the Town.

CPC signage situation

- **Willow Street Flats:** Mr. Butler spoke with Hamilton Development Corporation President Rick Mitchell who said that the company that owns and manages the building (Traggorth Companies LLC) was amenable to placing a CPC plaque. Mr. Butler has not yet been able to make contact with the right person.

- **Chebacco Woods White Dot Trail:** Sandy Coddling will contact Virginia Cookson of the Chebacco Woods Land Management Committee.
- **First Congregational Church:** Ms. Farrell visited the church, and it was determined that the lobby/greeting center would be a good place for a plaque with an accompanying photo of the clock tower. CPC members approved of the idea. Ms. Farrell will implement it.
- **Asbury Grove Tabernacle:** Mr. Butler will contact Brad Tilley
- **Habitat for Humanity Community Housing at 436 Asbury Street** Ms. Dietel said she received approval to place a lawn sign on the property, but placement is not determined. She is waiting to hear back from the supervisor. She and Ms. Farrell will follow up.

Committee email addresses

Ms. Farrell reported that anyone considered an employee of the Town must use a Hamilton email address. Otherwise, if there is an audit, one's entire personal email could be subpoenaed. Those CPC members not having Town email addresses will contact Ms. Farrell to arrange setting them up. Also, Ms. Farrell noted that the Town's Microsoft license was upgraded so that everyone who has a Hamilton email address can set up meetings through Microsoft Teams and use a work calendar rather than a personal calendar.

Other business as necessary/ Next meeting date

Ms. Farrell asked about setting up the CPC Meeting calendar for the next fiscal year. She was told this task is typically done by her in July.

The CPC agreed it would not hold an April meeting due to ATM and the Town election being held in April. The next CPC meeting will be on May 8 at 7 p.m.

Adjournment roll call

Ms. Dale made a motion that the CPC adjourn at approximately 7:45 p.m. Mr. Preston seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with "ayes" from Mr. Preston, Ms. Dietel, Ms. Horgan, Mr. Farrell, Mr. Butler, and Ms. Dale, (6-0) unanimous among those present.

Prepared by:

Mary Alice Cookson

5/8/25

**Mary Alice Cookson
Minutes Secretary**

Date

**Respectfully submitted at the 5/8/25 meeting.
Cyndi Farrell, Coordinator**

Documents Discussed at Meeting:

- * Meeting minutes of Jan. 9, 2025, Mary Alice Cookson
- * Spreadsheet of CPC Reserves, Finance Dept.