

**Town of Great Barrington, Community Preservation Committee (CPC)**  
Minutes of February 5, 2015  
Great Barrington Fire Station

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The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Vice-Chair Jessica Dezieck.

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

**Administrative Business**

Minutes of January 3, 2015: Some corrections and clarifications were made including with regards to the Wetherbee, Berkshire South, and Bridge Street open space discussions. Rembold will make changes and present them at the March meeting.

**Review Funding Requirements**

Rembold reminded the Committee that CPA projects must provide public benefits. He referenced the Mass. Anti-Aid Amendment which says that public funds cannot be used for the private sector for private purposes. Any expenditure of public funds must be used to advance a public purpose. Benefits include the goals of the CPA itself, as well as agreements like allowing public access to a property, providing a historic preservation restriction, or a conservation restriction.

Dezieck asked Jackson and Rembold to work on the sample contracts and be sure that projects comply with the law. Jackson suggested she and Rembold choose a boilerplate contract to be reviewed by the Committee at the next meeting and then sent to Town Counsel for review. Nappo said the contract should cover all the bases but should also have specifics for each project, like when funds will be released and the project schedule.

Rembold read an email from the Trustees regarding their public outreach plan. It includes at least two public meetings to develop the parking and trail access plan. Outreach will be made through flyers, emails, and phone calls.

Nappo asked about the CPA signage for each site. Dezieck said this should be part of the grant agreement. Abrahams wondered if we should insist that the CPA sign be separate from other construction signs. The Committee favored this approach. Jackson said she envisioned a temporary sign on the construction fence; at the end of construction it would be removed. People should be able to see the sign and learn about CPA.

There was discussion about whether a permanent sign should be required. The Committee thought this would be a good idea, but the placement would differ depending on the site—it might be in a building lobby or at a trailhead. Jackson thought we should provide either a sample sign or a template. Rembold suggested we could either require certain content, such as “this project funded by CPA,” or actually make some signs for people to use. Jackson thought the permanent signs should be designed for each individual site so it fits in. Nappo said the message should be kept simple and clearly say it was a CPA project.

Fred Harris thought the permanent sign should remain in place for a certain amount of time, such as at least 5 years, but it should not have to stay there in perpetuity.

The Committee generally agreed that there should be a construction period sign, and a more permanent sign should be put up after construction and it should stay there for a certain amount of time. Fowle said she might have some design ideas to share with the group.

### **Town Meeting Preparation**

Rembold suggested the Committee draft a report to Town Meeting. It would be a few pages long at least and would summarize the CPA in Great Barrington, our budget, and the recommended projects. He further suggested it could be incorporated into the Town Meeting warrant book, so people could refer to it easily during the voting. The Committee thought this was a good idea.

Rembold said at Town Meeting either he or Karen should give a brief slide show. It would summarize the budget and the nine proposed projects. Each project would have a slide showing a map or photos and some description. He said the applicants would not give the presentation but could be present to answer questions.

Rembold said he would work with the Town Manager and Town Counsel to see how the warrant articles will be written. He said it is likely there could be just one article, but each project would be listed individually, and therefore could be voted either at once, or held and voted individually. There might have to be a separate article to cover the 10% requirements, just to make sure that if projects fail we will still meet our 10% obligations. Dezieck asked Rembold to determine what will work best and let the Committee know.

Dezieck asked about outreach before Town Meeting. Rembold said he will discuss newspaper stories with the papers, and also schedule some radio time. Kathleen was nominated to help with the radio show.

Rembold will contact applicants. Jackson said they need plenty of advance notice to get the relevant information or photos for the slide show.

Abrahams said that an important thing to mention is that voting yes or no on a project does not impact how much you pay in taxes. We had this debate a few years ago already. We are not authorizing raising new money, we are just using the money that is already being collected.

There was a discussion about how Committee members should represent themselves regarding the projects they voted for or against. All agreed that the Committee has made recommendations and now we need to speak unanimously at this point, no matter if the vote was split.

Fowle said the report to Town Meeting could show the actual vote. She said being clear about the vote, whether unanimous or not, is ok. She said it is a simple way to show we are being transparent. The Committee did not agree, feeling a united front should be presented.

Fowle said the report could at least show who moved and seconded, and simply say that the vote passed. This would show a level of transparency without needing to detail the vote count. It sets a good tone. People could ask what the vote was, or they could review meeting minutes if they wanted.

Fick asked what the status of the CPA administrator position was. Rembold said the Town Manager will create the position and suggest it be funded via the CPA admin account. It would be up to her to appoint whomever she thinks is best for the position. He would provide an update next time.

Fred Harris said it would be a good idea to work with applicants and give them some tips about what to expect at Town Meeting. He said he's gotten a lot of good questions, such as are we using local

contractors, but we should know what types of questions to expect. Dezieck said anything can happen. Rembold said he would work with the applicants.

There was a discussion of whether there should be flyers for each project, or one flyer to summarize them all. Fowle thought a few issues could be distilled and answered up front, such as the point Abrahams made regarding the budget. Dezieck said we could discuss this next time.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be March 19 at 5:30 PM. We'll review a draft contract agreement if it's ready and other items related to Town Meeting preparation.

### **Adjourn**

Hearing no further business, Dezieck adjourned the meeting at 6:27 PM.

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Materials presented or distributed for this meeting:

- Draft Minutes from January 3 meeting
- Article from Community Preservation Coalition website
- Email of February 4 from the Trustees of Reservations regarding Flag Rock outreach

Respectfully submitted: 

