

# **Acton Community Preservation Committee**

Meeting Minutes - June 3, 2003, 7:30 pm - 9:45 pm, Library Meeting Room

Attending: Andy Magee, Walter Foster, Peter Grover, Catherine Coleman, Walter Foster, Alison Gallagher, Joe Nagle, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Roland Bartl

Absent: Chris Shaffner, Peter Berry

## **1.1 Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of 5/1/03 and 5/8/03 were approved as amended. Approval of the minutes of 5/20/03 was deferred until Mr. Johnson reviews them.

## **2.1 Review Draft CPC Plans**

The committee discussed the need for consistent formatting, a point system to prioritize projects and other project criteria.

### **Plan Formatting:**

- A global outline is needed so each group can have common formats and to keep the style consistent.
- A morning session was suggested to thrash out an outline.
- Roland recommended dealing with style issues at the end.
- Roland suggested referencing everything that is quoted and putting the goals from the OSRP in the Appendix.
- Roland suggested a separate section on Active Recreation
- It was agreed that it would be helpful to also look at the Westford Plan for ideas.

ACTION: Andy and Susan will work on weaving their individual criteria into the goals putting the goals from the OSRP in the Appendix.

### **Project Priority Point System:**

- Andy advised against such a system since it lacks flexibility. It's difficult to apply when comparing apples to oranges; a committee must have the ability to use discretion.
- Roland commented that a system of bonus points might be appropriate for a proposal that covers more than one area or leverages funds. For example, a project could get points for being multifaceted - for example if it combines historic and housing and open space.
- A vote was not taken on whether or not to use points; however, my sense was that the committee wishes to not use them.

### **Other project criteria:**

The committee discussed other factors for judging proposals, but none were adopted at this point.

- Will the project reach fruition in a reasonable amount of time?.
- Depending on what kind of proposals we get, we should emphasize long or short term projects; look for a balance.
- Encourage proposals for less than 70% funding unless it's extraordinary; parcel out the funding.

### **Project Review:**

- Refer people to the state website.
- Anticipate proposals of varying levels of sophistication.
- If we are not sure if a project meets CPA qualifications, review it with Town Counsel
- If we see something we think looks favorable, encourage people to bring it forward.
- Most projects will not be 100% funded.
- Turnaround time will depend on how complete the project is, and whether or not it has multiple funding sources.

### **Other Topics Discussed:**

- When a project is completed we may emulate Stow and Bedford and do a ribbon cutting, photo opportunities, etc.

Joe: In the Affordable Housing area the focus is on converting the Towne School to affordable units.

Joe: In Acton projects get done by a couple of people who act as catalysts. Without that particular person, the process doesn't work as well. How can we grade whether or not there are project champions?

Andy: A project has to be sold two times; once to the CPC and then to Town Meeting. We will have people come in whom we don't know, and we will have to be fair.

### **Discussion of the statute, "Land for Recreation."**

Walter said that under the CPA you can build a playground, but not a gymnasium; improvements for recreational purposes can be made on land as well. One could build a new playground but cannot restore or maintain it. The same thing goes for an athletic field. - you can make improvements. Andy said the applicant may stretch the envelope of what's permissible.

### **Discussion of possible amendment to the bylaw to require allocating a percentage of CP funds to Recreation:**

Recreation could be broken into 3 categories: Open space, passive and active.

10% could be shared between passive and active recreation.

A concern is that Active Recreation would lose. If you take Open Space away from Active Recreation, you separate its biggest supporter.

Flerra field is an example of both, and the Morrison Farm will be an example of both.

- Joe commented there are grants for field development from sports manufacturers.

### **Report on Susan and Andy's Open Space and Recreation Section for the CP Plan:**

Andy and Susan referenced the OSRP goals in their Open Space Section of the Acton CP Plan. These goals will be relocated to an Appendix.

The OSRP had 3 goals; they created 5 additional goals using the objectives which were viable and fundable.

They broke out Recreation to 5 goals:

- 1) Promote development of bike trails
- 2) Enhance possibilities for hiking...
- 3) Provide additional athletic fields...
- 4) Encourage regional planning with abutting towns...
- 5) Promote active recreational activities.. address adult senior and toddler recreation needs.

- The Recreation goals could become its own section or; they could be more fleshed out.
- There could be 5-10 goals for Active Recreation such as a goal for football fields, basketball courts, ballfields, etc..
- They borrowed from Stow's list of weighted criteria (less the point system) to flesh out the goals re: such things as Water Resources, Species Habitat, Historic Preservation
- They liked Bedford's goals for each category and liked Stow's level of detail.

ACTION: Those goals will be moved to the Appendix, and they will footnote where they borrowed material.

### **Competition for Open Space?**

Joe: Concerned that developers will outbid us for open space.

Andy: Bob Durand had set a goal of preserving 200,000 acres by 2010. He took things like land on which town water supplies depend and put on an overlay of protection. ACT wrote to the governor asking about the prison lands and put a layer of protection on top of them. We could go after those types of lands.

Susan mentioned that several Acton Conservation Trust members will proactively approach landowners whose land is placed on the OSRP prioritized property list to see where their interests lie with respect to their land.

### **Brief Discussion of Community Housing:**

The Community Housing Section of the Acton CP Plan is from an outline from Nancy Tavernier.

- A priority is to reach the 10% goal.
- Numbers 3 and 4 will be inventories of what's existing in terms of low income housing/rental housing and moderate income home ownership.

### **3.1 Housekeeping:**

- Hard copies of documents will be made available to Joe and Alison through Roland's office.
- We should have people e-mail us their proposals for CP funding.
- The CPC Agenda needs to be sent at least 2 days ahead of the next meeting.

- The committee reiterated that it hopes to add a new Associate Member to complete the slate.

#### **4.1 Future Meetings:**

Next Meeting: Thursday, 6/26/03, 7:30 pm, Library Meeting Room

Future Meetings: Tuesday, July 1, 7:30 pm, Library Meeting Room  
Tuesday, July 15, 7:30 pm, Library Meeting Room

#### **5.1 Action Items**

ACTION: Each Open Space, Recreation, Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation subcommittee should bring back another version of their draft for the June 26th meeting.

ACTION: Alison and Walter will present their idea for the Recreation Section of the Acton CP Plan at the next meeting

ACTION: Joe and Peter will flesh out their outline

ACTION: Mimi and Catherine volunteered to take the entire plan and format it at the end..

ACTION: By noon on Monday, 6/23 we will have all materials to Roland so he can copy them and email it to the committee (except for Joe and Alison for whom he will have hard copies).

Adjourned at 9:45 pm

Respectfully submitted: Susan Mitchell-Hardt