

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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MINUTES

November 12, 2014

Members present: Howard Baker-Smith, Chair
Stuart MacGregor
Damon May
Kevin Shea
John Sousa

Members absent: James Bosworth
Michael Kehoe
Elaine Lancaster

The meeting was called to order at 6:47 p.m.

AKIN HOUSE PROJECT

Diane Gilbert, President of Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust (DHPT), was present. She spoke on the project and the Facilities Master Plan that had been prepared. In 2008 DHPT received a CPA grant for restoration work on the Akin House that included its stabilization. Their vision is to use the property as a cultural heritage facility. Roger Williams University students have been involved in two relevant tasks. One is the curriculum development for a living history program, which was completed last year. The other is a business plan which is currently being developed. Once completed, the business plan will tie into the Master Plan.

Architects Joe Booth and Pam Atkinson were in attendance and presented the Master Plan they created. The plan included photographs of the property and architectural drawings. Mr. Booth spoke on the various work that has been done to the House over the years including the current restoration work he has been involved in. There is a deteriorated garage on the property that will need to be razed. Mr. Booth said it would be inappropriate to install plumbing in the Akin House, and therefore, proposes constructing a visitors' center on site that would not only provide restrooms but space for educational activities and public meetings. Ms. Atkinson said there was

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once a barn on the property, and the visitors' center would emulate that type of structure. There would be parking in the rear.

The visitors' center would be approximately 1,500 square feet. Features would include a library and an exhibition area to display artifacts. The Akin House itself would also contain an exhibition area. The history of the Akin House and the surrounding areas would be part of the educational curriculum. An audience member suggested showing the "morphing" of the House through the centuries. Mr. Booth said that is their intention. He was asked by another if there will be a fire alarm system (in the Akin House) to which he answered, yes. Another audience member asked how the visitors' center would be managed. Ms. Gilbert said that has not been determined, but the core management responsibility would begin with DHPT.

Deborah Melino-Wender was in attendance and asked about the time frame for the restoration work on the House and the construction of the visitors' center. Ms. Gilbert said the restoration work is their key priority. It will be done in phases. Mr. Booth said the House needs electricity and heat. Ms. Gilbert said separate funding would be sought to build the visitors' center.

Mr. May spoke in favor of DHPT's intentions. The visitors' center is imperative to dignify and bring recognition to the Akin House. Mr. Baker-Smith asked if there would be a role for the House should there be no cultural center. Mr. Booth said it could be made a usable space, a viable entity in the Town. Historian Peggy Medeiros was in attendance and said that when she attended school in Dartmouth, local history was not taught. The cultural and visitors' centers would be valuable resources for the local school children.

Mr. Baker-Smith asked how the buildings' operations would be financially sustained. Ms. Gilbert said they currently have limited capital. She views the project as a small business. Professor Joel Cooper from Roger Williams University was in attendance and said it may not be able to generate enough money to be self-sustaining, but the students are creating a plan that will outline possible uses to generate funds, as well as areas that will need donations and areas that will need public funding. Susan Guiducci was in attendance and spoke in favor of the project saying that Dartmouth third grade classes visit the Russells Mills Library/School House as part of a living history program. She suggested the Akin House could become part of the program as well.

Mr. Shea asked what the estimated cost would be for the restoration work on the House and construction of the visitors' center. Mr. Booth said the visitors' center would be \$600,000 to 700,000. The restoration work would be about \$200,000. Mr. MacGregor asked how much CPA funding has been awarded for the Akin House to date. Mr. Baker-Smith said \$380,000. When the Waterfront Area Historic League transferred the property back to the Town, they submitted documentation showing they had expended \$177,000 on the Akin House. Those funds had been acquired through donations and other grant funds.

Ms. Gilbert wanted to let people know that a website is being developed. She expects it to be ready in a month. With no further questions/comments offered, Mr. Baker-Smith said the project is steering in the right direction. DHPT is working toward making something tangible. The key

piece of the project is the business plan. He appreciated all the effort to date and said they should seek ways to inform the broader community about the project.

SHORT FORM FUNDING APPLICATION

Mr. Sousa distributed a one-page draft application for consideration. The required information would include the project description, timeline, schedule and budget. Questions and comments included the necessity/non-necessity of letters of support and a maintenance budget, where applicable. The words "if any" following the line "letters of support" will be stricken. That information and any other can be requested by the CPC, if desired.

Motion:

Mr. Shea made a motion to adopt the proposed short-form application for projects under \$10,000. The motion was seconded. A brief discussion followed.

A friendly suggestion from the floor was to assign a name to the application, such as "Short Form", to differentiate it from the regular application. Mr. Sousa agreed.

Mr. Shea amended his motion as follows:

To adopt the short form application with the edits discussed for projects under \$10,000. The motion was put to a vote and was approved 5-0.

Mr. Sousa will forward the draft to the clerk for completion. Mr. Baker-Smith will include the availability of the short form in the Submission Guidelines.

FY2016 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The CPC had received no additional comments since the previous meeting regarding the Needs Assessment update. Mr. Baker-Smith proposed making no changes to the content of the current document.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to adopt the FY2016 Needs Assessment as a continuation of the FY2015 Needs Assessment. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

The CPC still has a vacant at-large seat. Mr. Baker-Smith will write a letter to the Selectboard regarding the matter. He will also contact members Michael Kehoe, who represents the Conservation Commission, and James Bosworth, who represents the Parks Department, regarding their inability to attend meetings and ask if they wish to continue to be Committee members.

The CPA State match will be 36%. It was briefly discussed.

Motion:

Mr. Shea made a motion to approve the Minutes of the October 7, 2014 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

Two invoices for payment were circulated for review:

Attorney Anthony Savastano in the amount of \$35.00 for legal services

Southcoast Media Group in the amount of \$245.00 for the public hearing advertisement

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to approve payment of the invoice from Attorney Savastano in the amount of \$35.00. The motion was approved and seconded by a 5-0 vote.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to approve payment of the invoice from Southcoast Media Group in the amount of \$245.00. The motion was seconded and approved by a 5-0 vote.

The next meeting will take place on the first Tuesday of December, 2014.

There was no further business.

Motion:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan D. Dorschied
Administrative Clerk

Approved,



Howard Baker-Smith
Chair