



# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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Approved 1/28/16

## Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes January 8, 2015

**Members in attendance:** John Campbell, Chairman; Chris Kellogg; Michelle Gillespie; Debra Comeau; Andy Clark

**Members excused:** Kathleen Polanowicz; Peter Martin; Sean Durkin; Todd Helwig

**Others in attendance:** Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Norm Corbin

**Chairman Campbell called meeting to order at 7:00PM.**

### Continued Public Hearing to Consider FY2016 CPA Applications

- **Historical Category**
  - **Historical Resources Preservation Reserve Fund (\$200,000)**
  - **Old Brigham Street Burial Ground GPR Search & Mapping (\$15,000)**
  - **White Cliffs Preservation Restriction (\$427,000 - \$642,000)**
  - **Historical Markers (\$12,500)**
- **Open Space/Recreation Category**
  - **Algonquin Regional High School Track & Turf Project (\$190,000)**
  - **Conservation Fund (\$400,000)**
  - **Northboro Youth Basketball Association Court Repair Project (\$60,000)**
  - **Peaslee Elementary School Playground (\$68,162)**
- **Affordable Housing Category**
  - **Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (\$500,000)**

Mr. Kellogg voiced his understanding that the estimated FY2016 funds are \$528,000, of which 10% must be allocated to each of three categories; Open Space, Historical Preservation, and Affordable Housing. Members of the committee agreed to allocate \$55,000 to each of these categories.

**Request from Historical Commission for Administrative funds** – Mr. Corbin explained that the Historical Commission had recently petitioned the state for a preservation restriction on the White Cliffs that was denied because of exterior alterations to the building. He noted that, since that time, some additional information has come to light that the Commission believes could

support a reversal of the state's original decision. Mr. Corbin explained that he is asking for \$1500 from the CPC administrative fund to cover the costs of hiring a preservation specialist to revise the request for a historic preservation restriction from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. He explained that the consultant who had previously done the inventory of town buildings had estimated that he could do this work for that amount.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to use \$1500 from the CPC administrative fund to hire a specialist to help write up the justification for the Massachusetts Historical Commission to reverse their original decision. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote unanimous.

**39 West Main Street Ad Hoc Committee** – Chairman Campbell explained that the town has established an Ad Hoc Committee to make a recommendation about what to do with the town-owned parcel at 39 West Main Street. He noted that the options being considered are 1) put the parcel up for auction; 2) put out an RFP for proposals; or 3) continue to hold the parcel with the prospect of doing something with it in the future.

Chairman Campbell noted that there are many people who are interested in the possibility of creating open space, and are exploring the possibility of combining this parcel with an adjoining lot or two to create a larger green space. Ms. Joubert explained that one of the nearby parcels is owned by Bucky Rogers, whose asking price is \$350,000. She voiced her opinion that the asking price will likely exceed the appraised value, and noted that the town is not able to pay more than the appraised value using CPA funds.

Mr. Clark asked about zoning in this area. Ms. Joubert explained that, prior to the 2009 zoning changes, Bucky Rogers obtained approval for a mixed-use development on his property. However, she now understands that Mr. Rogers does not believe that he will be able to develop that project because a small strip of his land was taken in conjunction with the recent roadway and signaling improvements in the downtown area.

Mr. Clark voiced his opinion that this location would be ideal for affordable housing, and a decent sized development is conceivable if it is possible to combine some of these parcels. He also commented that the site is not suitable for open space, given that there is no pedestrian element to draw you to it. Chairman Campbell explained that, if the town could acquire the adjacent parcel, it would provide an open view up to the Abu building, a privately owned commercial building. Ms. Gillespie noted that there will eventually be a retail/residential development on the other side of Avidia Bank. Mr. Clark reiterated his opinion that the site is best suited for affordable housing. Mr. Kellogg agreed that he would like to see the land used for affordable housing. Mr. Corbin indicated that he would prefer for it to be green space, and suggested that traffic in that area is already bad and would only be exacerbated by a housing development.

Mr. Clark recalled that the NAHC identified a need for 2-bedroom affordable housing units for families and seniors. He also reiterated that development of affordable housing is one of the town's key objectives. Chairman Campbell suggested that the committee write a letter conveying their wishes for the parcel. Mr. Kellogg stated that he would like to see the town have some control over the property and what ultimately gets built there. Ms. Joubert

commented that an RFP would allow the town to make design element and use specifications. Ms. Gillespie noted that the Planning Board voted four in favor, one abstention, in favor of open space, and agreed to send a letter to the Board of Selectmen expressing such vote. She also noted that some of the Planning Board members expressed interest in having the town pay for an appraisal of the parcel owned by Bucky Rogers.

Chairman Campbell explained that the Open Space Committee did not take a vote, but members did express an interest in the town retaining control of the parcel even though there was no real consensus about what to do with it yet. Ms. Comeau spoke in favor of the town retaining control of the property. Members of the committee agreed. Chairman Campbell agreed to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen to that affect.

