

TOWN OF STOW
Community Preservation Committee

FINAL Minutes, March 23, 2009 Community Preservation Committee Meeting

Present: Community Preservation Committee members: Bob Wilber (Chairman), Bob Larkin, Laura Spear, Linda Stokes, John Bolton, Mike Busch, Dave Walrath.

The meeting began at 7:35pm with a quorum at the Town Building.

STOW HISTORICAL COMMISSION (SHC)– Update on Warrant Articles

Historic Properties Inventory – Susan McLaughlin from the SHC explained there was a miscommunication about what work the consultant (Anne Forbes) could complete prior to Annual Town Meeting (ATM). Anne revised her proposal and Susan said the Historical Commission is satisfied that Anne can provide the pertinent information for ATM.

Anne explained that her original proposal is actually the first of four phases. The first phase lays out what needs to be covered, gives a detailed prioritized street list, summarizes the background history of the Town, and analyzes the planning needs and threats to the Town's historic resources. Anne explained that the State Historical Commission suggests doing phase one as its own project. Then the report from phase one can be used to define and scope the other three phases as one separate project.

There is not sufficient time, prior to ATM, for Anne to complete phase one as proposed. Anne proposed doing a mini-plan. The main purpose of the mini-plan is to clarify the number of properties that need to be written and estimate the total cost of all phases.

Stuart Saginor from the Community Preservation Coalition was present and said administrative funds can be used for this phase but administrative funds can not be encumbered if the project is not completed prior to fiscal year end.

Action Item: Anne will rework her scope of services, adjust her fee, and the CPC will decide how to proceed with phase one and the follow up phases/project.

Action Item: Bob asked if Anne would be eligible to bid for the larger project since she is doing phase one. Anne said all phases are usually done by the same consultant and it should not be a conflict of interest. Bob suggested she and the Historical Commission talk to Stow's Town Administrator to confirm this is legal.

Update on Historic Musket – Bob Stokes Stow Minutemen (SMM).

Bob Stokes and Rick Lawson went to view the musket. They confirmed the musket is French and from 1768-1774. Bob S. said it was unlikely that Steven Stow used the musket but more likely that Steven's son Icabod acquired it while marching to Saratoga or he could have acquired it the following year at a battle in Rhode Island.

Bob S. said they have not obtained an appraisal. He does believe the current owner paid \$13,000 for the musket and will inquire about a receipt from the transaction.

There was a brief discussion about an appraisal. Bob S. believes Keith Downer, in Attleboro, is an expert in this field and could do the appraisal. Stuart Saginor said to check the CPA law about what the appraisal requirements are.

Action Items:

- Bob Stokes said he needs to report this information to the SMM and have them reaffirm their support.
- The SMM will obtain more documentation for the musket. A current appraisal and possibly a bill of sale to the current owner.
- The SMM will confirm that the musket can be displayed at the library.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COALITION PRESENTATION – Stuart Saginor

Stuart gave a presentation to the CPC updating them on current CPA legislation.

- 140 communities have adopted the CPA (40% of Massachusetts communities).
- The legislature wants to see diversity in the CPA Towns.
- The Coalition has successfully defended the CPA State Trust Fund from numerous attempted raids.
- The Coalition has successfully defended the ACT from proposed legislative amendments that are not in the best interest of existing CPA communities.
- Seven “good” amendments have been passed to amend the ACT – no “bad” amendments have been passed.
- When the CPA was enacted it was expected that participating communities would receive an annual 25-50% match. There was a surplus in the Trust Fund and communities received an unexpected 100% state match for several years. The surplus has been depleted and this was the first year that the state match was lower than 100%.
- **Challenges:** 1. Trust Fund has been depleted and the number of CPA communities has increased. 2. Only 15 cities have adopted the CPA and few Western Mass towns. 3. It does not make sense that restoration/rehabilitation can only be done if the land/projects were purchased/created using CPA funds.
- **Solution: *SB90 An Act to Sustain Community Preservation*** is a proposed piece of legislation that will 1. Increase the Trust Fund revenue to guarantee a 75% match in the first round. 2. Create a more attractive adoption option that will attract cities by allowing communities to adopt at a minimum of 1% tax increase and allow up to 2% more to come from other revenue sources. 3. Clarify the recreation language to include restoration/rehabilitation for all recreational assets.
- 81 Senators and Representatives have supported the new legislation.

- **Funding:** The proposal is to re-calculate the deeds fee, every couple of years, to cover the total amount needed to give participating communities a 75% CPA match.
- The Coalition is suggesting that towns ask their selectmen to vote to support the legislation and recognize their senator and representative for their support.
- Based on the most current figures, Stow can expect to receive a 38% match estimated at \$159,000 in October 2009. (First round: 29% - \$120,000 and Second Round: 9% \$39,000).
- It will be up to DOR if there will be a third round.

NEWS AND VIEWS

- Linda Stokes asked Stuart when public documents are considered historic. She mentioned that our Town Clerk believes all public documents are historic as soon as they are created. Stuart agreed that some documents are considered immediately historic – if they have special notes in the margins or other unique factors. He does not believe current vital records are considered historic. Stuart said there will be an article about this in the upcoming coalition newsletter. Stuart suggested that the Town Clerk prepare an inventory of what the Town has and what she would like done, then the Historic Commission can vote on it, and if needed municipal funds can be used with CPA funds to cover the cost of the non-historic portion.
- Bob Wilber met with Greg Jones, Mike Kopczynski, and Steve Dungan about the affordable housing / supportive housing projects at Pilot Grove and Plantation. They agreed the project is not ready for this Annual Town Meeting. They discussed the possibility of purchasing the land at a special Fall Town Meeting. Bob encouraged Greg to have some public forums, update the community, and get feedback.
- Bob Larkin said that the Elm Ridge deed riders will not be affordable in perpetuity.

BILLS AND MINUTES:

Kathy moved to accept the minutes from March 9, 2009 as amended, Linda seconded, and 5 votes were to approve (John abstained and Dave had stepped out of the meeting.)

Respectfully submitted by,
Deb Seith