



# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall Offices • 63 Main Street • Northborough, MA 01532 • 508-393-5019 • 508-393-6996 Fax

---

Approved 3/9/16

## Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes January 21, 2016

**Members in attendance:** Chris Kellogg; Kathleen Polanowicz; Peter Martin; Norm Corbin; Andy Clark; Todd Helwig; Sean Durkin

**Members excused:** John Campbell, Chairman; Michelle Gillespie

**Others in attendance:** Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Elaine Rowe, Board Secretary; Rick Leif; Amy Poretsky; Melissa Pride-Fahs; Dick Boutilier, First Parish Church

**Chris Kellogg called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.**

Kathleen Polanowicz made a motion to elect Chris Kellogg as Vice-Chair. Peter Martin seconded; motion carries by unanimous vote.

**White Cliffs** – Ms. Joubert explained that Melissa Pride-Fahs had withdrawn her application for funding, and is here tonight to provide the board with a brief update about her plans. Ms. Pride-Fahs confirmed that she has withdrawn her application, and is moving forward with a lease-to-own option on the property. She noted that, since she will not immediately own the property, she will not have the ability to sign a preservation restriction or accept any money from the CPC.

Ms. Polanowicz asked about preservation plans for the building. Ms. Pride-Fahs stated that the immediate need is to bring the building up to code for a function facility and, though it has always been her goal to restore the building as much as it is financially possible to do so, at this point she is not sure if it will look exactly like it did in 1886. Mr. Corbin asked Ms. Pride-Fahs if she would consider coming back to the CPC for funding if and when she ultimately owns the property. Ms. Pride-Fahs indicated that she will, and noted that she cannot financially take on all of the renovations in one phase. Mr. Helwig asked if the withdrawal of this application means that there are currently no pending applications for the White Cliffs. Mr. Corbin confirmed that it does. Ms. Joubert voiced her understanding that the LaCava family will continue to own the property for up to three years, and the demolition permit has not been enacted.

Mr. Kellogg asked Ms. Pride-Fahs to explain what can and cannot be done to the property that might affect its historic character. Ms. Pride-Fahs stated that the owners have indicated that, other than

taking apart any valuable assets within the building, they have no issues with renovation or historical restorations. She reiterated that she did not see any other way to approach this than doing the preservation work in stages. Mr. Helwig asked Ms. Pride-Fahs if she anticipates filing an application for funding next year. Ms. Pride-Fahs indicated that she cannot say definitively at this time, and noted the tremendous undertaking that this project represents. She explained that she will need to do some fundraising in order to make this project viable.

An audience member asked if the lease agreement precludes a developer from approaching the property owner. Ms. Pride-Fahs confirmed that it does, as long as she remains in good standing.

Ms. Polanowicz recognized Albert Rex and thanked him for his efforts on this project. She also voiced a desire to support Ms. Pride-Fahs as much as possible, but cautioned about donations given that this is a for-profit business. Mr. Kellogg asked Mr. Corbin to provide a revised priority list for the historic projects.

Ms. Joubert noted that the board had asked the Unitarian Church to obtain a second quote, and confirmed that they have done so. She indicated that the church has provided a letter and representatives are here this evening to address any further questions.

Mr. Kellogg asked about the proposed Town Common. Ms. Joubert noted that a revised application was submitted, in which the 20 rear Gale Street parcel was removed. In addition, the project will now be done in two phases.

**Consideration of Minutes** - Kathleen Polanowicz made a motion to accept the Minutes of the Meeting of November 5, 2015 as presented. Peter Martin seconded; motion carries by unanimous vote.

Mr. Helwig voiced apprehension about voting on funding the projects without the Chair being present, and suggested that the board delay doing so. Members of the board agreed.

Sean Durkin arrived.

In response to a request from Mr. Kellogg, Mr. Corbin indicated that the Historic District Commission is in favor of approving funds for the historic preservation reserve fund, historic markers, survey at Brigham Street Burial Ground, and most of the work at the First Parish Church. He suggested that the window replacements for the church be delayed until next year to allow time for additional research.

