



# TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Community Preservation Committee

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## Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes December 8, 2016

**Members in attendance:** John Campbell, Chairman; Norm Corbin; Leslie Harrison; Todd Helwig; Kathleen Polanowicz; Andy Clark; Peter Martin

**Members excused:** Sean Durkin

**Others in attendance:** Kathy Joubert, Town Planner; Elaine Rowe, Board Secretary; Rick Leif, NAHC; Rae Carlson; NAHC; Amy Poretzky; Terry Giannetto;

**Chairman John Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:06PM.**

### Public Hearing RE: FY2018 CPA Applications

- Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation - \$300,000
- Town Common – Phase II \$311,772 – Northborough Town Common Committee
- Trails Preservation - \$26,200 – Trails Committee
- Conservation Fund - \$200,000 – Open Space Committee
- Bartlett Pond Herbicide Treatment - \$30,000 – Conservation Commission

**Northborough Affordable Housing Corporation (NAHC), \$300,000** – Rick Leif and Rae Carlson appeared before the board to discuss their request for funds. Mr. Leif provided an update on the project at 33 – 39 Main Street that was approved at Town Meeting 2016. He noted that the project is well underway, with the property being transferred from Trico to NAHC on September 14<sup>th</sup>, and subsequently donated to Habitat for Humanity.

**Peter Martin arrived.**

Mr. Leif explained that the existing driveway is overgrown and unusable, so an easement has been obtained from Trinity Church for access to the buildings through their parking lot as was suggested by the Town Engineer. He mentioned that \$400,000 was approved for the project, of which \$300,000 was disbursed at the closing with the remaining \$100,000 to be used for renovation work. He voiced his understanding that Habitat for Humanity is actively fundraising in town, and is planning for students from Assabet Technical School to do much of the work. He also indicated that services were donated by architect Tom Reardon and structural engineer Ron Sales.

Mr. Leif stated that the lead and asbestos has been removed from the smaller house, and lead and asbestos remediation is underway for the larger house. He indicated that the units should be ready for occupancy in early 2018, and Habitat for Humanity has received 22 applications to date.

Mr. Leif indicated that NAHC is now pretty much out of this project and is looking for their next one for which they will need more funds. He noted that the current reserve fund balance is \$200,000, and they are seeking an additional \$300,000 to arrive at the \$500,000 that they believe is needed in order for them to pursue any projects that may arise. He explained that the ground rules will be the same as in the past, with money to be set aside until a project is identified. Once identified, the NAHC will come back to the CPC and the Board of Selectmen for a funding agreement to be put in place. Mr. Leif stated that the agreement provides for the funding to be good for 2 years, so the NAHC is also seeking a one-year extension for the \$100,000 that was awarded at the 2015 Town Meeting.

In response to a question from Chairman Campbell, Mr. Leif voiced his opinion that Habitat for Humanity will likely use the entire \$100,000 balance that was allotted for the project unless their fundraising efforts exceed their expectations. Chairman Campbell commented that the partnership with Habitat for Humanity seems like a worthwhile arrangement.

Ms. Joubert indicated that Habitat for Humanity has also expressed interest in town-owned property on Boundary Street. Mr. Leif commented that the two units in the Hitching Post Lane development are still in play, with both Habitat and NAHC expressing interest in pursuing them.

Ms. Polanowicz applauded the NAHC for their efforts and congratulated them on their progress to date. She asked if there have been any conversations with National Grid about reducing the footprint of the Habitat project. Ms. Joubert voiced her understanding that the goal is for the project to be gold certified. Ms. Polanowicz extended an offer of help, if needed.

In response to a question from Mr. Helwig, Mr. Leif indicated that, to date, \$900,000 in CPC funds have been spent on affordable housing. Mr. Helwig commented that funding will likely be less in the years ahead and wondered if there is anything else we can do to support development of affordable housing. Mr. Leif stated that he had read about several different programs, and will continue to research to find alternative ways to get people into affordable housing. He agreed to look into the establishment of a municipal housing trust if it appears that one would be beneficial.

Chairman Campbell expressed a desire to draft an article about the NAHC's efforts for publication by the coalition. He also suggested using some of the CPC administrative fund to purchase signage to highlight uses of CPA funds around town. Ms. Harrison suggested a plaque for the historical building that is part of the Habitat for Humanity project.

**Town Common, \$311,772** – Amy Poretsky and Terri Giannetto appeared to request funding for Phase 2 of the Town Common project. Ms. Poretsky noted that Phase 1 funding was for the purchase of the property at 39 West Main Street, which has been completed. She explained that removal of asbestos from the existing building is underway, with demolition to be done by the end of the year. Mr. Corbin suggested that photographs be taken now and during demolition.

Ms. Poretsky explained that the next phase of the project involves obtaining bids from landscape architects for the both the design and drafting of construction documents for the RFP.

In response to a question from Mr. Corbin about construction costs, Ms. Poretsky indicated that they had used the estimate previously provided by the DPW.

Ms. Poretsky reiterated that Phase 2 funding is to cover construction costs, and noted that the group had received a land grant in the amount of \$215,000. Ms. Giannetto indicated that funds will be returned to the CPC fund as reimbursements from the grant are received. Ms. Joubert stated that she had sent a list of questions to the Town Accountant for clarification about the process.

Ms. Poretsky explained that the application is similar to the one submitted last year. Chairman Campbell asked if we have sufficient detail to obtain bids. Ms. Joubert commented that this is now a town project, with the budget prepared by the DPW who has asked that the request be rounded up to \$315,000. She also voiced her expectation that construction bids should be in hand before this goes to Town Meeting.

Chairman Campbell recalled discussions about parking, which he now believes may not be needed. Ms. Giannetto explained that the obvious location for parking is at Assabet Park. Ms. Harrison recalled a discussion about providing a couple of parking spots on Monroe Street. Chairman Campbell expressed a desire for sidewalks to be installed between Assabet Park and the new Town Common. Ms. Joubert commented that this issue is already under consideration, and noted that sidewalk work will not come out of Town Common funds. Mr. Corbin questioned whether this would be part of the work done by the landscape architect. Ms. Polanowicz emphasized the need for signage for the project to highlight the good work being done with CPA money. Ms. Poretsky asked about the group's ability to do fundraising, and suggested they may wish to sell bricks and/or benches to be placed within the project. Ms. Polanowicz recommended that the group make sure that the landscape architect is aware of these ideas so they can design the project with them in mind.

In response to a question from Ms. Harrison about the landlocked lot nearby, Ms. Giannetto indicated that the group has thus far not pursued it. Ms. Poretsky noted that the Lowe's Market building was recently sold, and those owners also own the small house. She wondered about the possibility of obtaining an easement to cut through that property to the Town Common.

**Trails Preservation, \$26,200** – Ms. Joubert noted that the request is self-explanatory, with a breakdown of work included in the application. Mr. Helwig asked if the proposed trail work at the Hop Brook Dam had been completed, and Ms. Joubert explained the State has asked the Town to wait until at least next year to begin the parking lot and trail construction. The Dam Safety office has been working in other parts of the state and those projects have taken longer than expected. Ms. Joubert also discussed a new "walking policy" that the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife implemented this summer may prove problematic as the Division has requested removal of trails on their property. She agreed to send details of the policy to the members of the board.

**Conservation Fund, \$200,000** – Chairman Campbell noted that this is the Open Space Committee's annual application for conservation funds. He noted that, though there is currently no pressing project, the Open Space Committee's approach has always been to look for small, "low hanging fruit". He also noted that Indian Meadows is still on the interest list.

**Bartlett Pond Herbicide Treatment, \$30,000** – Chairman Campbell indicated that the CPC had supported this effort once before. Mr. Helwig explained that the work needs to be done

every 3 years, and there is only one vendor that does this work. In response to a question from Mr. Corbin, Mr. Helwig confirmed that the herbicide treatment has been effective in the past.

**Consideration of Minutes** - Kathleen Polanowicz made a motion to accept the Minutes of the Meetings of

- April 18, 2016
- May 12, 2016
- June 20, 2016
- September 26, 2016

as submitted. Todd Helwig seconded; motion carries by unanimous vote.

**White Cliffs update** – At the request of Norm Corbin, Ms. Joubert provided the following update on the White Cliffs project:

- Environmental work is being finalized, with 37 tons of contaminated soil removed (5 times more than was estimated)
- Base pavement is down.
- Monitoring wells need to be installed and environmental reports are to be submitted to the Town's consultant. Once the consultant confirms that the results are acceptable, the Town will close on the property.

In response to a question from Mr. Helwig, Ms. Polanowicz indicated that the items that were placed with Skinner were moved to a warehouse and the town has the right to inspect them prior to closing.

**Brigham Street Burial Ground** – Chairman Campbell voiced his understanding that questions have arisen from the State about the use of ground penetrating radar. Mr. Corbin explained that someone from the Massachusetts Historical Commission does not recommend the use of this technology, so he needs to speak with him to get more details. He noted that he has spoken with people in Sudbury, Grafton, and Southborough who have all used it with some success.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:28PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Rowe  
Board Secretary