

TOWN OF STOW
Community Preservation Committee

Minutes, January 27, 2020

Community Preservation Committee Meeting

Community Preservation Committee members present: Vin Antil (chair), Andy Crosby (vice chair), Mike Busch (arrived late), Erica Benedick, Ingeborg Clark, Bob Larkin

Members not present: Roger Zimmerman, Gary Yu, John Colonna-Romano

Liaison: Cortni Frecha

Project Presenters: Kathy Sferra, Laura Greenough

Admin. Assistant: Krista Bracci

The meeting began with a quorum at 7:30 pm

MINUTES

VOTE: Ingeborg made a motion to approve the minutes of January 6, 2020 as amended, Andy seconded. The vote was 4 - 0, with Bob abstaining and Mike was not present.

INVOICES

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve an invoice from Avery Associates for \$4,000 (High Rock Church / Admin Account), Erica seconded. The vote was unanimous (Mike was not present).

2019 ANNUAL REPORT REVIEW

There was a quick discussion regarding the section that lists the committee members. Some of the members felt that it required more detail (who replaced who and when). The final decision was to make no changes.

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the 2019 Annual Report as written, Erica seconded. The vote was unanimous (Mike was not present).

ACTION ITEM: Krista will put the updated report on the website and forward it to the Board of Selectman's Office as requested.

Mike arrived at 7:45 PM

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS (May 2020 ATM)

Stow Acres: Presentation given by Kathy Sferra and Laura Greenough – requesting \$800,000

Background History: Peter Brown, the owner of Stow Acres approached the town to see if they were interested in purchasing the driving range property (currently up for sale). The property has five oversized lots that would share a common driveway. One side of the property does have some standing water. There has been a recent

wetland delineation done and a perk test done less than a year ago (May 2019). The asking price is \$750,000 and is less than the market value. No price negotiations have taken place at this point. Kathy Sferra mentioned they are taking the proactive approach. If they wait and do nothing the future price may be much higher if a developer makes an offer on the property (Chapter 61).

Key points made by the presenters:

- Stow Soccer Club is in dire need of field space and has been requesting the Recreational Commission's help the past few years. They are no longer able to use the Pompo field since it is so wet. They do utilize Stow Park and Pine Bluffs.
- Other uses for the land could be a dog park or basketball courts.
- If the land is purchased the Conservation Commission would like to try and have the two parcels connect somehow (Stow Acres parcel and Conservation land that is nearby).
- The three things purchasing this land will do are as follows: supply the town with fields, protect the nearby wetlands and also protect an access point.
- Stow Acres most likely will hold onto the south course since that has the water source and club house. The north course is flat and easy to develop and may also go up for sale at some point.
- Some positives about the property are that it is already cleared, is flat, and has established parking.
- Since the property is somewhat wet it may require fill to make soccer fields, however, if this is not possible they could do more of hard scape recreation there (tennis courts or a skate park).

Bob made a motion, and then he withdrew it.

CPC Recommendation:

The members would like to have Kathy and Laura back at their next meeting to see if any further information can be provided. For example, how much administrative funds would be needed to get a better idea if a soccer field is even an option based on the land being somewhat wet. The administrative funds could help purchase conceptual layouts. They also made the suggestion to request design funds along with the purchase price of the property, maybe revising the application to \$810,000. The CPC will vote at their next meeting.

Town Park Playground: Presentation given by Laura Greenough – requesting \$50,000

Laura informed the members that Phase I of the project is now complete and was done on time and on budget. She would like to finish the park with a natural park. She explained that a natural park is just as expensive, if not more than the traditional wooden parks we see all over the place. The space is already cleared with wood chips and the slide is in. Laura mentioned she will look for available grants and other funding sources.

HIGH ROCK CHURCH APPLICATION WITHDRAWAL DISCUSSION

Krista received a memo from Laura Greenough formally withdrawing her application – dated 1/21/20.

