

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2016

7:30 P.M.

First Floor Conference Room, 141 Keyes Road

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's Office, Concord's Community Preservation Committee held a public meeting in the First Floor Conference Room at 141 Keyes Road starting at 7:30 P.M. Committee members John Cratsley, Linda Escobedo, Greg Higgins, Dee Ortner, Barbara Pike, Geoffrey Taylor and Peter Ward were present.

Ms. Ortner called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. Select Board Liaison Tom McKean and Finance Committee Representative Tom Tarpey were also present for the meeting. Committee Members introduced themselves before beginning the discussion.

Discussion of CPC goals/priorities for the upcoming year

Ms. Ortner noted that a list of previously funded projects had been sent out at the last meeting. To date, the CPC has recommended 69% of its funding to Town projects and the remaining 31% to local non-profits. Historic Preservation projects have received the largest share of the total funds at 36%.

Recreation came in second at 23%, followed closely by Community Housing at 22% and Open Space at 17%. Administration and Land Acquisition both received approximately 2% of available funds.

Ms. Ortner asked if the Committee wanted to consider goals for directing funding this year. Ms. Pike thought that it would be good to allocate more funding to Community Housing projects. Ms. Escobedo noted that the percentage of the allocations changed each year and pointed out that multiyear projects could have impacts which were not obvious from the start. Mr. Higgins thought that the percentage allocations were a reflection of what applications were received and was not sure that they could be planned for. Ms. Ortner agreed but noted that the Committee could put funding in reserve for future projects. Ms. Escobedo noted that this had been done in the past. Ms. Kritzer noted that Open Space projects were generally for land acquisition, and that this was often not known until after the other recommendations were made. As a result, those projects tended to receive funds in reserve or left over, but might have received more funding if they had been known earlier in the process.

Ms. Ortner stated that she was thinking of this year's goals in terms of the requests which the Committee already knew were coming. Mr. Higgins was surprised that Open Space had not received more funding and asked about Natural Resource Division applications for locations such as the Old Calf Pasture. Ms. Kritzer noted that many of their applications were funded, but that they were generally for relatively small amounts. In comparison, fewer Recreation projects had been funded but they were generally for very large amounts. Mr. Ward noted that the CPC was expecting to receive a request for \$1 million over two years for Junction Village. Mr. Taylor thought that this issue could be considered but that it was hard to plan for before the applications were received. Ms. Escobedo noted that Junction Village could also be coming in for funding of the Open Space portion of the project. Ms. Ortner noted that this was the beginning of a general discussion on future spending.

Discussion of Reimbursement Process and Purchase Order Approval Process/Policy

Ms. Kritzer reviewed the general reimbursement process for nonprofit projects and the alternative process for Community Housing construction projects and Town projects. She then explained the proposed change in the Town process to review and approve the Purchase Orders rather than the individual invoices. Members had reviewed the draft text prior to the meeting and discussed it at this time. Ms. Ortner confirmed that the Committee would still receive copies of the individual invoices for the file. Members agreed that the process made sense and to vote for the change as part of their amendments to the Community Preservation Plan.

Review and Approve Changes to the Community Preservation Plan

Members reviewed the other changes to the Plan at this time. Mr. Ward noted that in the Recreation Section, page 26, South Meadow was listed as a potential playground area but was no longer under consideration. Members discussed amendments to this section to correct the statement. He asked that page 25 refer to the “Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan” and raised a question about the public forum as discussed in the standard application process. He noted that feedback from the public hearings last fall had focused on the level of detail on individual projects that the public was interested in, and that the Committee had discussed altering the hearing format to have the applicants present their own applications. Ms. Ortner agreed that this had been discussed but thought that the Committee had been undecided on how to proceed. Members discussed options for integrating applicants into the review process and providing more information. Mr. Ward thought that the applicants were the most knowledgeable about their projects but others were concerned that it would be hard to have each application discussed equally with this format. Members agreed that the format should be revisited and that more needed to be done to stimulate conversation during the review process. Ms. Escobedo suggested that the Committee hold off on flushing out these details until this year’s applications were received and suggested that it be added to an October agenda.

A question was raised about whether the funding process should require review for “significant” or “material” changes. Members agreed that the term “material” should be used throughout and noted the pages to be changed.

