

**Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
January 20, 2015**

Present:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap, Mark Pease, Harvey Gagnon, John Hassan, Linda Kawa, Debra DeWitt, George Malonis, Glen Edwards, Assistant Town Manager, and Recording Secretary, Marylee Enos. The meeting was held at the Town Hall, 62 Arlington St, Dracut, MA.

Absent: Louise Tremblay and Ken Lania

Chairperson Helen Dunlap called the meeting to order 7:00 p.m.

Minutes:

John Hassan made a motion to approve the January 6, 2015 minutes, Debra DeWitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

2015 Needs and Possibilities Plan:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap read out loud the section of the CPA Law that describes the Needs and Possibilities Plan and the requirement for input from town boards and added at the request of some residents the CPC was also asking for input from the community. She also read the Needs and Possibilities letter that was on the website and posted at Town Hall before this meeting asking for community input. Helen asked anyone in attendance if they wanted to speak on this. Helen also told anyone who is pursuing any projects, the committee expects some participation in the process, not just dropping it off to the committee.

Karen Merrill wanted to speak and ask the committee if they would be interested in working with the Open Space Committee on future Landowners Forums to educate the public on preserving their land.

Helen stated that the CPC has had some open forums, the last one in 2011 and the problem they had was it was hard getting the landowners to come in. The board agreed that they would be happy to attend and assist in any workshops. Helen explained to Karen if she wanted to get something started, to go ahead and keep Helen in touch.

Mr. Michael Sancartier came to speak at the Needs and Possibilities meeting representing the Dracut Soccer. Mr. Sancartier explained that he has talked to Assistant Town Manager, Glen Edwards and the Public Works director, Mike Buxton about the need of drainage work at Veterans Park. Helen explained that the committee has only funded the study so far, and she understands that nothing can be done until the certificate of compliance and the as built plan happens. Mr. Sancartier stated someone who is on those fields every week, if there is a wet spring, we can lose 3 weeks.

John Hassan stated that there is a Conservation Committee meeting tomorrow night and the Certificate of Compliance is on the agenda.

them of an asset, we are trying to preserve farmland and you can't have both recreational and farmland they just don't mix that well. We want the voters to know we are doing it right by limiting access to it and that's the proper way to preserve farmland.

Helen told the committee that Warren Shaw was going to invite Chris Chisholm to Town Meeting in case he had to talk on the subject. Mr. Malonis stated he thought it was a great idea.

Gene Fox asked if the committee if anything could be done to educate the public on the difference with farmland and recreational land. Helen stated she thought that was an excellent idea. Mark Pease stated that there will be a public hearing on this and that will be televised on Dracut Access TV.

Gene thought it really has to be heavily advertised in favor of this being open space and farmland. Helen stated maybe we could put things on the website and in the newspaper. Wayne Fox stated some of the major concerns from the last Town Meeting, was that the public thought they were only buying a piece of paper.

George Malonis stated that maybe the Foxes could have the public walk the property to really see how it is. Wayne stated he would be glad to, he just want to check with his insurance agency just to see if there would be any liability issues.

Karen Merrill stated that the Open Space Committee has a pamphlet that is on the Towns Website that shows various trails that people can hike, so if you need that to bolster you don't have to walk on this property we have all these other trails.

Also as far as educating, you should also include how the development rights work; how it reduces the value of the parcel. Karen heard a lot of misunderstanding that at the last Town Meeting.

Gail Fox asked if they will know if they will have the Selectmen approval on this before the Town Meeting. Mark Pease stated that the Board of Selectmen will take up all the articles at one of their meetings before Town Meeting.

Mr. Don Plummer wanted to speak on the Fox Property to state in his opinion, if the town is spending all this money and the public does not even to get to look at it, along with the other three circumstances that came up from the last Town Meeting when it was voted down, recreational use, public access and the Appraisal, it's going to be a hard sell.

Helen stated that's a very good point. Helen stated let's just get the farmers conservation first and she'll bring it back to discuss it with the board.

316 Richardson Rd: Ben Garrison

No further update

Wheeler St: Arlene Murphy:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap stated that she has no information on this property, but she has sent a formal email to Craig Celli and has not heard back from him yet.

761 Mammoth Rd: Peter Richardson:

Assistant Town Manager Glen Edwards stated he wanted to thank Harvey Gagnon who followed through and arranged a meeting between himself and Peter Richardson on this piece of land that is a beautiful piece farmland with the house that is to be believed as the second oldest house in Dracut.

Mr. Richardson is interested in selling the property. Mr. Edwards stated that he gave Mr. Richardson an application to fill out if he chooses to. Glen explained to Mr. Richardson before the committee can get an appraisal they need the application filled out first, Glen stated that Mr. Richardson wants to get the most money for the property, he is interested but has also has talked to developers. He is not necessarily a preservationist

Mr. Edwards stated that the argument he gave him was if he goes with the CPC and this does come up at the June Town Meeting, he could have his money as early as July. Mr. Edwards explained to Mr. Richardson when you are dealing with developers, they are dealing with not giving him money until they get their permits, or until they get this part built etc.; another worry was the housing market turns south.

Mr. Edwards stated that there is the danger that we do the appraisal and he keeps his options open and a developer offers him more money than we are offering, he could possible go that way. Mr. Edwards explained that this is more of an interest of getting the most money not a genuine interest of preserving. Mr. Edwards did state that he thinks the speed of this, is a factor also and thinks that is an advantage to us.

John Hassan asked if this is 61A land, Mr. Edwards stated no it is not.

Mr. Edwards asked the committee if they want to get an appraisal if we get the application. John Hassan stated the committee should, and then they could get the two appraisals together.

Mr. Edwards stated that Mr. Richardson is interested in selling the property outright, it would not be just a conservation restriction, and the Town would be the owner. Helen asked if he would be keeping the house. Mr. Edwards stated that no it's the entire property and he added it's zoned as a R3.

Helen stated that the CPC will table this until the next meeting to see if they get the application.

520 Colburn Rd:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap stated she has talked to Angela McCarthy and she is very anxious with the interest from the committee. Helen told the board with their permission she will send her an application. The committee agreed to that.

Recreation:

No Update

Affordable Housing Presentation

Debra DeWitt stated that the feasibility study should be done by April 15th. Then it will be presented to the Dracut Housing Committee to address which one would be the best way to go out of the two projects.

Mark Pease asked if this is something that is going to be presented at the June Town Meeting. Mr. Edwards stated yes, that's what they are hoping.

Historical:

Harvey Gagnon stated to the committee that the Historical Committee probably won't need any CPC funding for the Clement Marker. He will update the committee at the next meeting.

Membership/ Renewals:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap went over with the board their terms and letters of reappointment that they have to put in.

New Business:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap stated that she will have a draft at the next meeting for the Annual Report.

Helen mentioned that Mark Pease was on the radio WCAP, Warren Shaw's show, talking about the Community Preservation Committee and how it operates with details about the Fox property.

Old Business:

John Hassan brought a sign to the meeting to show the committee what was purchased through CPA funds to have signage on projects that were preserved by the committee.

Next Meeting:

February 3, 2015

Linda Kawa made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Debra DeWitt, seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Helen Dunlap
Debra DeWitt
Harvey J. Gagnon

Mark H. Pease
John Hassan
Linda Kawa