

Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
November 16, 2017
Town Hall Room 204

Members Present: Bill Alesbury (Vice-Chair), Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Dean Charter (Associate), Walter Foster (Chair), Amy Green, Carolyn Kirkpatrick (Associate), Joe Will (Clerk), Ray Yacouby

Others Present: Roland Bourdon (Acton Finance Committee), Robert Hummel (Acton Assistant Planner), Greg Johnson (Windsor Avenue Resident), Susan Mitchell-Hardt, (Acton Conservation Trust (ACT) President)

Walter opened the meeting at 7:30 P.M.

I. Citizen Concerns

- none

II. Minutes of October 26, 2017

- Walter expressed the Committee's gratitude to Carolyn and asked that she convey it to the Acton Woman's Club for the Club hosting the CPC for last month's open house — "a wonderful event" — and business meeting.

- Fix the October minutes to correctly reference Peter Berry in one sentence.

It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes as corrected.

III. Review of Project Applications

- Robert provided the CPC with a listing of Project Applications submitted by the 11/13 deadline and with copies of the applications (some of which omitted pages not needed for this meeting, e.g., personnel documentation, but that are readily available for viewing in DocuShare). Walter led a review of the list and asked for comments on the applications.

- Regional Housing Services – \$50,000

It was noted that this requests funding for two years, and in the recent past the CPC has funded similar requests for only one year.

- Arthur Davis Etchings Restoration – \$12,000

It was noted that Larry Powers of Acton's Powers Gallery and "a friend of the CPA" provided the estimated cost of framing Davis's restored work. Per the application, mold removal from Davis's work will be done by Brigitte Boyadjian, whose "resume and qualifications are included (with the application)" but omitted in this meeting's handouts — an example of application information not needed for this meeting but readily available in DocuShare (see first bullet above).

- Woodlawn Cemetery Gates – \$31,000

- Handicapped-Accessible Campsite at Camp Acton – \$10,012

It was noted that the project value is \$13.7K but the application is for \$10K because of in-kind contributions.

- Arboretum China Trail and Garden – \$14,000

This project has “lots of leverage” including the donation of most of her time by landscape architect Hongbing Tang.

- Kennedy Building Rehabilitation at Woodlawn Cemetery – \$51,000

It was noted that the purpose of this project is rehabilitation, not preservation, of an historic resource that is significant to the culture of Acton. Walter reminded the CPC that the CPC has Town Legal Counsel review whether CPA applications meet CPA requirements, save for those applications that are quite similar to applications that have enjoyed Counsel approval in the past, such as the Open Space set-aside request.

- 53 River Street Park, and Dam Removal, Feasibility Study – \$58,875

– Town purchase of this property was originally proposed as a CPA project, but timing was bad and the use of the property was unclear, so the property was purchased with Acton’s free cash. Town Counsel was asked, and agreed that the Town could buy the property with its funds and the purchase could later be covered with CPA funds if use of the property would fall within CPA eligibility guidelines.

– As to the Town’s River Street Use Committee, its formation is stalled due to possible conflict of interest on the part of some committee applicants (because they live within a certain distance of the property). The conflict of interest issue has to be worked out before the Committee can even meet. The Board of Selectmen (BoS) expect things to move forward early in 2018.

– An error on the Project Application cover page was noted. The applicant will be asked to submit a corrected cover page.

- Skatepark Expansion — Phase 2, Skate Plaza — \$76,000

The cost estimate has increased to \$225K from \$175K, \$135K of which is covered by previously allocated CPA funds. Walter provided a little history on Boxborough’s participation in the Skatepark development, and what Boxborough’s role might still be with what has been a joint project. More generally, he suggested that the CPCs from both towns have a joint meeting as there is potential for other joint projects. He will try to arrange this.

- NARA Performance Improvements – \$25,000

(Variable Message Sign – \$19,000, Portable Stage Accessible Ramp – \$6,000)

– The variable message sign is “hardware.” Has the CPC funded something like this in the past? Only things that come to mind are the kiosks on the Trail Through Time and at the Arboretum. Town Counsel will definitely look at this.

- Open Space Set-Aside Funds – \$450,000

- Old North Acton School Project – \$315,000

– The project applicant should be advised to revise the first paragraph of the application to eliminate the reference to “maintenance,” as CPA funds cannot be used for anything that could be considered “routine maintenance.” Other possible issues could the restrictions required for CPA-funded 1) historic preservation and 2) open-space acquisition, particularly considering the proposal that the Town build a fire station next to this site (something that may be considered in the next regular Town Meeting). Also on the first page are references to two different site locations (62 Harris Street and 54 Harris Street).

– The above discussion also prompted the following: When the CPC receives Project Applications, the CPC tries to help the applicants with any issues that the CPC notices up front so that it can help the applicant “work out the wrinkles.” Thus, it is

helpful to try to schedule the presentations of “new” projects early so the applicants can revise and resubmit if necessary.

– The Town has lots of old buildings. How do Selectmen feel about this project?

Peter: This didn’t come to the BoS as a Town application. On Town applications, the BoS is holding off on recommendations until later in the process.

