

**Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
November 15, 2016**

Present:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap, Mark Pease, Louise Tremblay, Harvey Gagnon, John Hassan, Debra DeWitt, and recording Secretary, Marylee Enos. The meeting was held at Dracut Town Hall, 62 Arlington St. Dracut, MA.

Absent: Don Plummer, Linda Kawa and George Malonis

Also In attendance; Betsy Ware, Community Development Director

Also present: Tom Paquette

Chairperson Helen Dunlap called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Minutes:

John Hassan made a motion to approve the October 18, 2016 minutes, Louise Tremblay, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Open Space:

52 A Avis Ave:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap explained that this article passed at Town Meeting and was very pleased on how it went there. Mark Pease thanked Ms. Dunlap for doing a great job with presenting the article. Ms. Dunlap stated we just have to keep tabs on the APR to make sure they are doing everything they are supposed to do to keep this moving forward. Ms. Dunlap also explained that the CPC funds stay until the family gets the APR funds.

Yapp Property:

Ms. Dunlap explained that the Open Space Committee will be coming to the December 6th CPC meeting to discuss the trails, parking and other possibilities on how to get the Yapp Property started. Ms. Dunlap explained that the committee should be looking into grant programs to help out with this. Mark Johnson sent them information on a grant program for funding this kind of thing.

Ms. Ware stated that we need to update the CPC Open Space Plan, this needs to be in place for any federal and state grants. Ms. Ware is working on updating the plan.

Ms. Tremblay asked Ms. Ware if we use any federal or state grants, just like we did with Veterans Memorial Park; does that mean the trails and etc.; will be open to all community's not just Dracut; Ms. Ware stated, yes.

Beaver Brook Farm:

Ms. Ware explained at Town Meeting, the Article for the long term lease for farmland passed on the Yapp Property, the Beaver Brook and Dadak's land. Ms. Ware stated we are going to have to come out with some kind of a strategy plan with the BBFC on how we are going to play all that out. Mr. Richardson has sold all of his equipment and will definitely not be haying the Beaver Brook land next year. Ms. Ware stated an RFP will have to go out so we can get someone to hay

it at a minimum, until the BBFC can figure out the long term range on what they want to do with the property.

Ms. Ware explained, with the Yapp Property, Dana Taplin was haying it this past year. Ms. Ware would like to see the Agricultural-Commission and a subcommittee of the CPC to get together and try to work on getting a RFP together. Ms. Ware stated, there are some templates out there for RFP's for licensing farmland. Ms. Dunlap also explained there is a wonderful website also called the Land for Good with a lot of good information.

Ms. Tremblay asked if the RFP will go out for all three properties or separately. Ms. Ware stated she would think separately.

Ms. Ware explained that on the BBF Article, there was an approval on long term leases on various uses on the property. Ms. Ware handed out a memo that she had given to the Town Manager. In the memo, under additional information, under the statue of the Community Preservation Coalition, they have made it really clear, that if a property is acquired using CPC funds, you need to put some restrictions on it.

Part of the challenge on this is trying to find somebody qualified to hold the restriction. If it remains a Town owed property, it has to be a separate entity holding the restriction. Ms. Ware explained, whether perhaps it could be, Historic New England, or Preservation Massachusetts, both of whom are entities. Ms. Ware explained because it's a preservation restriction in perpetuity, they can charge a lot of money upfront to enter into a restriction.

CPC funds can be used for the upfront cost, but they are looking into this in perpetuity. What they would do is take the \$50,000(fifty-thousand dollars) or \$ 60,000 (sixty-thousand dollars) and invest it with the idea of coming out twice a year to look at it.

Mr. Pease about the Dunstable Land Trust that owns the land across the street, would they be interested at all. Ms. Ware explained that they do not have any experience in the preservation of buildings. They could deal with the landscape, but the big challenge is to find someone for the restriction of the house. Ms. Dunlap stated, the Dracut Land Trust could also hold the restriction, that would be very easy and we wouldn't charge anything. Just as we do on the Connie Richardson land.

