

MEETING MINUTES

Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee

February 12, 2009
Acton Memorial Library

Attending: Ron Schlegel, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Nancy Tavernier, Peter Berry, Jon Benson, Roland Bourdon, Tory Beyer, Janet Adachi, Roland Bartl, Town Planner. Also present were Pat Clifford (Fin Com Observer), Ellie Halsey (HDC Observer) and members of the public.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ken Sghia-Hughes at 7:40 p.m.

- I. Approval of 1/22/2009 Minutes. The minutes of 1/22/2009 were approved as amended.
- II. Final Comments/Discussion About 2009 Proposals.
 - A. Town Cemeteries. Peter Grover, Acton Historical Commission (AHC), has provided additional, detailed information about the consultant time and tasks that the \$28,000 request covers. Consultants vary in the level of detail they invest, so it is possible that the AHC will be able to get the work done for less, whether by the same consultant or another.
 - B. John Robbins House. The Applicant, Bravery Realty Trust, has submitted documentation in support of a larger request for \$42,075 rather than the original \$30,000; the amended request includes updated roofing and carpentry quotes effective until May 2009, an \$8,000 roof carpentry contingency and a \$7,000 general contingency. The Applicant has furnished a copy of the current Preservation Easement Agreement; Town Counsel has advised that an additional preservation restriction agreement for the benefit of the town will be necessary to provide the town with an interest in the property. The Applicant also has provided a draft easement agreement; the easement plan was recorded earlier this month.
 - C. Open Space Set Aside Funds and Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Fund. Susan reported that the Open Space Committee (OSC) is withdrawing the \$25,000 request for an open-space acquisition fund and instead wishes to increase the set-aside request from \$350,000 to \$375,000. The bad economy may be generating more opportunities for open-space acquisition. OSC is in very preliminary discussions respecting some large parcels. With opportunities for acquisitions possibly increasing and the set-aside fund down to \$1,020,000 in the wake of the Piper Lane acquisition, the OSC believes that a \$500,000 set-aside would be better. Use of the set-aside funds still would require Town Meeting approval but having the funds already dedicated to open-space acquisition might help to reassure prospective sellers.

There was some discussion of state CPA match-funding, which is expected to dwindle, and the need for other sources of financing for open-space purchases, for example, bonding, or funding from the town.

- D. AHA Pre-Development Funds. Nancy reported that one abutter has not been receptive to the AHA's outreach efforts. Abutter Chuck Sullivan has spoken with Ken and Roland Bartl, and also has appeared before the Conservation Commission with a proposal for a group of private individuals to purchase the property from the AHA and donate it to the town as conservation land.

III. Other Business

- A. School Street Twin Ballfields Update. Roland Bartl reported that according to Town Manager Ledoux, the town must replicate any land taken out of agricultural use for use as a ballfield. The acreage issue must be cleared up before the town can secure a lease and seek the Committee's approval of modifications to the project originally approved for CPA funding in 2006.
- B. Recapture of CPA Appropriations. \$15,751.31. See Roland Bartl's memorandum of February 11, 2009. The Committee voted to accept and restore to the CPA account the unspent appropriations from prior years.
- C. Space-Needs Study. The study currently is a \$50,000 capital item in the budget and supported by Department managers, who consider it to be among the top five priorities. It is unclear whether the proposed funding will survive anticipated budget cuts.

IV. Discussion of Recommended Project Funding Levels. Committee members supported funding of most projects at the requested levels, and agreed on the level of funding for most of those projects.

- A. Civil War. The members agreed on funding at the requested level (one member initially supported limited funding of \$7,842, covering only the new work).
- B. Windsor Building. The members ultimately agreed that there should be no funding (one member initially supported limited funding of \$128,000).
- C. Woodbury Lane. A number of members said there should be no funding; the rest supported funding at the requested level.
- D. Open Space Set-Aside. Members initially supported funding levels ranging from \$375,000 to \$500,000, with \$425,000 being the agreed-upon compromise.
- E. All Other Projects. Members agreed on funding at the requested levels.
- F. Historic Preservation 10% Allocation. A small set-aside will be necessary to increase the total of historic preservation appropriations to the required 10% minimum.

V. Outreach Regarding Warrant Articles – Project Recommendations, Bylaw Amendment

- A. Board of Selectmen. Ken and Jon will appear at the 2/23/2009 meeting.
- B. Finance Committee. 2/24/2009 meeting?
- C. General Public. Beacon articles, after formal vote.

- D. LWV. Nancy offered to provide information at the warrant meeting
- E. Other Boards. CPC members should report back to their respective boards.

VI. Announcements/Reports.

- A. LWV Town Volunteer Job Fair. Nancy and Ron reported that the job fair was well-attended, with some 30 people in the audience, including a number of board members.
- B. Land Conservation Conference. Susan reported that the conference will be on 3/28/2009 in Worcester, MA.
- C. CPA Amendment Legislation. Jon provided an update.
- D. Town Meeting. Peter noted that as a result of changes in Town Meeting, in response to the LWV survey, the budgets will be debated before all else.
- E. Pre-Town-Meeting Meeting. 4/2/2009.

Next Meeting. At the next meeting, on February 26, 2009, 7:30 p.m., the Committee will discuss the recommended funding for the Woodbury Lane project, conditions for project proposals, and draft warrant articles.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

- Janet Adachi, Clerk