

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Town Hall – March 4, 2019
Sturbridge, MA

At 7:00 pm Penny Dumas called the meeting to order. In attendance: Penny Dumas (PD), Ed Goodwin (EG), Heather Hart (HH), Barbara Search (BS), and Ed Neal (EN). Absent: Kadion Phillips (KP), and Kelly Emrich (KE).

Guests: Tom Chamberland (TC), Matt Maselli (MM) from Housing Partnership.

PD explained that last month there was an issue with the posting for meeting. While the meeting notice was posted properly, there was a link on the Town Website that incorrectly listed the meeting time as 10:30. Because of this, the agenda for the March meeting includes the agenda for February's meeting so that the public would have the opportunity to discuss the items on the agenda. She welcomed Joanne Everson as the CPC clerk, then offered opportunity for public discussion on the following: January 9, 2019, meeting minutes; Trails Committee Proposal; Recreation Committee Proposal; Habitat for Humanities information; Old Burial Ground, North Cemetery Proposal; ATM Warrant Article – Administrative Funds; CPC Annual Report; and Tape Survey.

EN stated that he would like to defer the tape survey due to a title issue on 117-119 Fairview Park Road until the April meeting.

Trails Committee Proposal

TC stated that the Town currently has 23.4 miles of trails available to the public on six properties; last year, the Trails Committee and the volunteers spend 750 hours constructing and maintaining the trails. Using the national volunteer rate of \$24/hour, this represents a \$23,500 value to the Town. TC presented three requests for funding for FY20:

Request #1: Phase 1 Riverlands development and general trail improvements in the amount of \$30,350.00. TC explained that this project would: construct a 50-car parking lot; fence in the Trails Committee storage sheds located adjacent to the new parking lot; fund the Student Conservation Association trail crew; and fund general trail improvement. TC is waiting until June or July for grant approval. If the grant is not received, he stated that he will determine where the proposal is weak or discuss how the community would fund the project. PD questioned whether the size of the parking lot is excessive; TC explained that the largest lot currently has space for 25 cars and is full on the weekends. EG asked if the site has been approved by the state for parking; TC will check. PD stated that she will check to see if constructing a fence is an allowable use of CPA funds.

Request #2: Grand Trunk Trail central section feasibility design study in the amount of \$16,650.00. TC explained that this request also is waiting for grant approval. If approved, the amount requested will be reduced to \$5,650.00. The feasibility design study will cover a 2.3-mile section of trail from River and Farquhar Roads to the Riverlands entrance on Stallion Hill Road. TC stated that he is requesting the full amount of the project due to the importance of moving forward with the project regardless of the grant award.

Request #3: Old Sturbridge Village (OSV) Easement costs for Grand Trunk Trail easement in the amount of \$5,000.00. TC stated that the Trails Committee would like to run the trail on top of the abandoned Mobil gas line across from OSV parking to the Grand Trunk Trail. TC explained that Town had previously worked with OSV for an easement at the Leadmine Mountain Property. EN questioned the amount; TC said that it was not a firm number and explained that it is necessary to pay for the lawyer for OSV and the Town.

EN asked how much of the total is possible grant money. TC stated that Request #2 would save \$11,000.00 if the grant is awarded, otherwise everything else stays the same. Discussion followed regarding which fund – General or Open Space – would be used.

EG moved the motion to recommend to ATM up to \$30,350.00 of CPA General Fund Balance for the purpose of funding the Riverland Development and General Trail Improvements proposal, contingent upon the construction of a fence being an allowable use of CPA Funds; BS seconded. Motion accepted 4-0-1 (EN abstained).

EN moved the motion to recommend to ATM up to \$16,650.00 of CPA Open Space Fund Balance for the purpose of funding the Grand Trunk Trail Central Section Feasibility Design Study; HH seconded. Motion accepted 5-0-0.

BS moved the motion to recommend to ATM up to \$5,000.00 of CPA Open Space Fund Balance for the purpose of funding OSV Easement Costs for Grand Trunk Trail Easement; EG seconded. Motion accepted 5-0-0.

BS requested a clarification of wording on the February 4 meeting minutes. PD allowed discussion but stated that the minutes would be voted on in April.

PD explained that EN had a question regarding a Recreation Committee balance of \$16,000.00 left over from a project. PD is waiting for an answer from Barbara Barry to verify that the money is in the CPA Fund, not the Town General Fund.

PD stated that she will reach out to Jean Bubon regarding the Habitat for Humanities home.

Historic Proposal

BS explained that the request is to provide for two signs prohibiting both gravestone rubbings and dogs around the gravestones to be constructed and installed at the entrances to North Cemetery and the Old Burial Ground. BS stated that first there must be permission from the Board of Selectmen and a policy against gravestone rubbings.

BS moved the motion to recommend to ATM up to \$1,000.00 of CPA Historic Fund Balance for the purpose of funding the construction and installation of two signs, one at each of the entrances of the Historic Burial Ground and North Cemetery to deter stone rubbing; HH seconded. Motion accepted 5-0-0.

MM asked if there are one or two Habitat for Humanities homes being considered. HH replied that only one lot passed the percolation test. MM stated that he was very impressed with the CPC meeting.

EG moved the motion to adjourn the meeting; HH seconded. Motion accepted 5-0-0 and meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Next meeting April 1, 2019 at 7:00 pm.

/jme