



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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Approved 11-6-14

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes September 4, 2014

Members in attendance: John Campbell, Chairman; Todd Helwig; Chris Kellogg; Debra Comeau; Peter Martin

Members excused: Kathleen Polanowicz; Andy Clark; Sean Durkin; Michelle Gillespie

Others in attendance: Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Elaine Rowe, Board Secretary; Rick Leif; Trish Settles, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:10PM.

Community Preservation Plan – Trish Settles from CMRPC appeared to discuss the proposed Community Preservation Plan. Chairman Campbell explained that the committee is anxious to get the project moving forward and, ideally, would like to get something in place before spring. He also explained that he had asked Rick Leif to attend tonight's meeting, since affordable housing is the one area where the committee has the least amount of expertise about what we can do moving forward.

Ms. Settles explained that her firm had prepared the town's Open Space & Recreation Plan a few years ago. She also noted that the town has several plans (Master plan, Open Space Plan, Housing Production Plan etc.) from which she can pull a good amount of information for the Community Preservation Plan. She suggested kicking off the process with a discussion of the project timeline at the October meeting. She indicated that CMRPC has a good compliment of staff, and they will work to schedule interviews with the various groups in town to get a sense of what their plans and priorities might be. She voiced her impression that the process can be wrapped up in approximately 6 months. She explained that the proposal references a June 30, 2015 completion date but she is hopeful that it can be done by spring. She also noted that she has been looking at the Community Preservation Plan for the town of Sharon as a good model to work from.

Chairman Campbell asked Ms. Settles about the process for conducting interviews. Ms. Settles explained that she will work with Ms. Joubert to arrange meetings with town staff and some committees, and will send out a set of questions in advance of the meetings. She also stated that the focus of the discussions will be forward looking. Ms. Settles commented that a section of the plan will address the process and any changes the board may wish to make to that process. She explained that, once the interviews have been done, she will compile a draft report to bring back to the CPC for their comments. Following input from the CPC, she

anticipates holding a public hearing to educate town residents about the board's priorities and obtain community feedback to be incorporated into the final report.

Chairman Campbell questioned the possibility of getting CMRPC on the agenda for some of the committees prior to January. Ms. Joubert agreed to look into the October and November meeting schedules. Chairman Campbell suggested that the perception of the CPC's role in town may figure into the report. He also suggested that the CPC review the list of committees and staff to decide who CMRPC should meet with.

Mr. Helwig voiced his understanding that the town has an Affordable Housing Plan and an Open Space/Recreation Plan and asked if we also have a Historic Resource Plan. Ms. Settles indicated that the Historic Resource Plan is part of the Master Plan. Ms. Joubert commented that the Master Plan is old, but the town also has a more recent Community Development Plan. Mr. Helwig asked what the Community Preservation Plan will get us that these other plans do not already furnish. Ms. Joubert explained that Community Preservation Plan is required by statute. Chairman Campbell suggested that the plan will also provide us with a map of where we wish to go, which dovetails with what the Town Administrator and town staff have been driving us towards. He also suggested that having more concrete goals will help the CPC when identifying those projects that are in line with our goals. Ms. Comeau commented that the Community Preservation Plan provides a cohesive plan for the benefit of the entire town. Mr. Kellogg suggested that once the plan has been completed, it should be added to the town website. Ms. Settles stated that the plan also provides applicants with information about the CPC's priorities that can help them determining how they may line up with the applicant's proposed project. Ms. Joubert voiced her opinion that the plan should also make it easier to determine whether specific projects fit better into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) or should seek CPC funding. Ms. Comeau commented that it also provides transparency.

Ms. Settles agreed to provide Ms. Joubert with a contract to get the process started. Mr. Kellogg suggested including information in the plan about how to approach what might be a capital project, given the challenges the board has had in the past. Ms. Joubert also suggested including instructions about getting buy-in from applicable town entities before bringing a project to the CPC.

Debra Comeau made a motion to engage CMRPC to formalize the Community Preservation Plan at a cost of \$11,820. Chris Kellogg seconded. Mr. Helwig questioned the cost. Ms. Joubert commented that the cost to draft the Open Space Plan was much higher. Mr. Helwig voiced his desire to be sure that the expenditure is defensible. Ms. Joubert indicated that she is comfortable with the quote. The committee voted unanimously to engage CMRPC.

Chairman Campbell explained that Kathleen Polanowicz is the CPC's representative from the Housing Authority but was unable to attend this evening due to work commitments in her role supporting Congressman James McGovern. He stated that Rick Leif is the spokesman for the Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation (NAHC) and asked Ms. Settles to get Mr. Leif's input this evening in the event that Ms. Polanowicz is unable to attend the board's next meeting. Mr. Leif explained that NAHC is a non-profit organization and not a municipal board.

Ms. Joubert noted that the Housing Partnership had ramped up a few years ago and drafted a housing plan, and the NAHC was formed to facilitate the building of affordable housing. She also commented that, though the NAHC is not an official town board; it is driving the affordable housing cause in town.

Mr. Leif explained that his group is looking into how to develop partnerships with other groups that may have more experience. He suggested that, with the right justification, the NAHC can ask for funding and then combine CPA money with other sources of funding (Habitat, NOAH) as a means to support their cause. He also noted that the NAHC is developing a proposal to start to fund a reserve account. He voiced his understanding that future funds will be held in reserve by the town and asked if it is possible to phrase the warrant article in a manner that would make it possible to spend the reserves without having to convene a Special Town Meeting.

Chairman Campbell requested that Ms. Settles attend the CPC's meeting on October 2, 2014.

Chairman Campbell stated that CPC meetings will be held on the following dates

- October 2, 2014
- November 6, 2014
- December 4, 2014

Applications - Ms. Joubert informed the members that the following seven applications have been submitted thus far:

- Historical Commission (4 applications)
 - Reserve allocation
 - White Cliffs
 - Historical markers
 - Burial Ground on Brigham Street
- Recreation/School Projects (3 applications)
 - Playground equipment for Peaslee
 - Basketball Court improvements at Peaslee and Zeh
 - High School Turf Field proposed by the Booster Club

Ms. Joubert explained that she has contacted the Superintendent of Schools and the Business Manager to determine if they are aware of these projects and where they stand with regards to supporting them as well as the possibility of them providing funds for the specification and design work.

Mr. Kellogg asked how much has been spent on the basketball court work thus far. Ms. Joubert agreed to provide that information. Chairman Campbell suggested that Mr. Spataro can provide an update when he comes back before the board for the next phase of his project.

Chairman Campbell indicated that applications will be heard in the following order:

1. Basketball courts
2. Peaslee playground
3. High School turf field
4. Historical Markers
5. Burial ground
6. Historic reserve
7. White Cliffs

Ms. Comeau noted that the Massachusetts Historical Commission has declared that the Mary Goodnow Gravesite is eligible to apply for recognition. She also stated that someone from the condos nearby had donated money to install a fence around the gravesite.

Historical Commission – Ms. Joubert explained that work has begun on the RFP for the gravestone restoration at Howard Street Cemetery. She also plans to look into a grant program in an effort to fund 50% of the cost, so it is possible that not all CPC money will be needed to fund this project.

Ms. Joubert explained that work on the platform at Memorial Field is underway. She also noted that the project was expanded to include ripping up and installing all new pavement so that it will be uniform.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Rowe
Board Secretary