

Town of Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Minutes of July 19, 2016

Great Barrington Fire Station, 37 State Road

Members present: Thomas Blauvelt, Jessica Dezieck, Martha Fick, Jeremy Higa, Kathleen Jackson, Karen W. Smith, and Nan Wile. Absent: Ed Abrahams, Bill Nappo
Also present: Town Planner/CPA Administrator Chris Rembold

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Mr. Blauvelt.

Administrative Items

Dezieck moved to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2016 meeting. Higa seconded. All in favor.

Public Hearing Community Preservation Plan

Blauvelt read the Public Hearing Notice which was published in the Berkshire Eagle.

Dezieck moved to open the Public Hearing. Higa seconded. All were in favor.

There were no comments from the public.

Dezieck moved to close the Public Hearing. Higa seconded. All were in favor.

Blauvelt asked for comments from the Committee.

Jackson suggested more outreach be done to try to get more people to comment on the plan and come to the public hearing.

Nan Wile arrived.

Smith agreed that more outreach can be done including print, radio and social media. Smith moved, Wile seconded, to discuss an outreach strategy at a meeting early next year, in advance of the public hearing. All were in favor.

Blauvelt asked for comments on the plan. Dezieck said the Conservation Commission has been discussing the McAllister reserve for a while, but they don't have anything specific to add to the plan yet. Smith said that is something the Conservation Commission should work on and apply for funds in a future year.

Jackson suggested that CPA should consider what we want to prioritize. She said every year we get the applications that we happen to get, and we dole out money that we have. She suggested the Committee develop a longer term vision and perhaps use a consultant to help us. There was some agreement on this point, and the desire to follow up with the Coalition to see how this could be done for next year. Rembold said in the meantime the Master Plan is the Town's document for vision and goals.

Smith said applicants should check only one box—the one that best fits their project. Rembold described how some applications might cut across categories. We discuss that in our plan.

Higa said that the Planning Board wanted to note there is a serious need for more affordable housing. He added that the Planning Board also highlighted properties like the old Getty station, Ried Cleaners, and

TOWN CLERK

GREAT BARRINGTON

AUG 24 2016 PM2:30

the Housatonic Mills as sites for future funding, but they did not have any specific recommendation as to what should be done there.

Smith said the Parks and Recreation Commission will continue to plan for handicapped access at parks and public bathrooms.

Blauvelt said he hesitates to mention specific sites in the Plan. He thought it might discourage other worthy projects. Higa said that these ones are in our Main Street corridor.

Jackson reiterated the need for a strategic plan. Blauvelt said the Committee can bank funds into the certain categories. There is no requirement to fund every project that comes forward. Fick said she has tried to look at balancing the funding to projects in all parts of town. Smith said our hardest job is trying to balance needs and funds.

Blauvelt said Abrahams could not be here tonight but sent a statement by email. He read Abrahams' email which said: "The plan calls for the CPC to "take a town-wide and long-range perspective in evaluating projects". That limits us to reacting to the projects in front of us in any given year, which limits our ability to think long-range. One year we may spend 3/4 of our money on very good preservation projects which meet the long-term needs of the town, the next year we may do the same. Every year we will look at the projects in front of us and see what long-term needs we can afford to address. If instead, we considered the long-term needs of the town before we accepted applications, we could plan ahead. For example, (and pulled out of thin air). If we decide the town should have a large in-town park like Egremont's French Park, we may want to save money for a project like that for several years even if there is no proposal in front of us.

Hearing no further comments, Blauvelt asked for a motion on the Plan. Dezieck moved adopt the CPA Plan as presented, Fick seconded, all were in favor.

FY18 Step 1 Applications

There have been no other Step 1 applications received yet.

Reports from Committee Members

Fick, Jackson, and Smith related that the Selectboard discussed the CPA at their strategic planning meeting on July 11. They reported that the Selectboard seemed to think the Committee and in particular the citizen-at-large representatives should help prioritize town projects. Smith said the Selectboard also suggested the CPA schedule be adjusted to accommodate the Town's schedule for developing projects. The Committee all agreed to keep the CPA schedule as is, and that it is the Selectboard who need to set their priorities and apply for CPA at the same time as other applicants.

Higa suggested that we ask the Selectboard what their projects might be. Smith moved that the Committee send a note to the Selectboard stating that in order for us to do the best we can with CPA, we need some strategic planning direction on projects that they would like to consider for CPA. We would like their input. Dezieck seconded. All were in favor.

Administrative Update / Existing Projects

Rembold said there is an invoice from the Coalition for dues of \$1,750. Smith moved to pay the invoice, Dezieck seconded, all were in favor.

Rembold gave a brief overview of existing FY 2016 projects (first year projects):

1. Trustees of Reservations: 75% of the budget is remaining; they are still planning trail outreach work for Flag Rock

2. CDC Open Space: 100% of \$300,000 remaining
3. CDC Affordable Housing: 96% of \$250,000 remaining
4. Mahaiwe: 100% completed.
5. St James Place: 10% of \$150,000 remaining
6. Newsboy: 72% remaining but work is complete except for a community celebration
7. Town Hall eaves: 50% remaining. Ready with bid package and to go to Historic District Commission seeking a certificate of appropriateness for the work.
8. Mason library repairs: 89% of the budget remaining. Designs are ready to be put out to bid.
9. Dutch Wagon house at Wheeler Farmstead: 10% remaining. They need to finish the work and certify it was done to historic standards

Rembold said the grant agreements for the recently approved projects (second year projects) are now being signed.

Next Meeting Dates

August 23 (if needed to review Step 1 apps submitted)

September 1 (review last of Step 1 apps)

October 11 (begin Step 2 review)

Citizen Speak Time

Smith said she is very upset about the way the reorganization at the last meeting was handled. She felt it was very poor. She read an email she received from Bill Nappo who expressed his anger about the last meeting and that there was a conspiracy to undermine Karen. She said she had no idea that there was some discussion between other members about changing the Chair. She said she takes it personally that no one had the courtesy to speak with her first and discuss it. It was behind her back; it is deplorable and not honorable.

Blauvelt said he hopes we can continue now to do our good work and move forward.

Adjourn

Hearing no further business, Blauvelt adjourned the meeting at 6:40 PM.

Materials Presented/Distributed for this Meeting:

- Draft Minutes of June 14.
- Draft CPA Plan

Respectfully submitted:



