



## **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

**Thursday October 13, 2016**

Chairman William D. Raus called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Vice Chair, Betty Slade, and members Tim Gillespie, Janet Jones. Hugh Morton, Elizabeth Collins Jim Coyne Anne Brum present and Richard Lambert were absent.

**Town Hall Annex project update.** Jim Coyne reporting.

Mr. Coyne informed the committee that he will be sending a letter to the Sheriff's office to request the inmates return to finish the stairwells in the Annex. These stairs will require staging. The members discussed the alternative of hiring an independent contractor. Members suggested soliciting three estimates for staging.

Mr. Gillespie motioned to solicit 3 bids. Seconded by Mr. Coyne. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Minutes.**

September 9, 2016. Mr. Gillespie motioned to accept as written. Seconded by Ms. Slade. The vote was seven in favor with Mr. Morton and Ms. Collins abstaining because they were absent at that meeting.

#### **Public Hearing to gather input of the needs, possibilities and resources of the town regarding community preservation funding.**

A. Jane Loos as a member of the WHC stated that she is working on finding ways to increase understanding and recognition of Paul Cuffe who was a mixed African American/Native American who was a significant contributor to this area. She mentioned that his father was a freed slave from Ghana who bought a farm in Westport. Historical research and work has been done to look into a heritage trail throughout the area. Mr. Morton asked if she had contacted the NB Whaling Museum. She stated that she is working with the New Bedford Historical Society and they work closely with the Whaling Museum. Ms. Slade stated that this is a result of research on what properties were owned by the Cuffe and Wainer families. She noted that they will be receiving funds for the seminar portion. The funds that will be solicited from CPA would be for signage within Westport only with the other communities pitching in for their areas.

B. Tony Connors, president of the Westport Historical Society was present. He discussed the Bell School at the Head of Westport. There are three items they are looking at for the preservation of the school which is their headquarters. The one story lean-to that contains the stage has been leaking and needs restoration. The sills are not wide enough and the building has been bowing out and there is a substantive structural engineering work involved for which there is

some CPA money is already pledged. The bell tower is also in need of being preserved. Secondly there are many audio interviews from the 1970's of mostly people that are no longer with us as well as videos. They would like to preserve these by digitizing these and make them available to the public. Some of these exist at the WHS and some are also at the Library, and these are not for private use or gain. He is looking for the Committee's opinion in having these digitized. Lastly, the Handy House property has 23 acres of land they would like to include informative and interpretive and nature oriented trails there to fit the historical and open space aspects of CPA. Ms. Slade stated that the Bell School is a significant building and merits the assistance of CPA funding. Mr. Millham explained that they have been out to bid on the sills the last few years and they only received one bid for more than what was originally funded. They now have new plans to identify what is needed. He strongly recommended CPA allow the WHS to file a separate proposal for the sills. Discussion ensued. Ms. Slade suggested that there is funding now in place for historic document preservation that can be used for the digitization now.

- C. Ms. Slade has someone interested in taking over the cemetery project. Corey Howland in researching his family found that some graves were vandalized. The police were notified and have taken action. Ms. Slade suggested the implementation of more signage that states that vandalism is unlawful. Mr. Gillespie discussed the pickets for the Linden Grove and Maple Grove cemeteries and he felt that the pickets should be larger than originally thought. He asked the committee if they would be agreeable to have him and Nat Allen visit the picket supplier. Mr. Raus suggested that this be placed on the next agenda to discuss. The issues that need to be looked into are where to store, who will paint and who will install. Mr. Morton noted the Middle School is empty and perhaps pickets could be stored there.

Ms. Loos reminded the Committee that the Board of Selectmen has assumed the responsibility over the cemeteries. She suggested the BOS name a Cemetery Commission to oversee such things. Mr. Raus agreed that is a good idea and that she should bring it up to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Raus asked the public audience if there was any more comment. Seeing none, the next item on the regular posted agenda was taken up.

### **Acoaxet Chapel.**

Application for Historic Preservation funding - Stanley Cornwall made the presentation to the committee of the proposed Historic Preservation work for a total of \$23,100.00. The work involves addressing the emergency exit door; emergency exit stairs, the walkway to the level ground at base of stairs; steeple restoration and paint. The labor will be provided free of charge by the Sheriff's office. Ms. Slade asked that he provide three quality photos for the historic inventory. Ms. Slade brought up the court case that

found that CPA funding can be used for churches because they perform a public purpose.

**Westport Land Conservation Trust Application for CPC funding for a conservation restriction on 15 acres on Horseneck Road.**

Steve Sloan discussed the project total request for \$140K for an Agricultural Preservation Restriction. The project has a total of 15.4 acres of farmland and will be adjacent to other APR farmland. The appraisal has come in for \$625K. The State will contribute \$285K and the Land trust will contribute \$205K. They anticipate closing some time next summer where CPA funding is hoped to co-incident. The land is already under Ch61A. A conservation restriction would devalue the land approximately by 85%. The agricultural restriction is perpetual. The form of agriculture is fairly flexible - this property can support animals or tillage. The state has the ability to place a tenant should the property fall into abandonment.

Mr. Sloan has been working for the TTOR since 2002 and as a consultant for WLCT since April. He worked in DNRT back in 1993 and has other experience of this area. Ms. Slade asked if a house could be placed on it. Mr. Sloan said that once the APR is placed on it, no house can be built. The highest a best use has shown under the appraisal is that 9 house lots are possible.

Mr. Raus asked for a copy of the appraisal. Ms. Slade wanted to ascertain for sure if CPC is required to procure its own appraisal. Ms. Slade suggested asking DOR. Keystone consulting Group was the appraiser for WLCT.

Mr. Gillespie motioned for Ms. Slade to consult with DOR for the necessity of having an appraisal and if so to go forward. Ms. Collins seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Mr. Sloan mentioned the WLCT will be filing for a federal NAWCA grant in support of acquiring a separate parcel. He asked for CPC support and for the CPC to send a letter to the BOS recommending their support.

Mr. Gillespie motioned to encourage the BOS to sign this document in support of this sanctuary. Seconded by Ms. Jones. The vote was unanimous with all in favor.

**WUYS update on RFP.**

Fernando Larginha was not present. They are waiting for an engineering drawing.; tabled to the next meeting.

**Powder House Update.**

Restoration work will begin October 12 and complete by November 7 depending on weather. In an e-mail from Nathaniel Allen, he noted to the members that he would be starting the project October 12, weather permitting and expected to be finished around November 7, 2016.

**Resolution of Town Hall Roof leak.**

Tim Gillespie reported the sequence of events. He would contact Ward Hamilton to ask that he move on contacting Michael Frank at John F. Shea to make the repairs.

**Correspondence.**

Letter from the Westport Citizen's Betterment Fund requesting grant application proposals.

**Any other business that may come before the Committee:**

The Assistant Town Planner, Lucy Tabit noted that the Town Hall Annex roof shingles are in need of attention. Mr. Gillespie noted that he would like to have a central repository of application files for members to access on the website. Some thought would be given to this.

Ms. Slade stated that the contract with SITEC was signed.

Brian Valcourt has resigned as consultant.

**Invoices.**

Gatehouse Media Ad for WYAA RFP \$248.00

Acoaxet Chapel Myron F. Simmons for \$3,509.38 (this is the final balance of the project)

**Next meeting.**

November 10, 2016

**Adjournment.**

Members unanimously adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lucy Tabit, Recording Clerk