

**MEETING MINUTES  
Town of Acton  
Community Preservation Committee  
January 13, 2011  
Acton Memorial Library**

**Attending:** Walter Foster, Andy Magee, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Janet Adachi, Tory Beyer, Corrina Roman-Kreuze, Roland Bourdon, Doré Hunter, Betsy Mercier

**Also present:** Roland Bartl Acton Planning Department, Steve Noone Finance Committee observer, Belle Choate, Anne Forbes, Ron Rosen

The meeting was called to order at 7:38PM. Walter let the committee know that Linda McElroy would be running a few minutes late.

Minutes from 12/16/10 were approved as amended – all ayes.

Walter announced that the next meeting would be on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Agenda items will include Acton Historical Society's presentation on the Hosmer House and Glenn Berger will provide an update on Exchange Hall. An update will be provided on projects with unexpended funds.

**CPC Presentations:**

1. **Appointment: Linda McElroy/Town of Acton Trail Through Time – Phase III 7:30 PM –**  
Amount requested: **\$66,900.00**

Linda McElroy presented the The Trail Through Time proposal to the committee. The Narrative of the grant has been updated to reflect changes to the original applications. For now, the plan for a pavilion has been put aside. A platform is proposed with railing and information panels. This cuts the original estimated cost by half. Many trees will need to come down – Tom Tidman's crew will remove. All landscaping elements have now been removed from the CPC proposal – this should address concerns raised by Town Counsel.

Susan M-H asked if the Wheeler Farm is on the Register of Historic Places. Linda answered that when the farm was restored, background research indicated that the farm and the mill were originally all part of the same parcel. She believes that since the Mill was on the Register that this should apply to the Farm as well.

Money from Phase II for information panels will be returned to CPC. Linda is not sure of the exact amount to be returned to the fund – it is estimated to be more than \$5000.00.

Doré asked for clarification around the TTT project overall. Linda explained that the TTT trail allows access to series of sites. Stone ruins have been found at this site from two different cultures (Colonial and Native American) over a period of time. The trail follows existing land steward trails – restoring the stone remains allows visitors access to this unique historical site.

Many committee members urged anyone who has not seen this site to do so.

Janet commented that she was glad that the originally proposed pavilion is not part of the project now and wondered if the demolition of the shack and removal of concrete could fall under historic restoration?

Ken thanked Linda for submitting changes from original application. Question: What triggers archaeological oversight? Answer: Any digging. Who oversees? Mass Historic, Acton Historic Commission.

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Andy commented on the removal of the shed – it may be harder to put a structure up much later on if people get used to the site without a structure. Due to the conditions of the shed, he agrees that removal is best. Andy asked about the Dam remediation project. Linda outlined the importance of maintaining the historic look/aspect. When the sluiceways are restored, it will be picturesque. She hopes the dam will have the correct waterfall flow when dam design is complete and hopes that consideration will be given to get correct water flow for the raceway so that someday an overshot wheel could be put in. Walter asked if there is sufficient contingencies built in to the proposal? Linda answered that she thinks she has the right amount.

### 2. **Appointment: Town of Acton Historic District Commission and Historical Commission – Asa Parlin House 8:00 PM** Amount Requested: **\$388,787.00**

Michaela Moran (HDC) and Kimberly Connor Hughes (HC) presented a proposal for the preservation, renovation and rehabilitation of the Asa Parlin House at 17 Woodbury Lane. The goal is to preserve the original part of the historic building. Additionally, this proposal provides the Town with meeting space by opening up the second floor and putting a small historically correct addition at the rear of the building – this would make the building accessible to all. As part of this project, the current historically incorrect additions would be removed. The proposal includes a creation of a garden terrace which adds more green space near the Town center – a campus like concept.

Tory Beyer asked about Town Counsel's memo regarding demolition costs. Michaela referenced the Secretary of Interior Standards and believed that the standards addressed Town Counsel's concerns around demolition. The proposed demolition would restore the house to an appropriate historic structure.

Tory likes the idea of cohesive campus and the improvement of the streetscape.

Roland Bourdon asked if the building is structurally sound. The "newest" additions are believed to be the weakest links. All cost estimates presented in proposal are based on a structural engineer's evaluation.

Andy asked if there were a way to mask the parking closest to the house. Proposal shows plantings near parking.

The presenters were asked about the kitchen in the proposed addition. The kitchen will be very basic – sink, and electrical outlets. It will not be a caterer's kitchen.

Walter pointed out that CPC needs to be able to defend this project at Town Meeting. Discussion of the side yard – Kimberly C-H pointed out that historically, the side yard was really an extension of the house and was an important use to the original house.

Doré is delighted with the proposal.

Janet was pleased with the proposal – especially when one looks back at previous proposals for this restoration.

Ken stated that the proposed project is giving him pause and he has concerns about the historic preservation eligibility as addressed in Town Counsel's memo. If CPC funds can only be used for part of the proposal, is the Town committed to the rest of the project? Ken would like more information on the budget.

Steve Noone commented that this is the best take on this project to date. Advice – This proposal needs to be sold on merits and not on a 300K conference room.

Ron Rose commented that this would be a unique meeting space with indoor and outdoor features – citing an example of the Boy Scouts possibly using it. In this regard, it is unlike the Faulkner Room and the meeting room in the Library.

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Anne Forbes thinks this is a fabulous project and that an amazing effort has been put into this proposal.

Belle Choate pointed out that the Acton Agricultural Holding Company once held the property – the land around the house was most likely part of the Fair Grounds.

Roland Bartl asked if the beams were solid? Yes they are.

### 3. **Appointment: Acton Community Center, Inc. (dba Theatre III) 8:30PM** Amount Requested: **\$229,500.00**

Pamela Furnace presented this proposal to the committee. Attending with her were: A representative from Gorman Richardson Lewis Architects, Jamie Watt (Theater III) and Tom Wachtell (Theater III).

Pam thanked the CPC for funding the master plan for preservation of their historic building. Theater III is seeking funds from CPA for the restoration of the exterior shell of the building. The building needs to have restoration done within the next 10 years. The total cost of the restoration is 1.6 Million dollars – the master plan helped to break this work down into smaller parts. The proposal in front of CPC takes care of the exterior envelope. The proposal includes re-pointing of existing foundation, truss rehabilitation and roof repair. The trusses were not designed for current use – propose to “sister up” trusses to make them last another 50 years. The need for truss rehabilitation is noted as walls are “bowing out”. The roof needs repair – clapboards and trim missing. Two doors in front would be replaced as would rear side entrance door. These exterior items are what are visible and keep the building standing.

A question was asked about an appraisal of the building. The online assessment is approximately one million dollars. Roland Bartl pointed out that the assessment and an appraisal are not the same thing.

Ken asked about reference in the application to electric code. The power coming into the building is safe now – upgrading of power would be addressed at a later time.

The building is safe, it is inspected yearly.

Ken asked if public bidding laws would apply? Roland Bartl answered that no –as the building is privately owned.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 PM

### Documents Discussed and Attached

Meeting Agenda for January 13, 2011

Draft Meeting Minutes from December 16, 2010 CPC meeting

Memos from Town Counsel re: Project eligibility; dated December 15, 2010 and January 3, 2011

Updated Application for Continuation of the Wheeler Farm and Mill Complex (Trail Through Time)

**Next Meeting: January 20, 2011 7:30PM**

Respectfully Submitted: Corrina Roman-Kreuze, Clerk