

TOWN OF STOW
Community Preservation Committee

Minutes, November 13, 2017

Community Preservation Committee Meeting

Community Preservation Committee members present: Cortni Frecha (chair), Rick Connelly, Mike Busch, Ernie Dodd, Andy Crosby, Atli Thorarensen, Vin Antil (arrived at 7:45)

Community Preservation Committee members not present: Bill Byron (vice chair), Bob Larkin

Admin. Assistant: Krista Bracci

The meeting began with a quorum at 7:33 pm

MINUTES

VOTE: Rick made a motion to approve the minutes of October 30, 2017, Atli seconded. The vote was unanimous (Vin was not present for the vote).

INVOICES

There were no invoices to approve.

CPC SIGN DISCUSSION

Rick informed the committee that he left a message to find out when the other four signs will be done. He has not heard back yet. Rick confirmed that once the signs are complete he will forward the invoice to Krista. The committee agreed to place two signs at the library and another one at Small Farm. It was suggested that permission should be obtained before placing the sign on the Small Farm property. The placement of the last sign was not decided. Mike mentioned how nice the first sign looks at Pine Bluffs.

Vin arrived at the meeting

STOW CP PLAN REVIEW

Open Space Section: Krista will make one small change on page 12. Vin explained to the committee that there was a update in the Community Preservation Act that stipulates all land purchased with CPA funds require a third party to hold a conservation restriction on it. Thus, the newer open space parcels are required to be more protected than the older open space in town. He also mentioned that the third party is needed to monitor even when the town owns the land.

Recreation Section: Krista will make one small change on page 13.

VOTE: Andy made a motion to approve the rewrite of the Open Space/Recreation section of the Stow Community Preservation Plan , Rick seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Affordable Housing Section: There was a very long discussion about what Laura Spear changed and/or added to the old version of the Community Preservation Plan. Cortni mentioned the main goal here is to determine how much of Stow Municipal Affordable Housing Trust's (SMAHT) goals do we want to adopt. She also raised the question on what does the CPC want to include?

Discussion Topics

- Ernie would rather leave the SMAHT section out and follow the CPA guidelines. He is in favor of supporting the seniors in town no matter what the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) says. He mentioned the Council on Aging could help identify families that need assistance. Ernie also mentioned that he was concerned about all the money that SMAHT has received and has only spent on studies.
- Jim Salvie (Board of Selectman Liaison) suggested making the section simple showing support for senior relief and helping to pull down the SHI (Stow Housing Inventory).
- Mike is in favor of eliminating the section pertaining to SMAHT in its entirety. He feels that the CPC's function is approving funding, not implementing a program.
- Vin feels that Stow will never reach safe harbor, but feels we should support affordable housing. Reaching safe harbor would require changing the character of the town.
- Mike mentioned the only way to reach safe harbor in Stow would be to develop rental units. Stow's lot sizes are too large and land is too costly.

Deed Restriction Program

- Jim suggested that the program needs assessment. He raised the question: how much demand is there for it?
- Atli is concerned that we have a significant amount of money tied up in the Deed Restriction Program.
- Cortni suggested that we invite Kate Hogan and Jamie Eldridge to a meeting to help move this program along and help advocate for us with the DHCD.
- Mike mentioned that we do not have anyone to manage the program.
- Ernie is going to reach out to the COA and see if there are any families in town that could benefit from this program.
- Cortni is going to speak with Bill Wrigley and look into developing an RFR to see if there is any interest from a nonprofit organization to run the program. She feels that the program is vital in order to maintain the character of the community.
- Andy suggested that maybe we rescind the program at the next town meeting until we are able to find someone to manage the program. He further mentioned we could always go back to the town for the funding again.
- Cortni asked for a sense of the meeting with a show of hands to see how many members support the deed restriction program. The vote was as follows: yes - 3, no - 2, and 2 abstained.

Bylaw

After some discussion it was determined that Cortni will contact Mike Kopczynski from SMAHT to see if he can rally the Stow Housing Authority to meet and appoint a representative from SMAHT to sit on the CPC.

Conclusion: Mike is going to revise the Affordable Housing section and forward it on to Atli. Atli will add additional information and forward the final draft to Krista. The section will then be reviewed by the members potentially at the next meeting on November 27th.

PROJECT UPDATES

Small Farm: Stow Conservation Trust held a meeting and confirmed that all fund raising has been met.

Carver Hill Farm: Stow Conservation Trust is still waiting to hear if they will receive state funding. They did mention that a generous anonymous party will donate up to \$50,000 of matching funds for contributions made by the end of the year.

NEWS AND VIEWS

- Andy reported to the committee that Doug from the Building Department did meet with the Historic Commission regarding the Old Town Hall. The Historic Commission supported and approved his efforts. Andy will forward information to Doug to help him understand the CPA guidelines when renovating historic buildings. Andy felt that Doug will be requesting only design funds in addition to funds to fix the emergency items. Ernie suggested to Andy that the Historic Commission should do a walk through with Doug pointing out what items are historic and what items are not.
- Rick mentioned that the Gleasondale Mill property has an accepted offer on it for \$580,000. It was appraised for much more. This land was not protected but contains many obstacles the buyers may not be aware of.

MEETING SCHEDULE

November 27th

December 11th

Rick made a motion to adjourn at 9:17 pm, Mike seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by: Krista Bracci