

Community Preservation Committee

7:00 PM October 1, 2014

Town Hall, Room 019

MINUTES

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Attending: Frank Chamberlain, chairman; Chris Bajdek; Warren Chamberlain; Thomas Dumas; Rachel Kane; Melissa Kaspert; Elizabeth Newlands; Mike Pelon; Eva Stahl

Also present: Nancy Farrell, Robert Weidknecht

Rail Trail Committee Request

Mr. Weidknecht provided a map of the trail from Cross Street to Hopping Brook. He is requesting the full amount of \$770,000 from the CPC, though in time other grants may reduce the amount needed. However, he said there are various sources of other funding pending, some of which will not be known until after Town Meeting. There was a discussion of how and when the amount might be broken down to meet various grant results, to be acceptable at Town Meeting, and to fit within the budget of the CPC without depleting funds in that one account. The Committee decided that the \$79,000 language might be restructured at the next Town meeting, to be approved use for ancillary purposes too, such as safety, appraisals, and the 21E. All agreed that the Trails Committee has been very good at finding other sources of funding and volunteer labor. Speaking about the negotiations, Mr. Weidknecht said that CSX seems to have approved the amount. CSX requires the 21E from the buyer, and the Rail Trail Committee did representative sampling at intervals -- Church and Cross Streets. Testing the results indicated covering could mitigate issues, which is surprisingly better than expected in older abandoned parcels. Chicken Brook is contaminated. Frank Chamberlain stated that the Committee would vote on this at the next meeting, before taking all the proposals to the Finance Committee meeting on October 14th.

Open Space Committee Request

The Serocki Property

Ms. Kane handed out an illustrated proposal of the Serocki project, lots 17 and 18 on Rogers Road. The Open Space Committee is requesting \$488,000 to support the purchase of 33.2 acres of farm/forestland located at 34 Rogers Road, Holliston. The total project cost is \$588,000, and the Open Space Committee has \$100,000 to put toward the acquisition. She explained that the contiguity of wetland is a factor in the benefit of this purchase. The cleared land makes a good habitat for various kinds of animals. Much of it is wet. She reviewed a bona fide offers, a 2009 appraisal, and an NSTAR easement. She noted that the family is keen on having the area conserved, and a nephew who is young and dedicated to the land owns the remaining property.

The Agricultural Commission is enthusiastic about developing more community gardening and managing the land. They propose utilizing the shed for storage; the CPA does not require demolishing barn because it's useable. There was a discussion of the house that is on the property. The Conservation Commission supports the acquisition. The site is in a Zone II area (of a public water supply well), and would preserve more conservation area in this part of town. As development rises in town, it's good to get some lands set aside for open space. The Committee agreed that this purchase is important. This site is vulnerable to purchase and use in the industrial park. After two generations of farming, the agricultural use is appropriate. The Town could lease land to farmers and manage the lease. In addition, there is a lot of timber.

CPA Plan update review and discussion

Frank Chamberlain listed his annotations to the plan that Ms. Kane circulated.

Page 3 10% of the funds are allocated to each of the three areas: Open space, housing, and historic preservation
Up to 5% for administration

Balance remaining is unrestricted and may be used as the Committee decides
Recommendations go directly to voters at town meeting.

Page 4 Holliston has a number of boards ... assisted by CPA funds: Hist. Comm, Open Space, Trails, Housing Trust, Housing Authority. The state? Where did those funds go? Public private partnership.
Upper Charles trail.
Do we want the blue? – looks more like the master plan and may not qualify for CPC funds.
What do we think about bulleting the projects we have done in each area?
Ms. Kane could add a link
Frank Chamberlain suggested a list, including the nature of project
List them all and update them – big and small –grave markers
For a list of all the projects see appendix A – way up front
It should be on the website
We should advertise ourselves.
Ms. Kane - appendix 5 – make it a chart
Reference it in the overview.
Links in each of the subcategories, like housing.
Fewer things to update annually
Q: What is the percentage of housing in town that's affordable? A: Still well below 10%
Overall goal of "Housing trust" – how to word this – Frank Chamberlain be vague
Community goals for affordable housing are:
Community goals for open space are:

Page 10 Historical preservation
There are no plans - this is the only text in town
Frank Chamberlain - we can't spend money on historic homes – not private properties
We want to protect the significant historic neighborhood/ districts
Inventories & establishing historic districts
Studies and research can be funded – pay for consultant
Researching every property. The B form is tough so we need a consultant.
Strike factory bldg.
Preserve the character of town through preservation of historic properties

Page 11 Public bldgs. Town hall, digital records
Natural features: possibilities for cataloging and preserving
Ms. Kane noted that appendices need frequent updating
Frank Chamberlain has the forms
The website is outdated: update, link to the eligibility matrix, allowable projects, worksheet

New Business

Frank Chamberlain noted that the Committee hopes to safeguard the historical character of Holliston through preservation of appropriate properties. He mentioned that Brooksmont Farm is currently under threat for demolition, to become an over-55 development. The Historical Society has asked if they would keep the house, if funds for affordable would be made available. He believes that would be a legitimate use of CPC funds.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday October 8, 2014
Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 8:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Woodrow

Date approved: February 25, 2015