

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY
DECEMBER 15, 2022
(Conducted via Google Meet)**

Members Present: Betty Slade, Chair
Timothy Gillespie
John Bell
Hugh Morton
Dale Weber
Philip Weinberg (entered at 7:04 p.m.)
Garrett Stuck

Absent Member: Elizabeth Collins and Mark Schmid

The Regular Meeting was called to order by Chair Betty Slade at 6:32 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements by Chair were as follows:

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), the meeting is being recorded.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Westport Community Preservation Committee is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the remote links listed on the posting online. An audio recording of this meeting will be posted on the Town's web site.

1. Approval of Minutes of November 10, 2022 Meeting

Minutes of November 10, 2022 - Mr. Morton made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2022 meeting. Mr. Bell seconded the motion. Mr. Bell noted that at the November 10,

2022 meeting, the Pledge of Allegiance was not recited. This notation will be removed from the minutes. The amended motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Hugh Morton, John Bell and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote. Mr. Stuck abstained from voting as he was not present at the meeting on November 10, 2022.

2. Town Hall Restoration

Town Administrator Jim Hartnett addressed the Committee. He said the amount being requested is \$265,000 (\$115,000 for exterior restoration (painting and trim) and \$150,000 for electrical upgrades). He said that the Town is receiving a \$500,000 grant from Green Communities, allowing for installation of a new heating system and new air conditioning system at the Town Hall.

Chair Slade corrected the ledger that was shown to the Committee. Specifically, it should be \$20,000 from the energy revolving account; \$499,000 from the Green Communities Grant; and \$129,000 as the utility rebate and incentive, for a total of \$648,000 being derived from other sources. With the \$265,000 from CPA funds, there will be a total expenditure of \$913,000 for rehabilitation and upgrading the Town Hall.

Mr. Morton inquired as to whether relocation of Town offices to the former high school is still a viable solution. Mr. Hartnett said that, although that option is still being considered, any rehabilitation and upgrading made to the Town Hall will be a substantial improvement for potential sale of the building.

Chair Slade said that any grant agreement will include a stipulation that exterior upgrading and repairs will require prior approval from the Westport Historical Commission. Chair Slade also stated that she researched actions by other towns and found no permanent restrictions on file; however, a few towns did stipulate that, at the time of sale, the sale must include the stipulation that the Historical Commission must approve any exterior changes to the property as a condition of sale.

Mr. Stuck asked about whether electrical vehicle charging stations would be installed. Mr. Hartnett said that there are two (2) stations in the rear of the Town Hall and two (2) stations at the Town Hall Annex. He said additional stations would be considered as part of the project.

Motion was made by Mr. Morton to advance the request of \$265,000 for the Town Hall Restoration project for consideration at the January public hearing. Ms. Weber seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

3. Historic Sanford School Submission

Chair Slade stated that there were unresolved questions from the last meeting that need to be answered tonight.

Antone Vieira said that the issues revolved around the exterior of the building, type of shingles to be used, and the handicap ramp.

Mr. Vieira said he tried to schedule a meeting with members of the Historical Commission and others to discuss this issue, but was unable to do so.

Mr. Stuck said that he had been away for about a month, but he did not believe that the Historical Commission addressed this project in the prior meeting.

Mr. Gillespie noted that shingles with weathering stain sustain the New England look for longer than 25 years and are used for historical renovations. He also said that these may be more readily available at this time.

Mr. Stuck said that he does not believe that the Historical Commission generally mandates a particular type of shingle to be used.

Mr. Vieira said that labor and materials for the yellow cedar shingles would be \$70,818. However, if less expensive shingles are used, then the cost would be less.

Regarding the handicap ramp, Mr. Vieira said he submitted Mr. Gillespie's design for the handicap ramp to the Historical Commission and was advised that he should submit a final plan.

Mr. Gillespie said he could revise the drawings to for the railing to comply with code.

Mr. Vieira said he has an estimate from Paul Hebert for construction of the deck and landing to be \$44,620, using Mr. Gillespie's drawings.

Accordingly, the amount being requested is \$180,000, which will pay for the entire project.

Mr. Bell made a motion to advance the request of \$180,000 for the Sanford School project to the January public hearing with the provision that the plans for the handicap ramp be revised to include railings to comply with code, and a decision has been made regarding the type of shingles to be used. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weber. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

Tom Flynn and Ed O'Hara from the American Legion were also present at this meeting and thanked the Committee for considering the project.