Mr. Leif reiterated that the Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation is seeking \$325,000 for their reserve fund.

Members of the Town Common Committee confirmed that there have been no further changes to their application.

Ms. Harrison noted she thought that the Open Space Committee had withdrawn their request for funding but Ms. Joubert indicated that the request has been reinstated due to the withdrawal of the two funding applications for the White Cliffs project.

**First Parish Church** – Mr. Corbin noted that three members of the Historic District Commission had toured the facility, and there is clearly a leak problem that needs to be addressed. He commented that the church is in beautiful condition and is well kept with the exception of the water damage from the leak. He also indicated that he had reviewed the application to determine what portions of the proposed work meet the criteria for CPC funding. He suggested that the window replacement work be delayed until next year, but agreed that the wheelchair ramp, interior renovations to accommodate wheelchair access, and steeple and clock work all make sense. He noted, however, that the proposed alteration to the steeple is significant and represents an architectural change that the state typically frowns on, so it will be critical to determine what will be allowable.

Mr. Kellogg asked if it will be possible to get the proposal completed to a degree of specificity to enable the board to move ahead with a warrant for Town Meeting. Mr. Corbin noted that the previous quote was quite detailed. Mr. Kellogg voiced his understanding that the louvered covers on the steeple is the only real issue, and suggested amending this year's application to do the other work and address the steeple/louvers at another time. Kevin Carroll asked if there is any chance that the louvers may have existed previously and noted that he has seen them on numerous churches throughout New England. Mr. Corbin indicated that they may be acceptable, but emphasized the need to clarify before moving ahead. Ms. Polanowicz voiced her opinion that it is not the board's responsibility to determine the eligibility, and suggested that the CPC can award the funds and the town can hold the money until these details are sorted out. Mr. Durkin asked if the louvers are necessary to prevent further leaking.

Mr. Kellogg commented that the most recent proposal is higher than the original, and asked if the request reflects the new quote. Mr. Corbin stated that the new quote of \$49,000 covers all of the steeple work. Mr. Boutilier stated that the church's standing committee has agreed to make up any difference in cost, so the original request stands. After discussion, Mr. Kellogg suggested that the proposal be amended to remove the window costs and reflect that the church will contribute \$10,000 of their own money. Ms. Joubert agreed to follow up with Mr. Gordon about a revised proposal.

Mr. Boutilier indicated that he did not believe the windows were included in the original budget. Mr. Corbin suggested adding \$2500 to cover legal fees associated with a preservation restriction.

In response to a request from Mr. Kellogg, Mr. Corbin provided a revised priority list for historic projects as follows:

1. First Parish Church, \$79,469
2. Historic Preservation Reserve Fund, \$200,000
3. Two Historic markers, \$7,000
4. Brigham Street Burial Ground property line survey, \$2,000

**Community Preservation Plan** - Mr. Kellogg suggested deferring the discussion about the Community Preservation Plan until such time as Chair John Campbell can be present. In response to a question from Mr. Martin, Ms. Joubert confirmed that the plan had been posted on the town website for public review/comment.

Members of the board reviewed details of the budgeted CPC revenue. Ms. Polanowicz noted that it appears that the board has roughly 1.5 million dollars to allocate to projects. Mr. Clark commented that the projects before the board exceed the total funds available for disbursement. Ms. Joubert reminded the board that there is an estimated \$49,800 payment for the debt service for the Green Street parcel.

Ms. Poretsky explained that the board received a memo from Ashley Davies, who has agreed to help write a \$250,000 grant application for the town common project. She noted that the warrant article must be written up by February 11, 2016 in order to apply for the grant. Ms. Polanowicz stated that Congressman McGovern is happy to provide letters of support for any grant applications.

**Adjourned at 8:00PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Rowe  
Board Secretary