Ms. Ortner asked if the Committee was ready to proceed with the revised plan with the changes noted. Members agreed and Mr. Taylor moved to approve the 2017 Community Preservation Plan as revised with Mr. Ward’s amendments and the new Purchase Order review policy. Ms. Escobedo seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Update on Surcharge Discussions and Establish Subcommittee

Ms. Ortner stated that she had met with the Select Board and that with Ms. Cookman, she had also met with the Planning Board. Both Boards were interested in learning more about the possible change. She had explained that the CPC was still gathering information and was not proposing any changes yet. Her next step was to meet with Ms. Rasmussen about the proposed change. The Select Board had wanted to know when this proposal would be moving forward and how the Committee was gathering community feeling. Ms. Ortner had explained that this was a long term project and that the Committee would be focusing on its annual projects this fall. She noted that the next possible ballot that this change could be voted on would not be until fall 2018. Ms. Ortner suggested coming back to this subject later in the year once they knew

whether Boston or Springfield had voted to join the CPA and what other legislation might be moving forward.

Ms. Pike asked when Boston was moving forward with their CPA vote and Ms. Ortnier stated that they were expected to request a 1% surcharge this year. Mr. Taylor expressed concern with the impact of this vote on the State Trust Fund. Ms. Pike asked if there was any discussion of increasing the fees that contribute to the State Trust Fund. Ms. Ortnier explained that this had been proposed but had not moved forward yet. Members discussed the Registry filing fees which contributed \$20 for every Residential filing and \$10 for every Municipal Lien filed at the Registry of Deeds. It was also noted that every community was required to receive a 5% match but that this could be difficult to reach with more large communities entering the program.

Mr. Taylor noted that the Historical Commission had discussed the proposed change and was not in favor of asking for more taxes at this time. They saw the reason behind the proposal but were not enthusiastic about it. Ms. Ortnier noted that this could be a lengthy process and suggested that the Committee form a subcommittee to work on the question offline. Ms. Pike moved that the CPC create a subcommittee to explore the possibility of increasing the CPA surcharge in the future. It was proposed that Ms. Ortnier, Ms. Cookman, and Ms. Pike take on this charge. Mr. Higgins seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Criteria for Permanent CPA Funding Signs

Ms. Kritzer presented information on other permanent bronze signs that had been installed around Concord and explained that the sign installed at McGrath farm had cost just over \$1,000. Ms. Ortnier asked what the criteria would be for permanent signs and Members discussed who would pay for the sign. Ms. Pike thought that it was good for residents to be made aware of where their money was going and how it was being used. Mr. Cratsley asked if the goal for the moment was to develop criteria for future permanent signs. Ms. Kritzer noted that this had been brought up at a past meeting for discussion and that to date, the Committee had provided temporary signs for projects while in progress. Mr. Taylor thought that it was more important to have signs up while work was underway than to have them there long term.

Members discussed their goals for signage and agreed that it was to promote the ongoing work of the program and create good feelings for it. Members asked Ms. Kritzer to report back on the number of temporary signs in use and where they were located. Mr. Cratsley asked if the question was whether there should either be permanent or temporary signs and Members agreed to continue the discussion on permanent signs to a future meeting. Mr. Ward suggested that if a project was installing a permanent sign, then perhaps the CPC could be noted as well and Members agreed. Ms. Ortnier felt that the Committee should consider specifically how to proceed with all signage.

Preservation Awards Recap

Mr. Taylor reported on the Historical Commission's recent awarding of Concord's first annual preservation awards. He explained that former CHC member Annette Bagley had worked hard to develop the program and would continue to assist the Commission in administering it. He stated that the Committee had received applications for a number of inspiring projects and had had a fabulous turnout at the June Select Board meeting where the awards were presented. People were very excited about the program and the CHC hoped that the awards would be displayed by recipients. He explained that a certificate was being developed with a Wyeth print

from the Concord Free Public Library. The program had received a lot of enthusiasm and the CHC had encouraged as large a pool of projects as possible. He reviewed the six projects that had received awards this year and their categories. Mr. Taylor stated that the CPC hoped that this award would be talked about and planned to move forward with another round next year.

