

Minutes from CPC Meeting of Thursday, 2/27, 7:30 pm-10:15 pm, Room 204

Attending: Peter Berry, Catherine Coleman, Mimi Herrington, Walter Foster, Andy Magee, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Chris Shaffner at 8:30 pm, Roland Bartl

Guest: Bob Johnson

Absent: Allison Gallagher, Peter Grover, Wayne Klockner, Joe Nagle

1. Elections:

Nominations: Peter Berry for Chair

Catherine Coleman for Vice Chair

Each candidate gave a brief history:

Peter worked in a legal services program in the early 70's in Boston. He has worked for Cambridge and Boston Housing Authorities; has two children, one in High School; has lived in Acton since '88.

Since then he has served on the Housing Authority Board and the ZBA; has looked at zoning in public housing and served on the Affordable Housing Committee. He subsequently moved to the ConsCom in order to understand why there was a conflict between ConsCom and Affordable Housing. He wants to get both groups to work together.

- Peter was elected unanimously as chair and will serve until the end of the fiscal year.

Catherine has lived in Acton for 12 years. She was a fund raiser for the Wang Center for the Performing Arts. Prior to that she worked in Dorchester for a social service agency and raised seed money for low income housing. She has also worked at Hill Holiday in public relations.

She has served on the AB Cultural Council and did fundraising and marketing. She is a supporter of land conservation organizations and is frustrated by the overgrowth of the town.

- Catherine was elected unanimously as Vice Chair and will serve until the end of the Fiscal year.

- Walter will play a supporting role as liaison between the BoS and CPC.

2. Secretary's Report: The minutes from 2/5/03 were accepted with one change.

3. Handouts:

Roland distributed a draft Q&A re: CPA Exemptions

Walter distributed paperwork associated with Right of First Refusal Notice - 108 Willow St.

4. Meeting Schedule for 2003 revisited.

- Tuesday evenings are not convenient for Peter. An option would be to meet at 7 am. Decision is postponed.

5. Next Meetings: 3/18, Tuesday, 7:30 pm, Room 204

4/1, 7:30 pm, Library; may need to be re-scheduled (elections)

4/15, 7:30 pm ROOM 204

5/6, 7:30 pm, Library

5/20, 7:30 pm, Library

6. Agenda items:

- Friday will be the deadline for agenda items as Roland needs to get them out no later than Friday. Important last minute items will go on Open Agenda Items.
- The agenda will need to go through Roland
- It might be possible to put agenda on the Town website.

7. Structure for future meetings:

- Start with the education process.
- Begin by learning about affordable housing issues and parameters

ACTION: Peter will invite Nancy Tavernier, Chair of the Community Housing Authority for the past 10 years to speak to us on 3/18.

- The CP Plan will be an education piece.
- We may borrow public documents - for example, Stow borrowed the Bedford's CP Plan. (Andy has a copy).
- We should make use of Master Plan and Acton Open Space and Recreation Plan where much of our work is already done i.e. prioritization of parcels, etc.
- The Open Space and Recreation Plan has preliminary approval/we'll get copies.
- CPA will depend on what's happening in town such as rights of first refusal, 40B's, etc.
- Determine next steps and assign subcommittees.

8. Discussion of Comprehensive Permits (40B's) or anti snob zoning. Walter explained that the state wetlands bylaw applies whereas the local one does not. ZBA and ConsCom approval are needed - all other bylaws are bypassed. Roland explained that in the late 80's 40B's were built in a poor economy because they used to be linked to federal and state housing programs. In 1990 the Town adopted an affordable housing overlay - certain areas where it would be allowed; 5 units/acre, townhouse type construction. Most developers say it's not profitable enough.

9. Report to Town Meeting:

2002 Town Report - deadline 3/4 to Ann Chang

ACTION: Peter will write a piece about the CPA and the CPC for publication in the Town Annual Report to be distributed at Town Meeting.

10. Discussion of EDIC and how it will be on the town warrant for April.

- Walter indicated he is the liaison to the EDIC.

Members of EDIC: Roeber, Kabakoff, Friedrichs, Harting-Barret, Chernin, Avery, Lawrence, Chang; from Planning Board: Sghia-Hughes, Millett

An example of an EDIC project could be redevelopment of the W.R. Grace land which is a brownfield. Grace has a proposal for 150 homes and a golf course. Grace land sits over aquifer lands - not the best place for light industry

- We discussed how the town depends on growth to balance its budget and how it creates a vicious circle where we depend on more and more growth.

- Other places where the EDIC could be used are Exchange Hall and ADESA (auto auction on Rt. 2)

11. Discussion of Exemptions:

- Roland wrote Q&A Sheet Draft.
- Catherine suggested putting notice re: exemptions or Q&A on Cable Channel.
- Roland remarked that the exemptions are complicated, but could be easy.

ACTION: Listen for advice re: exemptions at the Conference on Saturday.

ACTION: Susan will e-mail the CPC her draft write up re: exemptions for publication in Beacon, Action, etc.

ACTION: Put piece on exemptions on the town website.

12. Discussion of Right of First Refusal Notice - 108 Willow Street:

- 17.3 acres with much wetlands and in flood plain; could be subdivided in 3 lots
- Chapter 61A or 61B land - either an agricultural or forestry restriction allows for a reduced tax load. When there is a change in use, the statute requires the owner to give the town the right of first refusal. The BoS has a 120 days to respond. The action involves a decision by the BoS on whether or not to consider further study, to assign their option to a non-profit land trust or to recommend it go forward to Town Meeting to appropriate money to purchase the property. (Andy pointed out that it's easy for a landowner to avoid this step by paying back taxes.)

- The Planning Board and ConsCom must be notified.
- The BoS needs all the information.
- The BoS didn't recommend purchase of 108 Willow St..
- The CPC needs adequate notice.

ACTION: Walter will have the CPC cc'd whenever there is a conversion.