

TOWN OF STOW
Community Preservation Committee

Minutes, January 23, 2017 - Amended

Community Preservation Committee Meeting

Community Preservation Committee members present: Cortni Frecha (chair), Dot Spaulding, Mike Busch (arrived at 7:35), Bill Byron (vice chair), Vin Antil, Rick Connelly, Ernie Dodd, Bob Larkin, Atli Thorarensen

Admin. Assistant: Krista Bracci

Liaison: Brian Burke

Other attendees: Project Presenters, Habitat for Humanity and members from SMAHT, SCT, Conservation Commission, Recreation Committee

The meeting began with a quorum at 7:29 PM

MINUTES

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the minutes of January 9, 2017, Rick seconded. The vote was 8 - 0 (Mike was not present).

INVOICES

Discussion:

Invoices for Randall Library - Craig Martin was present to answer questions

- Krista reminded the committee members that there are two library design fund accounts. After both invoices are paid one account will no longer have any funds.
- Craig mentioned to the members that he reviews and signs off on all invoice line items prior to giving the invoice to Krista. He refers to the agreement when reviewing the line(task) items. Craig also mentioned that they are almost done. He went on to state that both the October and November invoices are in order and have his approval.

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve invoice #4161 from McGinley Kalsow & Associates for \$9,575, Atli seconded. The vote was unanimous.

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve invoice #4177 from McGinley Kalsow & Associates for \$2,448.50, Dot seconded. The vote was unanimous.

- *Note: The correct amount was later determined to be \$2,346.99, not \$2,448.50.*

Discussion:

Invoice for Community Preservation Coalition (2017 Dues)

- Cortni explained to the members that the invoice amount is the same as last year, however, it did increase a great deal since two years ago. The dues are determined on where you fit into the scale (how much local CPA revenue is taken in by the town). Cortni went on to say how

important the Coalition is when questions arise. The Coalition is great at advocating for more CPA revenue from the State.

VOTE: Bob made a motion to approve the invoice amount of \$2,875, Mike seconded. The vote was unanimous.

2017 ATM PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Town Center Park

A handout was provided to each member that included a timeline, maps, pictures and estimated costs.

Presenters: Kathy Sferra, Bob Wilber, Laura Greenough, Susan Crane and Stuart Weinrob.

Requesting: \$275,000

Discussion Topics:

- 7.3 acres were purchased with CPA funds and the remaining 4 acres by the town. The park will be placed only on the 4 acres which means no restriction will be needed on the land.
- Ernie suggested that we make sure no restriction is needed and Kathy agreed to consult the town attorney (the Community Preservation Coalition said that no restriction is needed).
- Design funds were already approved at town meeting and clean up has been started already. A dumpster was rented and volunteers including the Highway Department helped clear debris.
- The park will be a passive recreation area with trails seniors can enjoy.
- The park will have the following features: benches, picnic areas, trails, natural play area for children, a gazebo, informal playing field and an amphitheater.
- The public stressed the need for lighting and public restrooms. Therefore, the cost estimate includes conduits for future electrical work.
- There is a great deal of earth to move to make the ground level. Some of the earth is going to be used for the amphitheater.
- Cost savings would be using stone dust at the entry area and not completing the amphitheater completely.
- They have not spoken to the High Rock church yet, but were assured they have their support. The plan is to meet with the church prior to town meeting.
- The church insisted that the park have their own parking, but will allow overflow to park in their lot.
- The project could be broken up into phases, however, some members felt if you are going to do this it should all be done at once.
- Stuart explained that it is vital to have a contingency number prior to the bid process.
- Much of the existing vegetation on the site will be removed. It was mentioned that there is nothing worth keeping and in fact there is a great deal of invasive plants on the site.
- Stuart confirmed he was aware that he needs to file paperwork when disturbing more than an acre of land.
- There was some discussion that lighting will be needed so that trouble makers do not hang out in the park. The park is not as easy to see from the street as Pine Bluffs and Stow Community Park.

- It still has not been determined if dogs will be allowed in the park, however, it will be finalized prior to town meeting.
- A pavilion is not necessary, but would offer shade.
- The Recreation Committee has not had a chance to discuss this project yet. They have many questions, like what would the operating cost be? This park will not be bringing in any revenue like Pine Bluffs.
- There is a 6 bedroom leaching field that can be used for potential restrooms.
- Some engineering work may need to be done.

Final Comment: Cortni suggested they tweak their design and mentioned to continue as if the project was going forward. The CPC will be in touch once they have heard all project presentations.

Habitat for Humanity

Two handouts were given out to the members, one being pictures of some habitat homes that have recently been built in our area.