Ms. Ware explained what has to be done is to draft up the restriction, and have a map or some kind of plan to show what is restricted in terms of the land area for the for conservation or agricultural restriction. The building, the main house, would be a separate restriction, as would the other buildings.

The restrictions need to happen in consent with these new uses. Ms. Ware has lined up the person who did the building assessments to take some photos if the building is significantly cleaned out. He will take pictures of some interior features that he thinks should be preserved. This is the main house.

At this time, Ms. Dunlap introduced Tom Paquette, who came to the meeting with his own

possibilities for the BBF. Mr. Paquette explained to the committee he had been working on purchasing the Phineas St parcel, he had come up with a master plan for the property if it had gone through, but it is not going to happen, he stated. With that thought, Mr. Paquette stated he believes that the Beaver Brook Farm is almost a carbon copy of that parcel.

Mr. Paquette explained that he would be interested in having a bed and breakfast with an event venue with active farming around it, apple orchards with walking trails all around the perimeter, among a lot of other thoughts and suggestions. Mr. Paquette explained, he has been doing a lot of homework on the property and how it would fit with these buildings. His thoughts are it would be a better fit here for his plan and scope of work.

Mr. Hassan asked since the land was purchased with CPC funds, would we lease it out to you? Mr. Paquette stated, he didn't know what the CPC's priorities are or what the BBFC priorities are. He is going into this blind, he has a lot of things in mind but he doesn't know if they fit the priority's that they have.

Ms. DeWitt, who is also on the BBFC, stated, the big part of the BBFC is getting it preserved. Some of Mr. Paquette's ideas are on the same track, but with questions, like if you plant maple trees how long will it take for them to grow and realistically be worth something. The venue idea is good but, their thought was who's going to manage it. There is still a lot of unanswered questions.

Ms. Ware stated this is not an easy one, the Town acquired the property using CPC funds, for Affordable Housing, Open Space Recreation, Preservation and Recreation. These are the four areas that can happen there

In order to have a third party use the property it would have to be put out in a RFP process. That being stated, Ann Vandal, the Assistant Town Manager- Finance Director, wants to move very carefully on how to move on this project. Mrs. Vandal explained to Ms. Ware, some funds that are not qualified to use under CPA are now coming out of the general fund.

Ms. Ware explained, the budget is too tight to keep using that for other things that come up.

Ms. Ware stated, there are still CPC funds available from the original motion to stabilize the buildings and do repairs on the buildings. Ms. Ware also wanted to state that any demo costs cannot be used with CPC funds or out of the general fund.

Ms. Ware stated, we are in a little bit of a holding pattern right now. We have a tenant there and we need to respect his rights.

Debra stated to Mr. Paquette that she will see if the BBFC can get him on the agenda for one of the next meetings.

Mr. Paquette thanked the committee for their time.

383 Richardson Rd

Property (Jeffrey, Candace, Meghan Richardson):

Louise Tremblay made a motion for the board to review the Jeffrey Richardson package and come back to the next meeting to discuss this with the board. Debra DeWitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Tremblay asked Ms. Ware if she would check on the taxes to see if they are all up to date on this property. Ms. Ware stated she will look into that.

The committee decided to do a site visit on December 10, at 9:00 am at the 383 Richardson Rd address.

Recreation:

No update

Affordable Housing:

Debra DeWitt explained to the board, there is a meeting with Mass Housing on Thursday morning in the Town Manager's office to see how to move forward on this project. Mrs. DeWitt stated she will be out of town for the meeting but Ms. Ware will be there.

Historical:

No new Update

New Business:

Louise Tremblay would like to have a talk with the members to see if the meeting time should be moved from 7:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Ms. Tremblay would like to be placed on the next agenda.

Old Business

None

Next Meeting:

December 6, 2016

John Hassan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 pm, seconded by Louise Tremblay, the Motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE













