

**Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
March 3, 2015**

Present:

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

Absent: John Hassan, Linda Kawa and George Malonis

Also in attendance were, Town Manager James Duggan, Selectwoman Cathy Richardson, Selectwoman Alyson Hughes and Selectmen Tony Archinski and Mary Karabatsos Director of the Housing Authority.

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

Chairperson Helen Dunlap welcomed Mr. Don Plummer as a new CPC board member.

Minutes:

Louise Tremblay made a motion to approve the February 3, 2015 minutes, Harvey Gagnon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

CPA Coalition Bill:

Louise Tremblay made a motion to pay the bill in the amount of \$3,500.00 for the 2015 Community Preservation Coalition dues Debra DeWitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Open Space:

52 A Avis Ave:

761 Mammoth Rd:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap stated that there has been some new developments with the Fox Property. Debra DeWitt made a suggestion to Helen and the board to see if they wanted to set aside a period of time for this property and the 761 Mammoth Rd property at the next meeting so the full board could be there and the meeting would mostly be about the two property's that will probably be Town Meeting Articles for June. Helen and the committee agreed.

520 Coburn:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap stated that she has sent a simple email to Angela McCarthy, letting her know the committee has this property on the 5 year capital plan with the town.

Affordable Housing: Greenmont/Spring Park Feasibility study:

Town Manager, Jim Duggan came to speak to the board, Mr. Duggan wanted to address a housekeeping issue. When he and Mary Karabatsos first came to the board to request the

One-Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the feasibility, which would look at both parcels, the CPC graciously and generously granted the funds.

Mr. Duggan also stated as part of his presentation, he was also on a parallel track of soliciting grant money from the state. Mr. Duggan explained the Town was fortunate to receive \$25,000 (Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) of that. Mr. Duggan stated in his original presentation in the event the Town did get some of the grant money he would reduce that off the \$100,000 (One-Hundred Thousand) appropriation or return that grant money back to the CPC.

Mr. Duggan is now respectfully requesting to keep the \$100,000 (One-Hundred Thousand Dollars) and the \$25,000 (Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars) from the state. Mr. Duggan wants to make sure all the necessary submissions and requirements are met at though the state level, through a local lender and that all the necessary paperwork is done properly and efficiently through a third party. In doing that, Mr. Duggan stated this is why he would like to keep the resources.

The Town Manager stated to the board, in the manner of transparency, when the team met, clearly they wanted to make sure everything was above board, and everyone knew there was never any perception, or beliefs, or anything like that. Mr. Duggan explained this is why we are here, in respect of the CPC Chair and to the board.

He just wanted to make sure the communication stays consistent.

Helen thanked Jim for the clarification.

The Town Manager asked Mary Karabatsos to come up and speak more about the feasibility studies progress.

Mary Karabatsos wanted the board to know that one of the issues the Housing Authority has come across is that, they can't use any of the funds they have towards any new projects.

Mary explained that based on not being able to use any of the funds they have, we need to look elsewhere for funds on anything they want to do either on Richardson or Spring Park. Mary explained in order for the housing to build 13 units on either site, they first need to take their existing section eight certificates and convert them to a project based certificate. Mary explained this is a long process to get done; they would have to have approval from HUD, go through an application process, and advertise.

Mary explained that this is something they need a consultant to do; they will need money to hire a consultant. Mary also explained that they will need some commercial lending. That is something the consultant could also take care of.

Helen asked if money for a consultant is allowable through CPC funding. Assistant Town Manager, Glen Edwards, explained that through the wording of the article it is. The Town only received one of the path grants not the two that were applied for. Glen stated that this is the seed money that the Housing needs.

Louise Tremblay stated she remembers at the original meeting on the feasibility study, that it wasn't promised back to us (the CPC) if it was needed to work on the project.

Debra Dewitt agreed with Louise and stated this is really part of the feasibility study to bring it back to complete fruition. Debra explained if you get the study almost done you can't complete it unless you go this extra step. Louise explained if they don't get the project done they will be coming back and needing help. Louise explained the money is part of the housing, so let's do something for the housing. Assistant Town Manager, Glen Edwards explained it should be covered but you can always check with the Town Accountant to make sure.

Mr. Duggan explained as far as the feasibility study goes right now, the architect did come in and unfortunately because of the weather we are having, he was not able to get complete access to the Greenmont property in order to do the surveying, the soil samples, the borings, things of that nature. The Town Manager stated this is probably going to delay the project about thirty days.

What they did come back with, after getting access to the Spring Park Ave building, was they looked at the whole site in general. They explained that they could fit 13 units but would have to knock down the building and put the new building in the corner.

Mr. Duggan pointed out the drawing from KBA Architects that everyone had in front of them to show this.

The building would be much larger and taller; it's about another story to the height of the existing building now. It's able to fit the parking spaces.

Some of the drawbacks are there is no green space for the seniors to come out and enjoy the fresh air. The other issue is the zoning; it would have to go through the 40B process in order to do that. The complete budget for this for all 13 units would be Six to Seven Million Dollars. The Town Manager explained that does not include any of the potential site prep.

The other drawing shows keeping the existing building, which the architect stated has strong bones as the study shows, and putting a large elevator in the back of the building to make sure it would fit a stretcher.

This plan would fit seven units and would still have some green space there, as well as parking. It would also have to go back to the zoning; it's also a zoning challenge, a 40B. The preliminary cost of this is approximately Three and a half to Four Million dollars.

Mr. Duggan stated once again they have not had any examination on site of Greenmont. This is what they were able to do to start the process and just get in the building on Spring Park Ave.

