

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

7:30 PM March 25, 2015
Holliston Town Hall, Room 019

MINUTES

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:55 PM.

Attending: Frank Chamberlain (chair); Chris Bajdek; Warren Chamberlain; Melissa Kaspern; Elizabeth Newlands.

Approval of Minutes

VOTE Moved: to approve the minutes of 3/11/15 as amended.

Approved: Frank Chamberlain, Mr. Bajdek, Ms. Newlands, Warren Chamberlain

Opposed: 0

Abstained: Ms. Kaspern

CPA Requests

Holliston Housing Trust

Discussion: There was a lottery on 3/24/15 for the Regency Drive property, which adds another completed project to the Housing Trust's recent list. The Committee hopes to be able to contribute to their progress as they identify appropriate opportunities in the future.

VOTE Moved: To appropriate \$171,848.02 from the CPC Housing Reserve, and the difference up to \$250,000 from the General Reserve, for the purpose of supporting affordable housing projects in Holliston.

Approved: 5

Opposed: 0

Parks and Recreation Department: Stoddard Park Playground

Discussion: Ms. Kaspern spoke about the proposal. The CPC reserves have been drawn down, and the Committee wants to be sure to have sufficient funds to meet further needs that may emerge. Frank Chamberlain reviewed two handouts: the CPC Activity Summary and the Project Balances. These figures were compiled by the new Town Accountant, and will be subject to verification for agreement with the CPC records. Frank Chamberlain suggested that the Committee could vote to support the playground funding, contingent upon checking the accuracy of the figures on the spreadsheet before Town Meeting.

VOTE Moved: To approve up to \$55,000 from the CPC Open Space and Recreation Reserves to the Parks & Recreation Department, for acquisition of playground equipment as specified in the submittal.

Approved: 5

Opposed: 0

Holliston in Bloom: Wenakeening Woods Parking

Discussion: The Committee has heard a request from Paul Saulnier and Mark Ahronian regarding proposed work at the Wenakeening Woods recreation area. The CPA preservation chart allows funding of capital improvements, and the sense of the Committee is that this is a worthwhile effort, but there must be an official proposal with appropriate permissions.

VOTE Moved: To approve \$7,978 from the CPA Open Space and Recreation fund, for improvements at the Wenakeening recreation area., subject to receipt of a formal proposal and subject to favorable consultations with the Conservation Commission and the Trustees of Reservations.

Approved: 5

Opposed: 0

Community Preservation Plan

Further action by the Committee was postponed.

New Business

Holliston CPC Website

Ms. Newlands returned a revision of the original CPC splash page text.

Frank Chamberlain distributed "Chart 1, Community Preservation Fund Allowable Spending Purposes (G.L. c. 44B, § 5)." There will be a link to this added to the website.

The Agricultural Commission: Serocki property

Discussion: The Town has approved the purchase of this property, which provides a benefit to the public that includes trails, agricultural land, wetland, and aquifer protection. The Conservation Commission is reviewing language for a CR, not an APR, and is considering whether they will hold the property in care and custody. The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation will hold the Restriction. The Agricultural Commission hopes to repurpose the house on the property to be a public center for meetings, education, a library and storage, if allowed by the Conservation Restriction.

This may be an allowed use for CPC funds. The Conservation Commission and the Agricultural Commission have been meeting and developing a cooperative relationship. One question, which might be answered by the Building Inspector, is if the building is suitable for public use, or if the footprint could be used to site some kind of additional opportunity for the Town. The Agricultural Commission hopes to develop a proposal for use of the building as a Community center for all ecological activity. Some ideas include: learning about our ecology, a butterfly aviary, and perhaps Garden Club involvement. Everyone is favorable to the idea of an educational facility, but there is a need to find out how that could be accomplished. As to the question of what can be done and what it would cost, there was agreement that a management plan would be useful. The CPC believes that an educational center on the property would be an asset to the community, and would like to investigate which uses are allowable for funding. Any proposal should consider raising money for long-term maintenance. Usually when a building association purchases a property, an additional endowment is needed to fund upkeep. The CPC cannot do that. Grants might be available.

Brooksmont Farm was mentioned as an example of a possible rehabilitation of historic structure.

Reschedule Public Meeting

The public hearing for the purpose of discussing the CPA in Holliston will take place Wed April 15 at 7:30 PM.

The next CPC meeting will follow.

Upon a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Woodrow

Date Approved: April 15, 2015