

Minutes for CPC Meeting of 9/8/05, 7:30 pm – 9:15 pm, Town Hall Room 204

Attending:

Peter Berry, Catherine Coleman, Walter Foster, Matt Lundberg, Andy Magee, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Nancy Tavernier, Roland Bartl

Audience:

Six people in attendance, and one reporter.

Matt opened the meeting at 7:30pm.



Approval of Minutes—The minutes of 8/24/05 were approved unanimously with minor changes.

OLD BUSINESS

Membership Update

The Historical Commission needs to select a member to be on the Committee, but they haven't met since our last meeting.

Walter reported that no further progress has been made toward selecting an Associate Member. The Volunteer Coordinating Council (VCC) is short one member so it is behind, but it is working on making a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. There are five applicants that are being processed. The VCC will contact them. It may be a month before this is all resolved.

Andy, Nancy and Ken are confirmed to be re-appointed. Andy and Ken did not need to be re-sworn in, since they remain on their respective committees (Conservation Committee and Housing Authority).

TJ O'Grady Skatepark

Walter had no new update on the funding situation. Walter will be talking to John Murray about this, and also will be speaking to the TJ O'Grady group, but may not have any new information by the next meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

Matt opened the Public Hearing to receive comments on the Draft 2006 CPC Plan. Matt introduced the draft plan, and opened the floor up to comments.

Tom Tidman, Natural Resources Director, asked if the CPC was looking to fund a "big ticket" item this year, or many smaller projects. Andy responded that the Bruce Freeman rail trail is one big item that we are expecting to come in over the next few years. Nancy added that last year was unusual in that we had a lot of little projects that we funded. Due to the 10% statutorily required set-asides for housing, open space, historic projects, plus the 5% administrative set-aside, 35% of the total is already earmarked. Peter commented that the CPC does not make proposals, but

depends on people giving us proposals to fund. We need to hear any ideas people may have for projects requiring large funding.

Brewster Conant, Cemetery Commission, asked why the term “improvement” was not included in the criteria for community preservation on page 4 of the Plan. The Committee had a brief discussion about what types of projects might qualify under the law and what probably would not. The text in the Plan comes from the statute, and specifically allows creation and preservation, but not maintenance or improvement of existing open space. Careful wording of the proposal can influence whether a proposed project is seen as improving or creating new open space.

Ken noted that Town Counsel will provide a legal opinion on whether each proposal qualifies under the statute. Our comments tonight are our own opinions.

Matt and Roland noted that all Town Counsel comments on previous proposals are available in the Planning Department for anyone to review, and the Community Preservation Coalition website has useful information for writing proposals. Roland added that any prospective applicant can speak to the Planning Department about funding eligibility. If Roland feels legal review is warranted, he will send it to Town Counsel for review.

Andy brought up the fact that we don’t recommend anywhere in the Plan that groups seek the opinion of legal counsel. A discussion followed regarding whether or not to recommend that groups get their own legal opinions.

Cathy Hatfield, Friends of the Arboretum, informed the Committee about the plans to make the Arboretum accessible to the disabled, and provide educational materials and maps for the Arboretum. Plans so far call for the re-working, re-location, and creation of trails, and re-working the entrance to the Arboretum. The goal is to have the upper loop fully ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant. There would also be a new trail to a new lilac garden. Walter commented that new construction and re-location of trails would be easier to qualify than simply improving existing trails. Roland commented that it seems to fit with the creation criteria, in that it is creating recreational space for a particular population. Andy cautioned that the project needs to be leveraged on its own (not counting previous work done as leveraged money), and that the CPC money should not be mixed with private donations. Kathy explained that the expertise in designing and writing the proposal is donated, and that the Town will be the applicant, since it is Town-owned property. Matt suggested looking at Kayla’s Garden, a similar CPA-funded project in Newton.

Matt asked for comments on specific sections of the Plan: Open Space, Recreation, Housing, and Historic. Hearing no further comments Matt closed the Public Hearing.

Proposed Changes to the Plan

Ken suggested that we include our website and the Coalition website to the Plan. It was noted that the references exist on page 1 of the Plan. Andy proposed copying the entire last paragraph from page 1 to the end of page 17.

Peter proposed updating the members’ names in the Plan on page 2.

Andy proposed adding “legal counsel” in the list in the fifth bullet on page 16.

The 2006 CPC Plan was approved unanimously as amended.

NEW BUSINESS

A brief discussion was held regarding the 9/22 and 10/6 meetings, in which interest groups are invited to present and discuss potential proposals to be submitted to the Committee. Everyone was encouraged to invite appropriate groups to the meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Sghia-Hughes