Presenters: Carolyn Reed and Kevin O'Brien (Mike K from SMAHT also made comments).

Requesting: \$150,000

Back Ground Information:

- Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit company covering 25 cities/towns.
- They build 1 to 2 homes a year and do critical repairs on around 8.
- Their goal is to break the cycle of poverty.
- They recently repaired a roof on Bradley Lane in Stow.
- Habitat does construct single family homes as well as duplex units.
- A lottery needs to take place in order to determine who will be awarded the house (applicants can only be very low income individuals).
- The home owner will need to be a first time home buyer and take financial classes. They also are required to help build their home (200 hrs for a single parent and 350 for two parents).
- The home is constructed by many volunteers and will have a DHCD deed rider attached to it.
- The mortgage is determined on what the family can afford.
- Mortgages are no interest loans through Leominster Credit Union.
- Habitat for Humanity holds half the mortgage, which in turn lessens the risk of turnover.

Home Specifics:

- They would utilize the CPA funds to build a two family on Pine Point.
- The home may be two smaller boxes, slightly offset.
- The Pine Point lot is 1.26 acres and 2/3 of the property is a modest slope.
- The slope will need to be dug into and it has not been determined if a stone wall will be needed.
- The driveway will be on Sudbury Road.
- When the home is done it will be part of the SHI.
- The ZBA will need to approve a permit and the Board of Selectman will need to sign off on the project. However, the State can overrule any decisions.
- There are three abutters to the property.

- Letters to the abutters have been sent, an article was in the paper and flyers have been passed out. No one has called to request additional information at this time.
- An advanced septic may be needed.
- They will be applying for grants shortly to help fund this project. SMAHT mentioned they may be able to help with some smaller costs.
- SMAHT currently has control of the property, but it will be transferred to Habitat for Humanity prior to Town Meeting.

Discussion Points:

- Brian Burke suggested that they speak to the residents around Lake Boon and have the plan all set to present at the Town Meeting.
- Bill mentioned he felt this was a safer way to obtain low income housing than other methods.

Affordability Safeguard Program (SMAHT)

Mike Kopczynski provided a more legible project application to the members.

Presenter: Mike Kopczynski

Requesting: \$200,000

Request Details:

- There are three more homes in Stow that are in foreclosure (Arbor Glen, Villages and a second on Elm Ridge), hence the need for additional funds to try and save these homes.
- The Elm Ridge property is more important because if lost there is no way it will be able to get back on the SHI list.
- There are problems with the majority of the Elm Ridge home deeds. They were refinanced above the appraisal and the DHCD made a mistake when the deeds were recorded.
- The second Elm Ridge home may come up in the next year or two.
- SMAHT is working on a short sale for the home in the Villages.
- The Metrowest Collateral Development is trying to send out letters to the lenders and owners to remind them of their responsibilities.
- Saving affordable homes is more cost effective than building a new ones.

OPEN PROJECT DISCUSSION

Rail Trail: members decided revisit this project and possible rescind the funds at the Fall Town Meeting.

Deed Restrictions: Cortni explained to the new members that this project was to help seniors. She was wondering if this could help out SMAHT in any way. Members are going to revisit this project in the future. Some felt that maybe the funds should be rescinded.

DISCUSSION ON PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

The only project that some members had an issue with was the CR for Carver Hill. Bill felt that this project would keep future buyers out of Stow. Bill went on to say that the slogan Save Stow Farms was

not completely accurate. Brian B felt that purchases like this need to be sold to the Town, not the CPC. Atli mentioned if a developer bought this property there could be 40B homes put on it and our schools would be even more crowded. Cortni mentioned we should try and keep the rural character of Stow. She also suggested that we come up with our own ranking system for historical preservation and affordable housing projects. Vin mentioned that if Stow Acres comes up for sale the town could not afford it and we should try and obtain what we can afford. Dot would rather see the property having an APR instead of just a CR. It was mentioned the owners did not want an APR on the land. The CR will guarantee no new homes being built, but the land does not need to remain a farm.

NEWS & VIEWS

- Cortni made the comment that Concord has a public meeting in the summer and publicize what CPA money will be awarded for the following spring. Thought we may want to think about how we go about awarding the Stow CPA funds in the future. She also raised the questions if we should have a set amount.
- Vin told the members that the Open Space Committee endorsed both the Carver Hill and Small Farm request for CPA funding.

MEETING SCHEDULE

February 6th, 13th and 27th

Bob made a motion to adjourn at 9:55 PM, Dot seconded, and approval was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by: Krista Bracci