Ms. Ortner asked how the work of the CHC could contribute to the reviews conducted by the CPC. Mr. Taylor noted that the CHC worked to protect and promote Concord's historic resources and generally reviewed all Historic Preservation projects submitted for funding. He noted that the CHC was currently interested in completing research on Camp Massachusetts, an 1859 encampment of Massachusetts Militia held in preparation for the Civil War. He explained the CHC's work on this project and noted that the Commission regularly encouraged people to consider CPA funding when they came in with new project ideas. Ms. Ortner asked other Commission representatives to give an update on their Commissions at future meetings to encourage a better understanding of different points of view.

Status Report on Open Projects and Projects To Be Closed

Ms. Kritzer passed out an updated spreadsheet of open projects with the 2016 funded projects included. She explained that all completed projects had been removed and that only projects with outstanding funding remained. Ms. Ortner asked if there were any open projects that should be looked at and Members reviewed those open for the longest time periods and their status. Members discussed whether the Robbins House Project should be asked to come in to update the Committee on its progress and agreed to wait until after the current funding round to do this. Members also noted that a number of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail projects were still open and Ms. Kritzer explained that the design phase of that project was wrapping up quickly. Members agreed that they would also like this project to come in at some point as well.

Approval to Close the Following Project Files

Ms. Ortner stated that she had reviewed the individual files ready for closing and had found them to be complete. Mr. Higgins moved to approve closing the following CPA project files:

- Concord Scout House Historic Structure Report and Restoration – Project #s 11-09 and 17-11
- Concord Children Center Woodland Trail Phases I and II – Project #s 3-11 and 9-12
- 51 Walden Street Historic Structural Repairs, Project #4-11
- West Concord Fire Station Rehabilitation, Project #12-08
- Recreation Facilities Plan, Project #12-11
- Rogers Land Restoration and Easements, - Project #s 6-10, 8-12, and 5-13
- CCHS Field Renovations Phase I – Project#8-13
- Thoreau Birth Place Historic Structure Report – Project#11-11
- Old Calf Pasture Restoration – Project#14-12
- Heywood Meadow Phase II Reconstruction – Project #s 4-12 and 3-13
- Town House Restoration – Project #6-12
- Wright Tavern Restoration – Project #3-14

Mr. Taylor seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Ms. Kritzer noted that the Wright Tavern Historic Structure Report file was also ready to close pending the receipt of a final copy of the report. She hoped to have that file ready for the Committee's review soon.

Visibility – Website, Signage, and Possible 10th Anniversary Celebration

It was noted that the Town would soon be unveiling a new website and suggested that the Committee hold off on improvements until that site was ready to be added to. Members discussed publishing a list of the projects completed with additional information, as well as possible ways to mark the Town's 10th anniversary with the CPA program. Ms. Ortner suggested that the Committee hold a Community Appreciation Day where the funded projects were open to the public. Members discussed this possibility and how it could be achieved. If it is decided that an additional surcharge be brought to the town for consideration, Ms. Escobedo thought that an idea like this could be a good addition to the CPC's marketing plan for the surcharge change.

Report from Treasurer

Mr. Taylor reported that the Committee had received requests for reimbursement from the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Project, the Concord Fountain restoration, Heywood Meadow, and the Concord Housing Development Corporation to buy down a new affordable unit. Members discussed the work completed and status of these projects.

Approval of June Meeting Minutes

Members had reviewed and revised the June meeting minutes prior to the meeting. Mr. Taylor moved to approve the minutes as revised. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR with the exception of Mr. Higgins who abstained from voting as he had not been present at that meeting.

Other Business

Mr. Cratsley stated that he had received a call from a potential applicant and asked how these should be handled. It was suggested that these calls be referred to Ms. Kritzer.

Ms. Ortner passed out an article that she had found in the Wright Tavern project file. She explained that she had found the article to be an interesting and informative article on the building and program. Mr. Cratsley noted that the Wright Tavern was undergoing big changes and would soon be more open to the public. He explained that the Concord Museum was taking over the first floor of the building and would be making it available to school tours and the public.

It was noted that a lawsuit has been filed against the CPC in Acton on the ground of separation of Church and State after CPA funding had been awarded to a local congregation for their historic church building. Members agreed that this would need to be watched carefully. The lawsuit had been filed by a Washington DC organization that saw this as a violation of the Constitution. Members were encouraged to check out the article in the Sunday Globe on the issue.

Ms. Escobedo moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Higgins seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: October 4, 2016

Bouzha Cookman, Secretary