- Hosmer House Campus Landscape – \$188,546

This project was “brought to the fore” by the Kelley’s Corner initiative. Because of the impact the Kelley’s Corner work will have on the front of the Hosmer House property, the Town is trying to work with the Acton Historical Society (AHS) to enhance the entire three-acre site to better serve the goals of the AHS.

- Acton Housing Authority Development/Acquisition Funds – \$75,000

This is the same amount as requested, but not approved at Town Meeting, last year. There apparently is no “catch up” for last year. It should be noted for the applicant that the last bulleted item in the narrative seems “extraneous.”

- AHA McCarthy Village Siding and Decking Replacement – \$75,000

On Sachem Way, McCarthy Village is the large building, one of the first built, and the first you see as you drive into the villages.

- 43-45 School Street Preservation Project – \$38,650

This Habitat for Humanity (HfH) proposal is for historic preservation, exterior work. Should this proposal be asking for funds to cover the certification of compliance costs required for rehabilitation of historic resources projects? For this, the Kennedy Building project, and others, the CPC will have to remember to address these costs at the project presentations. Cost for such a certification must be built into the cost of a project.

- 43-45 School Street Community Housing Project – \$53,000

This HfH proposal is for the interior of two affordable housing units. The BoS voted on Monday to transfer the property to HfH for \$1. If CPA funds are awarded for this project, an affordable housing restriction will remain on the property.

- CPA Administrative Support 2018 – ~\$56,000

– This is a percentage request and the proposal shows a range because the total revenue is not known yet.

– Robert shared these numbers: \$956,455 from local tax, \$164,537 from the state for a total of \$1,120,992. The Community Preservation Coalition says the State match now is 17% (down considerably because Boston has joined — the original State contribution was a 100% match), but it is not final yet although no extra \$ are anticipated. There are bills on Beacon Hill to increase ways of raising \$ for the CPA.

Membership status: Susan, who is present, has resigned from the CPC. The CPC thanks her for her service. Dean, as the most senior Associate member, will become a Regular member. Greg should be on the next BoS meeting for approval as an Associate member.

Next task: Assignments for and scheduling of the 17 projects.

This list below is arranged in chronological order of project presentations to the CPC. The CPC member listed is the CPC liaison to the project. The liaison contacts the project applicant with the relevant information below (and a heads-up to any

relevant issue suggested above), suggests that applicant questions be directed to the liaison, and introduces the applicant at the presentation.

12/07 7:35 pm	• Acton Housing Authority Development/Acquisition Funds	Nancy
12/07 7:55 pm	• AHA McCarthy Village Siding and Decking Replacement	Nancy
12/07 8:20 pm	• Hosmer House Campus Landscape	Ray
12/07 8:55 pm	• 43-45 School Street Preservation Project	Bill
”	• 43-45 School Street Community Housing Project	Bill
12/07 9:20 pm	• Regional Housing Services	Peter
12/21 7:35 pm	• Kennedy Building Rehabilitation at Woodlawn Cemetery	Dean
12/21 7:55 pm	• Woodlawn Cemetery Gates	Tory
12/21 8:15 pm	• Handicapped-Accessible Campsite at Camp Acton	Amy
12/21 8:35 pm	• Arboretum China Trail and Garden	Amy
12/21 8:55 pm	• Arthur Davis Etchings Restoration	Walter
12/21 9:20 pm	• Open Space Set-Aside Funds	Joe
01/11 7:35 pm	• 53 River Street Park, and Dam Removal, Feasibility Study	Greg
01/11 8:10 pm	• Old North Acton School Project	Carolyn
01/11 8:30 pm	• Skatepark Expansion — Phase 2, Skate Plaza	Walter
01/11 8:50 pm	• NARA Performance Improvements	Joe
01/11 9:10 pm	• CPA Administrative Support 2018	Peter

The CPC has two meetings scheduled in each of December, January, and February. Approved projects have to be made available to the April Town Meeting Warrant a month in advance.

IV. Recapture Memo

- Walter reviewed Robert’s recapture memo for the CPC. He expressed special concern that the Playground Basketball Courts project never commenced in the three year, one month time frame and will seek an explanation. He explained that the Committee will see all the numbers, including required minimum appropriations, at the next meeting in a spreadsheet from Planning.
- Robert reviewed other projects that are still spending CPA funds.

V. CPC Lawsuit Update

- Peter: Nothing new to report. The Town is still waiting for the Court to decide.

VI. Open Space Presentation for Special Town Meeting

- The Special Town Meeting is December 4, and it’s not likely to take two nights. All CPC members should attend (the entire Town Meeting) if at all possible, and let others know of the Meeting. The CPA Newtown Road land purchase appropriation is Article 2. Walter thanks Roland for helping secure the Finance Committee recommendation for the Article. Walter will coordinate the Article presentation with Andy Magee, Chair of the Open Space Committee. It’s Peter’s understanding that the Town will pick up the “soft costs” of the acquisition. The Warrant, approved by the BoS, will be available tomorrow. The Acton Conservation Trust is hosting walks on

the Newtown Road parcels this coming Saturday (2 pm, w/chili and hot cider) and on Saturday, December 2, at 9:30 am.

VII. Administrative Updates

- There was brief discussion about Committee membership.

9:45 P.M. — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.

Next scheduled meetings: 12/07, 12/21, 01/11, 01/25, 02/08, 02/22, 03/08, 03/22