4. Affordable Housing Trust Submission

Bob Barboza, the Interim Housing Specialist, addressed the Committee. He said that:

- The AHT is looking for \$60,000 in CPA funds to be allocated as follows: \$40,000 for the Housing Specialist; \$10,000 for the Clerk's salary; and \$10,000 for legal expenses, recording fees and supplies. The clerk will be given additional duties.
- To date, \$14,000 of the \$47,000 received from CPA funds last year have been used; and the land acquisition funds of \$200,000 remain earmarked for that purpose.
- These new funds will be used to fund the operation of the Housing Office for another year.
- The AHT has come before the Committee in the past for funds to acquire real estate for housing projects.
- The AHT solicited Requests for Proposals to hire a Housing Specialist following the expiration of the contract with Leonardi Aray. The only reply that the Trust received was from Mr. Aray's company and the AHT is currently

negotiating a contract with Leonardi Aray to be rehired as the Housing Specialist.

Mr. Morton noted that some of the funds from the prior year have not been expended.

Mr. Barboza said that with the absence of a Housing Specialist, there have been no acquisitions and not much change.

Chair Slade said that, most likely, the AHT will not be coming before the Committee in the coming year because it will have funds sufficient to cover any projects or expenses until the following fiscal year.

Mr. Gillespie made a motion to advance the request in the amount of \$60,000 by the Affordable Housing Trust to the January public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bell. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

6. WYAA Playing Fields Irrigation Project (taken out of order)

Chair Slade said that, although the Committee voted to advance the request of \$180,450 by the WYAA for irrigation, generators and wells to the January public hearing, she asked Ken Sullivan to address the Committee with any other details and quotes he may have received since the November meeting.

Mr. Sullivan said that he received a quote for three (3) well heads, although only two (2) may be required. He said that he is still working on bids for the in-ground irrigation. Mr. Sullivan also stated that the completion of this project should not take as long as the current project of dugouts and fences for the fields. He said that poles have been installed in two (2) fields, and there will be less engineering in irrigation and wells.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Morton made a motion to advance the request in the amount of \$180,450 by the Westport Youth Athletic Association to the January public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weber. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell, Philip Weinberg and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

5. Town Playground Project

Dana Stewart, the Recreation Director for the Town of Westport, addressed the Committee regarding the request by the Recreation Commission for \$350,000 of CPA funds. She stated that:

- These funds will be used to install new playground equipment at the Town Hall Annex and the Bicentennial Playground.
- The current playgrounds are about 25 years old, rusted, paint chipped and in dire need of repair or replacement.
- It is recommended that the Town Hall Annex playground be replaced. It is 28 years old with splitting or rotting wood, railroad ties sticking out of the ground, cracked plastic, and many other issues.
- Wood chips to be replaced with rubberized flooring. This will eliminate the need to replace the wood chips at various intervals. This will also allow for appropriate handicap accessibility.
- The removal of the equipment currently at the playgrounds and preparation for installation of new equipment will be an added expense, unless volunteers and/or the Highway Department can perform the work. Otherwise, that expense will be added to the total amount to be expended.
- There has been much research done to look at companies that can provide a variety of equipment.
- Various quotes were submitted with the lowest quote being \$221,000 and the highest quote being \$559,000.
- Residents are visiting playgrounds in neighboring towns because of the issues with the Westport playgrounds.
- Wasps are present in the sand area of the Annex playground in the summer, which causes issues because poisoning spray cannot be used.
- Dartmouth recently received CPA funds toward the total amount needed to replace its playground equipment in the amount of \$512,086.

- The total amount for both playgrounds could reach between \$700,000 and \$1,000,000.
- Some of the equipment would include swing, slide, climbing structure and spinning feature.

Mr. Morton asked about whether there is a manner in which spraying can be done prior to the summer months. Ms. Stewart said that she has been informed that spraying where the children play is not advisable. Water with a peppermint solution was sprayed, however, that was not effective. She is recommending that all sand be removed as a possible solution.

Mr. Gillespie stated that other businesses in town may donate funds as part of the Recreation Commission's fundraising efforts, once those businesses are aware that the Town has also provided funds. He also noted that the Westport Elementary School's new playground cost at least \$500,000.

Ms. Stewart said that she is waiting for information from Principal Duquette as to the cost of the playground at the school.

Mr. Gillespie stated that you can pick and choose the equipment you want at the playgrounds.

Ms. Stewart said that she has had discussions with other organizations and committees to determine whether funds can be obtained from these other sources.

Mr. Gillespie said that, if not enough funds are acquired through all sources, then the funds will be returned.

Mr. Stuck agrees that the playgrounds should be replaced and it is expensive. He also suggested that donors' names be displayed at the playgrounds.

Ms. Stewart discussed these playgrounds with State Representative Paul Schmid, who advised that, perhaps, he and Senator Michael Rodrigues could obtain funds from the State. She also said that she believes that Wal-Mart also provides grants for these types of projects.

Chair Slade inquired about the impact of the possibility of future sale of the Town Hall Annex.

Ms. Stewart said that the playgrounds may remain as Town-owned recreation areas. Otherwise, the playground equipment can be removed.

