

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
6:00 PM, Wednesday, September 7, 2016
Small Meeting Room

Members present: Eileen Morgan, Jim Baughman, Ed Casarella, Michael Hager, Jay Camp, Dan Coppelman, Carolyn McPherson, Ed Brookshire

Members absent: Peter Wade

Staff present: Paul Lagg, Town Planner, Debbie Cohen, Administrative Assistant

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. The committee members introduced themselves. Mr. Camp described the Community Preservation Act (CPA), where CPA funding comes from, and how funds are divided. He then invited representatives from the four CPA categories to explain how CPA support helps their operations.

Ms. McPherson began a presentation on the affordable housing CPA division. She described current regulatory housing definitions and thresholds and discussed who uses and benefits from affordable housing. Ms. Morgan continued the presentation by describing the evolving mission of the Affordable Housing Trust. Mr. Hager added in on the economic feasibility of affordable housing and stressed the importance of the CPA as a 'missing link' for funding.

Joanna Buffington and Bob Cook were present from the Open Space Committee to discuss the open space/passive recreation CPA category [see enclosed]. Mark Robinson of the Compact of Cape Cod Conservation Trusts added to the presentation by demonstrating how open space purchases in other towns have contributed to better preserved groundwater quality. He also pointed out the recent terrapin cove project as a good example of how CPA money could be used as leverage for additional state subsidies and local land trust funding. Mr. Lagg noted that dual funding could also be used for projects that preserved open space while also developing affordable housing.

Mr. Casarella segued into active recreation, noting the category was new to the CPA in 2014. He described past and current recreation projects completed with CPA funds.

Mr. Camp concluded the presentations by explaining the responsibilities of the local Historic Commission. He described previous historic CPA projects and answered audience questions about the upcoming historic renovation of the Chapel in the Pines.

Mr. Lagg announced that FY18 CPA applications are due November 2, 2016. Applications are available online and at town hall.

Adjournment – A motion (Camp, Brookshire) to adjourn, carried 8-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted as prepared by Debbie Cohen

Michael Hager, Clerk

enc. Statement from Dr. Robert Cook, Eastham Open Space Committee

Statement from Dr. Robert P Cook
Eastham Open Space Committee
9/7/16

I am a member of the Eastham Open Space committee and am here today to speak in support of open space acquisition and protection. I would like to thank the CPC for all the support it has provided to open space acquisition over the years. It has meant a lot toward helping to preserve the natural character and "feel" of Eastham.

As I look at town planning documents and websites designed to attract people to our town, I see Eastham described as a "rural village community", and "a quiet town with beaches, ponds, quiet country lanes, and lots of wide open space for nature lovers". The committee that wrote Eastham's 2012 Local Comprehensive Plan articulated a vision for Eastham they described as "maintenance of community character", "expressed as a desire to produce, in effect, high quality drinking water, a continuance of our small town semi-rural atmosphere, maintaining our beaches, protecting and preserving our historic cultural resources and open space and natural resources".

Certainly that is the view and vision for Eastham that I share and hope for, and I'm pretty sure this is what has attracted most of us here today to this town. **Working towards this vision is, in essence, what the open space committee does.**

Protecting open space has numerous benefits, both tangible and intangible that help maintain the town's character and quality of life, as well as provide environmental, health, and economic benefits.

Although some may argue that with the National Seashore on our east side, Eastham has all the open space it needs, had this view prevailed in the past, we would not have Wiley Park, the Glacial Pond Trail, and the other town open spaces on the town's "bay" side. The heavy use of these areas attests to their value and relevance to Eastham residents and visitors alike. Having neighborhood-based open space and natural areas, enhances the property values of homes in the neighborhood, and provides people in those neighborhoods the opportunity to experience nature and the out of doors daily.

One of the open space committee's goals has been to preserve open space throughout town, "neighborhood-based", so much of the focus has been on the west side of town. These parcels also help provide important habitat and travel corridors for native wildlife and plants, and help support populations of wildlife that are important as pollinators and insect eaters.

Besides helping to preserve the town's rural character and wildlife habitat, and provide neighborhood-based opportunities for nature observation, walking, and hiking, open space preservation provides important economic benefits. In a recent analysis, The Trust for Public Lands found that in Massachusetts, every \$1 invested in land conservation returned \$4 in natural goods and services to the Massachusetts economy. It does this in numerous ways, for example,

- protection of groundwater and water quality of our ponds and estuaries
Protected open space reduces pollution and future costs of waste water treatment and remediation.
- removal of air pollutants
- stormwater management
- scenic enhancement and preservation of vistas and view sheds
- Tourism and outdoor recreation – Eastham's economic engine is tourism, where the town's rural character and natural values are the attraction. We need to protect as much of the town's remaining natural values as possible to retain this feel and make the Eastham of the future still worth the visit.
- reduced costs for municipal services- saving land as open space instead of developing it can reduce demands placed on the town for services.
- Increased property values, which can compensate for "lost taxes" from not developing every possible parcel.
- Living close to parks and open space/natural areas provides important health benefits by inducing and inspiring movement and physical activity.

To sum up, preserving open space at the town level helps protect the character and quality of life of our town, as well as habitat for its native plants and wildlife. It provides numerous economic, environmental, and health benefits.

Best of all, the town does not have to do it all on its own. There are state funding and tax benefit programs, as well as opportunities to work with local land trusts, to raise funds from local residents and donors. This means we can get more bang for our CPA buck by leveraging CPA funds to preserve those parcels of land in Eastham that still have high natural values and whose protection will help maintain and preserve the town's character. Thank you for this opportunity to speak, and for your support of town open space.