

DARTMOUTH

Community Preservation Committee

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



MASSACHUSETTS

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MINUTES

July 16, 2013

Members present: Howard Baker-Smith, Chair
 Margaret Latimer, Vice Chair
 Michael Kehoe
 Elaine Lancaster
 Stuart MacGregor
 Damon May
 Kevin Shea
 John Sousa

Member absent: James Bosworth

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

Motion:

Ms. Latimer made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2013 meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by a 6-0 vote. Mr. MacGregor and Mr. May were not present for the vote.

Two invoices from Attorney Savastano were circulated, one of which had been discussed at the previous meeting. The CPC is not in agreement with all of the charges. Mr. Baker-Smith will be arranging a meeting with David Cressman to review the charges and determine which entity is responsible for each.

Mr. May joined the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Mr. MacGregor joined the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

Motion:

Mr. Kehoe made a motion to pay the smaller of the two bills without further information. The motion was seconded. A discussion followed.

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Ms. Latimer said the smaller bill contains charges that should not be CPC's responsibility. Mr. Kehoe agrees, but said that once the larger bill is rectified, an adjustment can be made if there are charges being removed from the smaller. Mr. Sousa feels they should hold off paying the smaller bill.

The motion went to a vote and failed by a 1-6-1 vote.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to open the meeting to a public hearing. The motion was seconded and approved by an 8-0 vote.

The public hearing opened at 6:44 p.m.

Three project proposals for the fall, 2013 funding round were presented.

NEWFIELD FARM CONSERVATION PROJECT

The Dartmouth Natural Resources Trust (DNRT) is seeking \$250,000 to acquire and permanently protect approximately 60 acres of land off North Hixville Road. Executive Director, Dexter Meade, was present and spoke on the proposal. DNRT plans to acquire a deeded right-of-way to provide public access for passive recreation, as well as remove the remains of dilapidated buildings. They plan to create a walking trail system. Mr. Meade described the natural features of the property. More than half is designated as critical natural landscape, which supports some endangered species. The entire project, which would include survey and testing requirements and a fund for ongoing maintenance, will be \$416,000. \$166,000 will be funded through private sources.

The CPC had provided DNRT with a list of questions regarding the proposal. Mr. Meade responded, referencing their written reply. The document is contained in the application file.

Mr. Kehoe asked what would happen to the project should DNRT not raise enough private funds. Mr. Meade said there is a six-month option on the property, thus by January they will need to have secured funding and have the easement, title work and 21E investigation completed. Without all of those things, the project may not happen. The project cost includes a long-term management fund of \$100,000. Ms. Latimer asked if that amount is typical. He said yes, the necessary funding corresponds to the size of a property. He anticipates the property will be actively used.

Mr. Sousa asked if there will be a trail network created into the nearby subdivisions. Mr. Meade said yes. It will be a goal. If CPC was to only fund a percentage of the requested funding, how would that impact the project? Mr. Meade said they would try to raise the additional funds.

Mr. Shea asked if DNRT is confident they will secure the \$36,000 in private funding necessary for the legal work and other preliminary costs. Mr. Meade said yes.

Mr. Baker-Smith said the property appraisal is for a single-family residential property. The value of the property with a conservation restriction will be lower. CPA funding cannot exceed that value. CPC could fund a lesser amount for the acquisition but cover some of the related costs.

Mr. May asked if the site assessment is contingent upon receiving CPA funding, and when would they expect it to be completed. Mr. Meade said the site assessment will be done as part of their general due diligence for acquisitions. He expects it to take place between October and December.

Mr. Sousa asked where the parking area for the trail system will be located. Mr. Meade said DNRT will work with the neighbors to establish an area. There is currently no suitable area near the roadside.

Mr. Shea asked if DNRT has spoken with the property owners regarding the granting of an easement. Mr. Meade said there are two properties that are crossed. They have spoken to the homeowners' association of one property, but have not yet spoken to the owners of the second property.

O'CONNOR-SISSON HOUSE FOR VETERANS

The Partners in Housing is seeking \$110,000 to convert the former State Police Barracks on State Road into nine units of affordable housing for veterans. Michael Gagne, President of Partners in Housing, as well as Gabby Gheller of the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development, were present and spoke on the proposal. Mrs. Gheller said the comprehensive permit was issued in December, 2012. Their pre-application has been approved by DHCD. The full application is due August 2, 2013. There is a 90-day turnaround, and an award notification would be received in November. A financing closing would take place in June, 2014. In the interim, they will be finalizing drawings, seeking other grant sources and completing the predevelopment process. Construction would begin shortly after the closing and take approximately one year to complete. Their goal is to have the building fully occupied by August, 2015.

Regarding the budget, Mrs. Gheller said the construction cost is estimated to be \$1.5 million. This cost includes a 10% contingency and the cost of demolition. Additionally, there are many soft costs, all of which are standard. A breakdown of all costs had been provided and was discussed.

Mr. Baker-Smith asked about the relationship between the Dartmouth Housing Authority (DHA) and the Partners in Housing (Partners). Attorney Roger Mervis was present and said the DHA created Partners as a public non-profit, tax exempt organization. The DHA will allot a portion of the funds from the previous \$350,000 CPA grant to Partners solely for the development of the O'Connor-Sisson House. The Housing Authority will remain the owner of the property and will manage it. Partners will have site control via a long-term lease. They will be the borrower for financing and the recipient of grant awards. They will enter into agreements with contractors and others to develop the property. There is one board member from the DHA that sits on the

board of Partners. Approximately \$172,000 of the previous CPA grant remains. All funds expended have been for soft costs. The remainder is to be used for soft costs, as well. The DHA confirmed that it will expend the balance of the grant funds for development of the housing prior to executing the agreement with Partners to complete the project.