Laura informed the committee that she attended a Selectman's meeting and then realized that the town would prefer to purchase the church with town funds. This is not to mean she is not interested in the church as a teen center, but did not want to lose out on the Stow Acres property. If the town purchases the church the property could later be resold and the utilization of the church would not be restricted and could have a dual usage.

The committee did ask if the property could be divided and Kathy mentioned that the septic is under the parking lot and dividing the property is not an option. Another small discussion was about town space and how many buildings does the town really need. Vin mentioned that there is a need for a facilities team in town to manage all the storage space.

ATM 2020 PROJECT APPLICATION DISCUSSION/VOTES

Red Acre Road Project Application

VOTE: Ingeborg made a motion to approve the Red Acre Road Project Application for \$25,000 and to be funded by Affordable Housing bucket, Bob seconded. The vote was unanimous.

ACTION ITEM: Krista will inform the project applicants and request a warrant article to be sent to her.

Town Hall Restoration (design funds)

Discussion Points:

- Krista and Vin informed the members that they have met with Capital Planning regarding this project to help answer some of their preliminary questions. Vin explained that the CPC would like to see other funding sources for the construction phase of the project. They will be meeting again with Capital Planning prior to town meeting.
- Mike informed the committee that he has heard that the Bill Wrigley would like to have this project completely funded by CPA funds.
- Vin asked Andy if the Historical Commission is looking into possibly registering the Town Hall with the State so that it can be on the Historical Registry. If this is done, there may be an option for some state grants. Andy mentioned there are certain requirements that need to be met. The Commission needs to look into this further.
- The members discussed the various options they have: to do nothing and the building would deteriorate, fix the upstairs only and leave the basement (and lift) alone, sell the building, fix it, or proceed with the design phase and maybe hold off on the construction portion until prices drop some.
- The CPC did determine it was necessary to move forward with the design phase.

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the Town Hall Restoration (design phase) for \$200,000 and to be funded by two CPA accounts: \$100,000/Historical and \$100,000/Unreserved, Ingeborg seconded. The vote was unanimous.

ACTION ITEM: Krista will inform the project applicants and request a warrant article to be sent to her.

Track Road Pre-Engineering Services

The CPC would like to have more detailed information prior to voting on this project. They have requested Krista reach out to the applicants and ask that they come to the next CPC meeting.

- No firm number was requested – only a range.
- Unclear on why they need the money since the road is in decent shape.
- There is concern that the owner benefits from the town spending money.
- What will the next level be and what is the end result?

Town Center Park

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the Town Center Park for \$50,000 and to be funded by the Open Space/Recreation bucket, Mike seconded. The vote was unanimous.

ACTION ITEM: Krista will inform the project applicants and request a warrant article to be sent to her.

Stow Acres Driving Range – No vote taken – presenters will return to the next CPC meeting for more detailed discussion.

REVIEW PUBLIC HEARING PRESS RELEASE

The CPC members requested no changes – Krista will have the press release placed in the paper twice prior to the public hearing in April.

DISCUSSION/VOTE ON THE AFFORDABILITY SAFEGUARD MEMO

VOTE: Ingeborg made a motion to approve the memorandum from Mike Kopczynski that addresses item #8 on the signed Letter of Conditions dated 5/1/17 (the CPC does not recommend recession of the project), Mike seconded. The vote was unanimous.

ACTION ITEM: Krista will inform Mike Kopczynski and file the memo with the Letter of Conditions in the project file.

PROJECT UPDATES

None given

NEWS & VIEWS

Krista mentioned to the committee members that the warrant closes on March 6th (earlier this year).

MEETING SCHEDULE

February 10th

February 24th

April 13th – Public Hearing (Community Preservation Plan) from 7 to 7:30 pm

May 4th – Town Meeting

Bob made a motion to adjourn at 9:12 pm, Mike seconded, and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by: Krista Bracci