

**Community Preservation Committee (CPC)**  
**Town of Great Barrington**  
Minutes of October 2, 2014  
Great Barrington Fire Station

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The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair Karen Smith.

Members present: Ed Abrahams, Thomas Blauvelt, Jessica Dezieck, Suzanne Fowle, Kathleen Jackson, William Nappo, Deborah Salem, and Karen W. Smith. Also present: Town Planner Chris Rembold. Martha Fick was absent.

**Administrative Business**

Dezieck moved to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2014 meeting. Blauvelt seconded. All were in favor.

Rembold provided the Committee with a brief review of the August 7 informational meeting held to review the CPA process for prospective applicants.

Nappo asked whether Committee members should recuse themselves from voting tonight on any matters in which they might have an interest. The Committee decided that if members may act as a contractor for an Applicant or a project, the member should recuse from voting on the project, whether or not they receive compensation.

Dezieck moved to join the Community Preservation Coalition and pay the dues of \$1,750 from the administrative reserve account. Blauvelt seconded. All were in favor.

**CPA Applications, Step 1**

Smith began by stating the objective of this meeting was to review Step 1 applications for their eligibility under CPA rules, not whether projects were worthy of CPA funding.

1. Ramsdell Library: Nappo recused himself from this discussion. Smith read a summary of the application. Fowle wanted to confirm that the library was recently listed on the national register of historic places. Rembold said that it was. Jackson wondered how the Secretary of Interior Standards for Historic Rehabilitation applied, and whether it included the proposed pantry and sitting room. Rembold said the Standards are intended to govern the exterior appearance rather than the interior uses. He mentioned however that the Committee may decide certain components are not worthy of CPA funding and the Committee could ask that those components be removed from CPA. Smith suggested that the Library Trustees consider that possibility. Blauvelt moved that the Step 1 application of the Library Board of Trustees project is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application, Jackson seconded. All were in favor, with Nappo abstaining.
2. BNRC Thomas and Palmer Book Trails: Jackson asked whether kiosks and bike racks could be included. The Committee thought the project was more appropriate as creation of a recreational use rather than preservation. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Berkshire Natural Resources Council is eligible as creation of a recreational use, and invited a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor.
3. Housing Authority: After some discussion and review of a DHCD memo regarding eligible CPA projects, the Committee decided that proposed projects 1, 2, and 4 were more like maintenance and would not be eligible. Dezieck moved that project 3 of the Step 1 application of the Great Barrington Housing Authority was eligible, and invited a Step 2 application for that project. Fowle seconded. All in favor.
4. Berkshire South: The Committee wondered why the pavilion had to be replaced at this time, and weather signage was eligible. Dezieck moved that Berkshire South's proposed creation of side paths and the creation of a community pavilion are eligible, but some components might not be eligible, and invited a Step 2 application. Salem seconded. All in favor.

5. Mahaiwe Theater: Blauvelt recused himself because he works for the Mahaiwe. Smith asked if their request of \$30,000 would be enough and suggested the applicant be able to show that they will be able to continue the project if they are not fully funded. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application by the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor, with Blauvelt abstaining.
6. Unitarian Universalists: Dezieck noted the structure is on the state and national register and they are only seeking half of what they need from the CPA. She moved that the Step 1 application of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor.
7. St. James Place: Smith asked about the total project budget and status so far. Sally Harris for the Applicant said the total is about \$6 million. They already have acquired the property and secured historic tax credits. At this point the focus is on structural rehabilitation. Smith reminded the Applicant that Step 2 asks for a detailed budget. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of St. James Place is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor.
8. Newsboy Monument: Smith asked that since the monument is not on the state register it should be reviewed by the Commission for its historic significance and eligibility for CPA funding. The Committee asked the applicant to clarify in Step 2 how it also counts as open space. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Great Barrington Historical Commission is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application only if the Historical Commission finds it to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the Town. Jackson seconded. All in favor.
9. Construct affordable housing: Cara Davis representing Construct said this funding would be used for predevelopment costs including design and preliminary engineering. It would also show support and readiness to the Mass. DHCD which would help secure full project funding. Salem mentioned that the Step 2 should be sure to show how all the funding sources will come together. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of Construct is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Blauvelt seconded. All in favor.
10. Historical Society for the Wheeler Farmstead: Nappo recused himself. Jackson asked the Applicant to be sure that the Step 2 submittal shows the full budget and the estimates should be provided by qualified professionals. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Great Barrington Historical Society is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Jackson seconded. All in favor, with Nappo abstaining.
11. DPW for the Weatherbee Vault: Smith asked whether the cemetery vault was on the state register. DPW Superintendent Joseph Sokul said no but they will review it with the Historical Commission. Abrahams asked if the Town had committee any funds to this already, since CPA cannot supplant other funds. Sokul said no. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the DPW to repair the Weatherbee Vault to be eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application only if the Historical Commission finds it and the Mahaiwe Cemetery to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the Town. Blauvelt seconded. All in favor.
12. DPW for Town Hall: Nappo recused himself. Superintendent Sokul said the Town Hall is on the register and repairs are subject to Historic District Commission approval. Jackson asked what the construction amount would be. Sokul said this phase is just to investigate what needs to be done to restore portions of the eaves. They would apply for other funds for construction. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the DPW to repair Town Hall is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Salem seconded. All in favor with Nappo abstaining.
13. DPW for Mason Library: Nappo recused himself. Sokul said this will fix roof leaks and rot. Blauvelt asked whether the contractor for the renovation several years ago should be responsible for the damage. Sokul said their scope did not include this area and so they were not responsible. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the DPW to repair Mason Library is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Salem seconded. All in favor with Nappo abstaining.