Mr. Gillespie suggested that the CPC advance the submission to the January public hearing. He said that, in the meantime, additional information regarding cost could be obtained to present at the January meeting. Chair Slade suggested that the Community Preservation Coalition website for recreation projects in Massachusetts be researched that could provide useful information as to what other towns in Massachusetts have done. Mr. Bell made a motion to advance the request in the amount of \$350,000 by the Westport Recreation Commission to the January public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weber. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell, Philip Weinberg and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

7. Buzzards Bay Coalition - Snell Creek Submission

Allen Decker of the Buzzards Bay Coalition addressed the Committee, stating that:

- Snell Creek is an open space project that will provide passive public recreational opportunities, along with natural resource protection.
- Snell Creek has native Sea Run Brook Trout, and has been designated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a cold water fishery resource and worthy of protection.
- The conservation restriction will contain 29 acres.
- The property was purchased for \$675,000, through the Town's right of first refusal, in that the prior owner's use of the property was in Chapter 61A.
- The property is located west of Main Road and also contains a house and two (2) acres that are in the process of being offered to the party that originally attempted to purchase the whole property and establish a horse farm. .
- With an overall project budget of \$700,000, the BBC is seeking \$100,000 from CPA funds, which will be supplemented

with private fundraising, grants and proceeds from the sale of the house.

- Angeline Brook also runs through the property and contains Sea Run Brook Trout as well.
- The BBC has worked with Westport in the past, in particular, with the Conservation Commission on other conservation restrictions.

Chair Slade said that, in her discussion with the Agricultural and Open Space Trust Fund Council chair she understands that they would not be interested in being party to this because of the tight situation of the town budget and so may not willing to provide \$50,000. Therefore, she suggests that CPC consider an amount of \$150,000 for the conservation restriction. The BBC will provide an official appraisal and the CPC will arrange for a review of that appraisal before any funds are extended for a CR. She also noted that the Planning Board recommends this project very strongly.

Mr. Morton inquired as to whether the conservation restriction should be held by a Land Trust instead of the Town. Ms. Slade noted that normally the Westport Conservation Commission holds such restrictions, sometimes with another entity.

Mr. Decker said that a trail network will be formalized, habitat restoration, and access by the public. There can be further discussion regarding the Land Trust being a viable option to hold the conservation restriction.

Mr. Weinberg, who is the representative of the Conservation Commission to the CPC, is familiar with how imperiled the cold water fisheries are in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Gillespie agrees that increasing the amount to \$150,000 is a good idea.

Mr. Morton also agreed.

Mr. Decker said the increase would eliminate having to approach the Agricultural Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Council for funds.

Mr. Decker said that he believes that the sale of the house and acreage is currently in negotiation and he is confident that the

sale will go forward. He anticipates retaining frontage sufficient to access the conservation restriction.

Mr. Bell made a motion to advance the request in the amount of \$150,000 by the Buzzards Bay Coalition to the January public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weber. The motion was passed unanimously with Tim Gillespie, Dale Weber, Garrett Stuck, Hugh Morton, John Bell, Philip Weinberg and Betty Slade voting aye in a roll call vote.

8. Decisions on Projects to be Considered at January 2023
Public Hearing for Recommendation to Town Meeting

None to discuss at this time.

9. Expense Accounts and FY24 Funds

Chair Slade said she received the information from the Town Accountant and there are enough funds for all the projects, with details to be provided at the January public hearing.

10. Discussion on Ways to Protect Historic Town Buildings With
CPA Grants

Chair Slade said that Town buildings do not have to have preservation restrictions on them in most cases when CPA funds are utilized for restoration. However, some towns do require a clause in a grant agreement that call for the Historical Commission to approve any changes to the exterior of such town buildings.

Mr. Bell suggested that language be inserted in the grant agreement to ensure that the Town is protected should Town buildings be sold in the future.

11. Correspondence

Chair Slade said the CPC received a letter from the Planning Board, supporting the Snell Creek project.

12. Bills

The two (2) bills that were to be addressed at this meeting will be postponed to the January public hearing.

13. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of Meeting

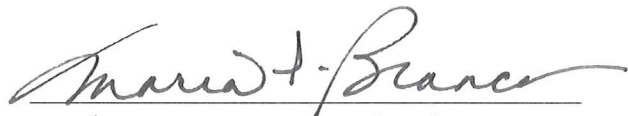
None.

Chair Slade said that the legal notice for the January public hearing will be published in the Shorelines.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Gillespie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Mr. Bell seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously with all members voting aye.

The next meeting -- the annual public hearing -- is currently scheduled for January 12, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. to be held via Google Meet, unless otherwise decided.

Respectfully submitted,



Maria I. Branco, Clerk
Community Preservation Committee

APPROVED:



Betty Slade, Chair

Attachments:

CPC Minutes of November 10, 2022

Submission Forms presented:

Town Hall Restoration

Sanford School Rehabilitation

Affordable Housing Trust

Town Playgrounds

WYAA Wells, Irrigation and Generators

Buzzards Bay Coalition - Snell Creek