### **Discussion of Applications**

Chairman Campbell noted that the CPC unreserved account has a balance of \$461,531, and the estimated FY2016 revenue is \$528,000.

Based on previous discussions at CPC meetings, Ms. Joubert indicated that the applications for the White Cliffs and the Algonquin track and turf field project would not be considered for this year's Town Meeting.

Chairman Campbell suggested discussing the NAHC application, since they are seeking the largest pool of money and that decision will impact what can be done with regards to the remaining applications. He explained that the modified application dated November 25, 2014 is the one under consideration, and Mr. Leif has provided a letter that outlines what he believes to be the points that should be included in a funding agreement under which the use of funds would be governed. Mr. Clark asked how Mr. Leif arrived at the figure of \$500,000. Chairman Campbell commented that it is likely the sum of money that Mr. Leif believes is needed to enable the NAHC to act on a project that might present itself.

Ms. Joubert explained that she recently met with Mr. Leif, and it appears that the NAHC is looking at a parcel of land behind the library that is owned by the Housing Authority. Ms. Gillespie asked how many units can be developed on that property. Ms. Joubert voiced her understanding that those specifics have not yet been determined.

Mr. Kellogg asked if Mr. Leif is seeking a total of \$500,000 (inclusive of the \$156,000 they already have) or an additional \$500,000. Chairman Campbell stated that Mr. Leif is trying to achieve a balance of \$500,000, but likely has forgotten that there was an existing balance of \$32,000 in the affordable housing reserve account. He explained that \$52,000 had been awarded at the last Town Meeting, and there are two sums of \$52,000 each (FY2011 and FY2013) that were approved for the Senior Housing Development but were not used. Chairman Campbell also noted that a CPC vote is needed to return the \$104,000 back to the affordable housing reserve account.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to return the \$104,000 in unused funds back to the affordable housing reserve fund. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote unanimous.

Ms. Joubert noted that the Town Accountant will need to take a Town Meeting vote to return the funds back to the affordable housing reserve account.

Mr. Clark voiced his support of the NAHC application. He commented that, while both are worthwhile causes, he does not believe that the conservation fund or the historical resources preservation fund have as immediate a need for additional funds.

In response to a question from Mr. Kellogg, Ms. Joubert stated that the CPC had allocated \$24,000 to the CPC administrative fund last year.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$24,000 from FY2016 revenue to the CPC administrative account. Andy Clark seconded, vote unanimous.

Ms. Comeau mentioned that the revised estimate for the burial ground project is \$20,000.

Ms. Gillespie commented that there is a balance of \$504,000 in the historical resources reserve account. Ms. Comeau explained that the Historical Commission is trying to build up that account in the event that a large project presents itself.

Mr. Clark suggested that funds be allocated to the CPC unreserved account since that provides the greatest degree of flexibility for the use of the funds. He also noted that both the conservation fund and historical resources preservation fund have significant balances.

Mr. Kellogg noted that the debt service on the Green Street purchase needs to be funded. Ms. Gillespie recalled that \$48,600 was allocated for the debt service payment last year.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$500,000 to affordable housing, to be administered by NAHC, with funds to be provided as follows:

- \$189,000 from the affordable housing reserve account
- \$ 55,000 from FY2016 revenue
- \$256,000 from the CPC unreserved account

Andy Clark seconded, vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$20,000 from FY2016 revenue for the Old Brigham Street Burial Ground GPR Search & Mapping project. Debra Comeau seconded; vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$12,500 from FY2016 revenue for the historical markers project. Debra Comeau seconded; vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$22,500 from FY2016 revenue to the historical resources preservation reserve fund. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote unanimous.

Mr. Kellogg commented that both the Northborough Youth Basketball Association (NYBA) court repair project and the Peaslee playground project fall within the Open Space category, so they would more than satisfy the requirement for funding that category.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$60,000 from FY2016 revenue for the NYBA court repair project. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote unanimous.

Ms. Joubert suggested that the committee consider allocating \$75,000 for the Peaslee playground project to provide a small contingency should the cost of the project exceed the estimate.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$75,000 from FY2016 revenue to the Peaslee Playground project. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote unanimous.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to allocate \$48,000 from FY2016 revenue to cover the debt service payment for the Green Street land purchase. Debra Comeau seconded; vote unanimous.

Chairman Campbell explained that the balance of CPA funds will go into the CPC's unreserved account.

Andy Clark made a motion to deny the request from the Open Space Committee for funds for the conservation fund. Michelle Gillespie seconded; vote was 3 in favor and 2 opposed (John Campbell and Debra Comeau opposed).

Ms. Joubert agreed to notify all applicants about the outcome of tonight's meeting.

Ms. Joubert stated that a funding agreement with the NAHC will need to be in place prior to Town Meeting.

Chris Kellogg made a motion to close the hearing. Debra Comeau seconded; vote unanimous.

**Next meeting** – Chairman Campbell noted that the next meeting will be held on February 5, 2015, during which Trish Settles will provide an update on the Community Preservation Plan.

**Adjourned at 9:00PM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Elaine Rowe  
Board Secretary