

DARTMOUTH



MASSACHUSETTS

Community Preservation Committee

Howard Baker-Smith, Chairperson
James Bosworth
Michael Kehoe
Elaine Lancaster
Stuart MacGregor
Damon May
Kevin Shea
John Sousa

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DARTMOUTH TOWN CLERK

MINUTES

October 7, 2014

Members present: Howard Baker-Smith, Chair
Elaine Lancaster
Damon May
Kevin Shea
John Sousa

Members absent: James Bosworth
Michael Kehoe
Stuart MacGregor

The meeting was called to order at 6:53 p.m.

Mr. Baker-Smith had sent public hearing notices to various Town boards, as well as some CPA grant recipients, seeking input for the annual Needs Assessment update.

Motion:

Mrs. Lancaster made a motion to open the meeting to a public hearing. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

The public hearing opened at 6:55 p.m.

The Needs Assessment update was discussed. The CPA purposes were addressed in no particular order.

Diane Gilbert, President of Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust (DHPT), and resident of Dartmouth, was present. She is in agreement with the content of the Historic Preservation section of the Assessment. She spoke of a recent movement to save the Helfand farm house. The house is owned by Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust (DNRT) who is seeking to demolish it. The Historical Commission voted to impose a six-month demolition delay. Ms. Gilbert and

others feel CPA funds should be sought to restore it. DNRT had not yet made a decision on the matter.

Deborah Melino-Wender, Director of Development for the Town, was present. She said in regards to Open Space and Recreation, the Town plans to actively pursue creating a priority list of open spaces it would like to see targeted for future acquisition. The Town would like to take an "integrated approach" toward the purchase of a larger parcel, should one become available, by partnering with other entities. Also, funds could be saved to preserve one large parcel, which cost could be much higher than the cost to acquire multiple smaller parcels. Other sources of funding would be sought to leverage potential CPA funding.

Mr. Sousa asked if the Town plans to target 61A parcels. Ms. Melino-Wender said it will be looking at everything that seems appropriate. The Dartmouth Agricultural Preservation Trust has created a priority list, and the Town will consult that as well. It is looking to acquire agricultural or other open space property to protect it from development. Mr. Sousa said that when a 61A property is brought before the Planning Board, a recommendation to the Selectboard is being sought. He suggested it would be wise to identify the parcels prior to them becoming available. Often there is a small window of time to act when a property goes up for sale. If all the properties were rated in advance, action could be taken quickly.

Mr. Baker-Smith said it is helpful for the CPC to hear priorities because it gives them an understanding when individuals are involved in a process. He suggested the Historical Commission utilize the historic building asset data that has been collected to identify potentially vulnerable properties.

Mr. May spoke about a meeting of the Historical Commission that had taken place the previous evening as well as a public hearing that had taken place a week prior to. He said there is a huge interest in saving the Helfand farm house. Some people seek to persuade DNRT to take advantage of the funding available to them? Ms. Gilbert said there are many entities involved in the movement. Some of those members are seeking to create a coalition for this purpose. If CPA funds are to be sought, the application deadline is January 16, 2015. Project recommendations will be made in March, 2015.

Ms. Melino-Wender spoke about housing saying there has been a lot of interest in recent months in rehab loans. The cap is \$30,000; however, costs have risen, and that amount may not be enough to perform all the necessary repairs to a property. She said raising the funding cap is being considered. Mr. Baker-Smith said the program should be capitalized higher in the future.

Mr. May spoke of a hearing that is coming up regarding the proposed new library. The disposition of the North Dartmouth Library will also be discussed. Ms. Melino-Wender said the Town has been awarded a \$50,000 grant for which it matched \$25,000. The purpose of the funds is to begin the planning process for the two libraries. Input for the new library will be sought to help determine what the public would like to see included. This information will help in the determination of the necessary size of the building as well as potential sites on which to build. In two to three years construction grants should become available.

Mr. Baker-Smith asked about the Housing Production Plan. Ms. Melino-Wender said it has been accepted.

There was no further discussion regarding the Needs Assessment.

Motion:

Mrs. Lancaster made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

The public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

A discussion took place regarding the Akin House project. Ms. Gilbert said Joe Booth and an associate have completed a Facilities Master Plan. The Plan includes architectural drawings and cost associations. This round of the Plan is not about future construction; rather it is a vision of what DHPT would like to do. The Plan will be unveiled at a meeting, preferably a CPC public hearing. She wants to invite Town officials such as the Town Administrator, and the heads of the Building Department and Planning Office. DHPT members and Joe Booth will present the Plan, discuss its details and answer questions. DHPT will reach out to members of the community including the property abutters. Members of Town Boards would be invited as well. A Business Plan is being created by Roger Williams students. Ideally, the Master Plan and the Business Plan would be incorporated together when an application for CPA funding is submitted. The Business Plan, however, could take more than one semester to complete.

Ms. Gilbert stated that she is devoted to the property. They have limited resources but want to keep moving in the right direction.

It was proposed to have an open meeting with the matter on the agenda rather than a public hearing, which would require advertising. DHPT would need to do outreach. Mr. Baker-Smith said the presentation should show how the Business Plan and Master Plan connect. The formal Business Plan may not be complete, but DHPT could show why the Master Plan contains certain features. The vision for the property's future should be incorporated in the presentation. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 4, 2014. Ms. Gilbert will confirm the date.

FUNDING APPLICATION PROCESS

A discussion took place regarding the creation of a two-tier application process. Comments have been made that the CPC funding application is complicated. Mr. Sousa researched applications for other communities and found many had simpler formats. Could a second tier be created for smaller projects with a low funding request? Mr. Shea said the availability of a shorter form may send a positive message that small projects are welcomed. Mr. Baker-Smith is concerned because a high expectation of due diligence exists when public funds are being disbursed. Mr. Sousa said if the shorter form is submitted and the Committee has any concerns regarding the project or its sponsor, additional information could be requested. A dollar threshold was discussed. CPC can change the amount any time.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to adopt a more streamlined, one-page application for smaller projects up to and including \$10,000. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

Mr. Sousa will develop a form and present it at a future meeting. Ms. Melino-Wender said the existing application contains some redundancy. Mr. Baker-Smith asked her to review the form and email her input.

In other business, Mr. Baker-Smith said he updated the State's CPA data base. The match should be finalized in November.

HELFAND FARM HOUSE

Mr. May spoke on the topic. DNRT acquired the house and did some renovations. A tenant occupied the premises for a time but later moved. He said the building was constructed in the mid 1800s. It has an interesting cultural history but is also structurally problematic. Mr. May elaborated, and a discussion followed.

MINUTES AND INVOICES

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

Two vouchers with invoices attached were circulated for review:

- *Anthony Savastano* in the amount of \$35 for legal services
- *Susan Dorschied* in the amount of \$2.75 for reimbursement for the purchase of envelopes

Motion:

Mr. Shea made a motion to approve payment of the invoice from Anthony Savastano in the amount of \$35. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

Motion:

Mr. Shea made a motion to approve payment of the reimbursement to Susan Dorschied in the amount of \$2.75. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

There was no further business.

Motion:


Mr. May made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Dorschied
Administrative Clerk

Approved,


Howard Baker-Smith
Chair