Mr. Sousa asked about the length of tenancy. Ms. Desbiens said it will be long-term, for as long as a person needs the unit. The units will be all single occupancy. Such units are in high demand. Dartmouth residents will have priority. All veterans who apply and qualify will be placed on a waiting list.

RUSSELL GARRISON SITE NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

The Dartmouth Historical Commission is seeking \$15,000 to hire a consultant to prepare a National Register nomination for the Russell Garrison site and provide an endowment for the required preservation restriction. \$10,000 will fund the consultant, and \$5,000 will fund the endowment. Ms. Latimer spoke on the proposal. The CPC had provided a list of questions they had for the Historical Commission. Ms. Latimer responded, referencing their comprehensive written reply. The document is contained in the application file. Information she provided included an explanation of the nomination process. The Commission will submit a Request for Proposals seeking a consultant with specific qualifications. A historic preservation restriction is imperative. Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust is willing to hold the restriction. A vast amount of documentation will be obtained, which will include archeological and historical information. Educators are looking forward to receiving material they can use as educational tools for local history. Several third-grade teachers and others have expressed their enthusiasm and support.

Mr. Baker-Smith asked about the historic preservation restriction. Will it be structured to prevent alteration of the site as it currently is? Ms. Latimer said there have been some references to possible untapped archeological areas. Some artifacts have previously been uncovered. He suggested the possibility of the restriction being structured in a way that would allow for archeological exploration.

Motion:

Mr. Kehoe made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded and approved by an 8-0 vote.

The public hearing closed at 8:30 p.m. The committee took a short recess and reconvened at 8:38 p.m.

Mr. Baker-Smith distributed copies of a report of FY 2014 budget projections. Information contained included revenue, expenses and fund balances. The State match is estimated to be 26%. A discussion followed.

The three proposals were discussed.

NEWFIELD FARM CONSERVATION PROJECT

Members spoke in favor of the project. There were concerns which included the value of the property with a conservation restriction versus as a single-family house lot. Legal access to the property must be secured. There is currently no area suitable for parking. Some felt funding a lesser amount would appropriate. \$250,000 is more than 50% of the total cost of the project. \$100,000 for the management fund may be excessive. There is preliminary work that must be done as well as a deposit conveyed, all of which totals \$36,000. The sponsor plans to raise private funds for these costs. If all the necessary steps are not completed by January, 2014, the acquisition may not transpire.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to recommend funding 75% (of the funding request) for the land acquisition (of the Newfield Farm) of \$250,000 for an amount of \$187,500, with the condition of securing deeded access. The motion was seconded. A discussion followed.

It is important to establish conditions for funding. The site assessment should be mandatory. The project cost, less the management fund is \$316,000. Should an even smaller percentage of the funding request be recommended? Fundraising may be more difficult in North Dartmouth than in South.

The motion was amended as follows:

To recommend funding \$187,500 for the Newfield Farm acquisition, with \$103,000 to come from the open space reserve and \$84,500 from unrestricted funds. The motion went to a vote and was approved by an 8-0 vote.

The conditions for the grant agreement were discussed. Conditions for all grant agreements will be included in the Town Meeting warrant.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion (to include in the language of the grant agreement) that no funds be appropriated until (DNRT) obtains deeded access to the property. A second condition would be that a conservation restriction be placed on the property. Ten percent of the funds will be held back subject to receiving the executed and recorded conservation restriction. A third condition would be the receipt of an appraisal, consistent with the requirements of the Community Preservation Act. The motion was seconded. A discussion followed.

Mr. May asked if there is a statutory lifetime cap on how much funding an organization may receive. Mr. Baker-Smith said no. He added that the Town is the single largest recipient of Dartmouth's CPA funds, accounting for about half. The grant agreement stipulations were further discussed.

The motion went to a vote and was approved by an 8-0 vote.

O'CONNOR-SISSON HOUSE FOR VETERANS

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to fund the (O'Connor-Sisson House for Veterans) project in the amount of \$110,000. \$107,972 would come from the housing reserve, and \$2,028 from revenue. The motion was seconded. A brief discussion followed.

The motion went to a vote and was approved by a 7-0-1 vote.

Conditions for the grant agreement were discussed. The lease should be in place between the Housing Authority and the Partners in Housing. All financing commitments should have been received.

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to include in the language of the grant agreement, the release of funds to be conditioned upon receipt of the executed lease between the Dartmouth Housing Authority and the Partners in Housing, and all project commitments to be in place to start construction. The motion was seconded and approved by a 7-0-1 vote.

RUSSELL GARRISON SITE NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION

Motion:

Mr. Sousa made a motion to recommend the funding of \$15,000 for the Russell Garrison project from the historic preservation reserve. The motion was seconded and approved by a 7-0-1 vote.

A discussion took place regarding the appropriation to fund the reserves. To comply with the statutory 10% minimum, \$55,000 would have to be set aside for the historic preservation reserve fund. No funds would have to be set aside for open space or community housing.

Motion:

Mr. Kehoe made a motion to set aside \$55,000 of Fiscal 2014 revenue for the historic preservation reserve. The motion was seconded and approved by an 8-0 vote.

Mr. Baker-Smith assigned August 6, 2013 as the date for the next meeting.

Motion:

Mr. MacGregor made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved by an 8-0 vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved,

Susan D. Dorschied
Administrative Clerk

Howard Baker-Smith
Chair