14. Fairgrounds: Fowle recused herself. Smith asked if the fairgrounds or structures were historic. Bart Ellsbach for the Applicant said no they are not on the list. There was some discussion about the project components, and of the phasing and funding for each project. Jackson suggested that since so many boxes were checked in the Step 1 chart, the Applicant be able to fully explain in their Step 2 how each project is eligible. Smith suggested the Applicant be able to show how they would proceed if the entire funding amount were not approved. Blauvelt moved that the Step 1 application of the Fair Ground Community Redevelopment Project is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application for proposed historic components only if the Historical Commission finds it and the subject buildings to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the Town. Dezieck seconded. All in favor, with Fowle abstaining.

15. Berkshire Food Forest: Salem asked if salaries were a eligible expenses. Smith said general salaries were not, but CPA could be used to pay people "to dig a hole," i.e. for the work on the project itself. Smith asked that the Applicant provide details as to the total project budget, and the amount of CPA funds. Fowle asked whether the soil at this location was safe for planting edibles. Jackson asked what the public benefit would be, and what restriction would there be if the landowner sold the site? All agreed more detail would be needed in Phase 2. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Community Commons for the creation of a food forest is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application. Jackson seconded. All in favor.

16. Co-Housing: Salem asked if the Applicants owned a house yet. Amy Warner for the Applicant said they did not yet. Rembold noted that if CPA is used for acquisition, an appraisal would be needed and CPA could only pay up to the appraised amount. Also, a permanent restriction would be required to limit it to low or moderate income residents. There were questions about the organization, its governance, and whether the units would be rental or ownership. Smith asked if they had other funds. Ms. Warner said yes they have funds for acquisition. Smith wondered why the CPA was needed then at this stage. Nappo suggested to the Applicant that they be completely transparent about what other funds are available and the organization. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Community Commons for the acquisition and creation of co-housing is eligible as submitted, and invites a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor.

17. Project Native: Salem asked what was being created. Erik Bruun for the Applicant said walking trails. Rembold asked if the invasive removal was part of this project or merely maintenance of trails. Dezieck moved that the trail creation and extension project of the Step 1 application of Project Native is eligible as creation of a recreational resource, and invited a Step 2 application for that purpose. Abrahams seconded. All in favor.

18. CDC Riverfront Park: Nappo recused himself. Smith asked the Applicant to provide detail in the Step 2 about the budgets and phasing. She said the CPC will not waste money if projects are not ready. Jackson wondered how that could be ensured. Rembold said a grant agreement would be required of the Applicant, governing when CPA funds would be released and the public benefit expected. Smith suggested the Applicant be ready to explain how the project would move ahead if the town did not fully fund the CPA request. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the CDC for the riverfront park is eligible as submitted, and invited a Step 2 application for that project. Fowle seconded. All in favor, with Nappo abstaining.

19. CDC affordable housing: Nappo recused himself. Jackson asked how CPA funds would fit into the overall budget. Smith said affordable housing is greatly needed but we need to know other permits are ready. She asked that if CPA is the first money into this deal, the Committee should be informed what aspects of the project it will be used for. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the CDC for the creation of affordable housing is eligible as submitted and invited a Step 2 application for the housing component. Fowle seconded. All in favor, with Nappo abstaining.

20. Flag Rock Farm / Housatonic River Side Trail: Fowle recused herself. Ethan Culleton for the Applicant said this would help acquire about 6 acres on the east side of the river in Housatonic with a rare opportunity to create open space within reach of the village. Smith asked that other funding sources be shown in the detailed budget. Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of Flag Rock Farm is eligible for the acquisition and creation of open space and recreational resources, and invited a Step 2 application for those components, and that the Historical Commission should determine whether it is significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of the Town. Abrahams seconded. All in favor with Fowle abstaining.

21. Trustees of the Reservation for Flag Rock - Monument Mountain trails: Dezieck moved that the Step 1 application of the Trustees of Reservations is eligible as submitted and invited a Step 2 application. Fowle seconded. All in favor.

### **Reports from Committee Members**

Nappo indicated the Historical Commission would be meeting Monday October 6. Rembold suggest the Commission schedule a meeting in November as well, in order to review the historical significance of CPA projects needing the Commission's determination.

### **Next Meeting**

The Committee decided to meet on the coming Tuesday, October 7 to decide on its procedures for reviewing Step 2 applications.

### **Adjourn**

Dezieck moved to adjourn, Nappo seconded, all were in favor.

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Materials presented or distributed for this meeting:

- Minutes from May 28 meeting
- FY '16 Step 1 applications
- Memo from Mass. DHCD regarding CPA eligibility for public housing authority projects

Respectfully submitted:

