

SEEKONK COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Minutes – October 19, 2011

Present: Ron Blum, Willit Mason, John Alves, Susan Waddington

Absent: Jim Tusino, Richard Wallace

Guest: Kelley Whitmore (Seekonk Land Trust, Trustees of Reservations)

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Ron Blum at 7:08.

Old business:

1. Corrections were made to the minutes of our September 28 meeting and it was agreed that page numbers and a date should appear on the minutes. Following the discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.

New business:

1. Review of Warrant articles.
 - a. Article 10 - 524 Newman Ave. Kelley, acting on behalf of the Land Trust had received a verbal “no” to our offer of \$406,000 (half of which was to be covered by CPC funds). It was decided to leave the Warrant article in place while we wait for an official seller’s decision and explore other possibilities for funding. The Water Grant will be granted or not granted on November 1, but it appears that the Water Board will probably not go ahead unless the property agreement is in place. Possibilities: would the Seekonk Land Trust fund half of a bridge loan if the Trustees of Reservations would do the other half; would the CPC be willing to take on the entire project?

Ron reported from the Finance Director that borrowing \$200,000 would not be worth the finance charges. Another possibility would be the use of State House notes. At this point, we agreed to keep as many options as possible in play and that the Chair will keep talking to the Town finance people while we hope that the seller modifies his position. The Warrant article will stay in place until we run out of options. The Warrant will probably be reopened in a couple of weeks and at that time we will substitute the words “sum of funds” for the exact dollar amount (\$203,000), include the specific acreage involved and make any changes that Kelley submits. Willit will provide Ron with a bill for the appraisal.

- b. Article 11 Yarghian Farmland. The Conservation Commission has agreed to hold the Conservation Restriction for this property. Willit will find out the tax implications for this transaction.
 - c. There was no further discussion on Articles 3 (Habitat for Humanity) and 4 (Organization of town documents).
 - d. The Chair has talked to the Capitol Improvement Committee and will address the Board of Selectmen when he hears from them.
 - e. Susan moved to accept the Draft Warrant as it now appears with the changes made by the Committee. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.
2. Discussion on hiring a consultant to look at the purchase of 1 or more Historical Deed Restrictions.
- The Chair had consulted with Stuart Saginor (Community Preservation Coalition) about funding requests for private historical buildings. Stuart indicated that some CPCs have purchased Historical Restrictions for private buildings. Our Committee discussed the pros and cons of doing this when the committee has such a small funding base. Susan suggested that we redo the existing Seekonk historical survey to get a more accurate reading of our resources before going further with this idea. We decided to leave this as a future option, but no vote was taken.
3. Richard was not available to update us on his signage research so this was deferred to the next meeting.
4. The Chair will purchase a tape recorder from Administrative Funds so we will have an accurate record of each meeting.
5. Susan will contact Seekonk Patch (Abigail Crocker) and the Seekonk Star (George Morse) about stories promoting our Warrant articles.
6. Open Meeting Law – Sandy, John, and Susan attended. For our Committee an important rule concerns Serial Deliberation. It is not allowed for individual members to sequentially discuss

items under discussion (similar to a child's game of "pass it on". The full text and interpretation of the Open Meeting Law and the recent forum are on file at Town Hall.

7. The Chair will ask the Town Administrator to determine the status of Bob Richardson – is he the official Parks and Recreation designated committee member. He will also ask Anne Rogers to forward any Talent Bank applications to fill the remaining open seat on the Committee

8. Next meeting: November 16, 2011 at 7:00. Place to be determined. We may need to have a short meeting before the Town Meeting on November 28.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Susan R. Waddington, Clerk

Seekonk Community Preservation Committee