**Sturbridge Community Preservation Committee**

**Meeting Minutes of Monday, November 6, 2023**

**Town Hall**

**Call to Order**

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Chair Penny Dumas established that a quorum was present and called the CPC meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Committee members present: Penny Dumas, Kelly Emrich, Ed Goodwin, Wally Hersee, Kadion Phillips, Barbara Search. Members of public present: Annie Roscioli. Absent: Lauren Vivier and CPC Clerk Elisa Krochmalnyckyj

1. Motion by Wally to approve the October 2, 2023 minutes as presented, 2nd by Ed, Vote 5-0-1 with Barbara abstaining due to absence from that meeting.

2. Annie presented a proposal with a site plan, for the “Cedar Street Rec” area and explained the history of the project. Annie explained that she and the Rec. Committee are considering a phased project, with immediate attention to bring the area to ADA compliance and they are not recommending new concrete sidewalks, in this proposal. Annie noted that perhaps there will future phases, but this is not guaranteed Their goal is to make the Rec. area functional and as safe as possible. The plan includes matting, creating a path, which will make the sandy beach wheelchair accessible to the water. Almost 50% of the cost of the project will fund upgrades for ADA compliant. The existing playground ground surface is not ADA compliant, and it is not an ideal product for safety and comfort. The new surface will be ADA compliant and is the product used at Burgess playgrounds. Existing playground is not all-inclusive, and children with certain disabilities can not play. The plan includes a equipment that will offer opportunities for all children to enjoy the playground.

Annie explained, that at this time the playground fencing does not include gates, making this area unsafe, especially when considering the location, lakeside. The new plan will have the playground area fenced with childproof gates.

The budget includes Engineering, ADA improvements, playground equipment, fencing, curbing and a 20% contingency and is pricing at $546,060.20.

Annie explained that Sturbridge applied for, and was denied, the MOD grant two years in a row. This grant offered a maximum of $250,000.00. She and the Annie was told that there will be a Special Town Meeting the last Monday in January and would like the CPC to considering the use of CPA funds for the project.

Ed stated that Streeter Beach is a much better area for swimming, and the town should make an effort to opening up the swimming area. Wally agrees with Ed. Penny asked if the area would be town or state and learning that it is state owned wondered if the area may not lend itself to a Sturbridge “Rec area”, because the Rec area as it is now, is only offered to town residents. Penny noted that while the swim area at Streeter is far better, the Rec summer program is ideal on the existing site and to hold off the ADA compliance and upgrades at Cedar Rec area, when we have no idea if and when Streeter could ever be home to our Summer Rec program would not make sense to her.

All agreed with Ed that the Cedar Lake lagoon is not an attractive swim area. Kelly spoke about a neighborhood on a lake in Holland that works together to fund treatment of a water aerating system. Wally had heard of something similar being used on a lake in Maine. Annie noted that every 6 years the town hydro-rakes the cover at the Rec area and she will look into the systems that Kelly and Wally noted.

Ed makes motion, 2nd by Wally, to recommend a Special Town Meeting article for use of CPA funds in the amount of $546,065.00, with funding to be determined after consulting the Finance Director, for the purpose of funding engineering, construction, implementation of ADA compliance and playground upgrades at the Cedar Street Rec Area. The vote was 6-0. Annie left the meeting at this time.

3. Discussion took place on the CPC’s Community Needs Study, which will be held in the spring, date, time and location to be determined. Kelly presented a QR Code on her phone to share the idea on how a survey could work. She put together four questions, to show how this would work towards getting feedback from residents prior to the open forum. Kadion shared the details of Medford, Mass’s survey, all agreed this was well done and something to work off of. Barbara would like to ask specific questions relating to Historic Preservation and had some to share at the meeting. Barbara shared the idea to ask other CPA committees for input for specific questions. Consensus was shown that we will ask Open Space, Recreation, Historic, Housing and Trails Committees for questions that they would like us consider. Penny suggested that CPC members can email survey questions, and/or bring to our December meeting.

4. Penny stated that we have been holding off on reorganizing the committee with the goal of doing so when all CPC members are present. Ed made a motion, 2nd by Kadion, to nominate Penny as Chair. Penny suggested that anyone who is interested in chairing the CPC should not be shy to ask, she stated she is very willing to give the responsibility to anyone who is interested. Without interest, vote was taken 6-0. Ed made a motion, seconded by Wally, to nominate Kadion as Vice Chair, Kadion accepted nomination, vote 6-0.

5. Wally informed the committee that he is working with Robin Chrabascz, Sturbridge Facilities Director, on the Civil War Plaques displayed on the walls of Town Hall. Wally realized that names have been omitted, most likely in error, and he would like to see the missing names added to the plaques. Wally asked about the history of CPA funding the bronze signage on the town common and various places in town. Penny described past member Joe Oulette, who was the CPC Historic Commission member, who was a dedicated member to the community and researched the history, drafted the information for the signs, found a designer to price the signs, the proposals went to town meeting and CPA funds were voted in, for the purpose of purchase and installation of the signs which depict history.

6. Kadion made a motion, seconded by Barbara, to adjourn, vote 6-0.

Next meeting, December 4, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted, Penny Dumas