Helen stated we did have some preliminary work done on the Greenmont Ave building and wanted to see if any of that work could be used. Mary Karabatsos explained it has been over 4 years now; they need new work done with the engineer and architect. They couldn't use the work that was done before. Assistant Town Manager explained it would have to be one concept plan.

Debra DeWitt stated when she put this composite together on the Greenmont Ave Property, they said they did it with materials they had based on the fact they could not get out with the six feet on snow out there.

Debra's understanding was they used what was available to them; they did say it does show some wetlands. Debra stated right now it's just a paper plan until the civil engineers can get out there.

Shelly Goering asked Mary; why you need section Eight to be project based, why can't you just put deed restrictions on the units. Mary stated we are trying to get people off our list. They only make so much money so they only pay 30 percent of their income, that's why we need the project based in order to fill in the difference. Mary said we are looking for a low income rate not an affordable rate.

Chairperson Helen Dunlap explained if the cost for 13 units is 6 to 7 Million, she's terrified what the estimate might be for 60 units at Greenmont. Shelly stated it would still be expensive because it's a big project but the cost per unit will probably go down with more units going in there.

Chairperson Helen Dunlap asked the Town Manager if he is optimistic that this will be in time for the June Town Meeting, Mr. Duggan stated he is optimistic that it will. He is talking with the architects multiple times a week to encourage them.

Chairperson Helen Dunlap asked the Town Manager if he is still going to be asking for the Three Million (\$3,000,000) from CPA and not anymore, and asked him to seek alternate funding. Mr. Duggan stated he is going to see what conventional funding is out there to get. He will make sure there will be subsidies where ever he can get them. Mr. Duggan explained he does not want to set false expectations but it could be a higher number. He will absolutely try to maintain that number, but does not want to close that door.

Affordable Housing Presentation

Shelly Goering who is the program Manager for Community Preservation from the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Association, (MAHA) came to the meeting to give a presentation about Community Housing and how it can work with CPA.

Shelly handed out a printout of PowerPoint slides to the committee for them to follow through the presentation with her. She basically went over CPA and Community Housing, and the tools that are mostly used through the MAHA.

Some of the main points of her presentation were:

- PROGRAMS
- INITIATIVES
- PLANS
- RENTAL ASSISTANCE
- HOUSING COORDINATORS
- ADVOCACY
- STAFFING
- MONITORING

- PARTNERING WITH HOUSING AUTHORITIES
- PLANNING
- TRUSTS
- GUIDELINES

Chairperson Helen Dunlap thanked Shelly for coming to the meeting and told her it was very informative. Helen told her we will be in touch. Shelly stated if anyone had more questions later they could email or call her.

RECREATION:

No new update

HISTORICAL:

No new update

CPA SET ASIDE FOR 61 A PROPERTY

DISCUSS POSSIBLE INCREASE FROM 1 MILLION TO 1.5 MILLION:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap explained to the committee that John Hassan, who was absent tonight, was going to make the motion to increase the funding for 61A that the CPC does every year at the June Town Meeting, from 1 Million (\$1,000,000) to 1 and a Half Million (\$1,500,000).

Mark Pease asked where is this money coming from, Helen explained it's from our existing funds Helen explained that just in case a 61A property comes up with a bona fide offer from a developer, we have 120 days to counter it because we have the right of first refusal. With the increase in property values going up, John Hassan and the Capital Planning thought it would be a good idea to raise the amount. Louise Tremblay explained to Helen that the budget book is already set for this year. Helen thought Ann Vandal expected the CPC to vote on this tonight. Mr. Edwards also thought the increase wouldn't be for this year, he also thought the budget book has been set. Mr. Edwards stated to Helen to check with the Finance Director, Ann Vandal.

Harvey Gagnon made a motion to increase the amount the CPC sets aside for the 61 A funding from 1 Million (\$1,000,000) to 1 and a Half Million (\$1,500,000), pending on the finance director's approval.

Don Plummer stated we should keep this noted in the minutes, to remind the committee next year when we need to vote on an increase if needed when this annually gets done. We should get this in by December next year before the budget books comes out in March.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairperson Helen Dunlap explained to the board she and the CPC were invited to the Selectmen's Meeting on March 10, 2015 to give a description on the policies, procedures and guidelines

Helen invited any of the board members to feel free to come with her.

Assistant Town Manager Glen Edwards stated he received an email from Ann Vandal, the Finance Director explaining that, the property at 114 Broadway Road is about to go into foreclosure, the property is located adjacent to Veterans Park, which the Town already owns.

Glen stated it is a 2.13 acre property, with 92,000 sq. ft. Glen explained there is a family dispute over the property right now, with no one paying the taxes.

Mrs. Vandal asked Glen to check to see if the CPC would be interested in the property.

Chairperson Helen Dunlap asked the committee what they thought; Debra DeWitt explained it was worth looking into. Helen explained we don't have to appraise it; we don't have to come up with any money we just have to express interest.

Louise Tremblay made a motion to do further research on the property, Harvey Gagnon seconded the motion.

Don Plummer asked if it was big enough for a Soccer Field. Assistant Town Manager, Glen Edwards stated yes, probably.

Don Plummer asked Glen Edwards, the Assistant Town Manger when the Dracut Open Space and Recreation Plan update was. Glen stated it was done in 2009 and approved. It's good through sometime in 2016 and it will have to be funded.

Chairperson Helen Dunlap passed out a memo from the Town Clerk, Kathleen Graham which states that all board members need to take the Conflict of Interest Law online training program by April 5, 2015.

OLD BUSINESS:

No Update

Next Meeting:

MARCH 19, 2015

Mark Pease made a motion to adjourn at 8:53 p.m. Debra DeWitt, seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Helen Dunlop
Och Oed Oer
Louise Trimblay

Michael H. Pean