

**Minutes**  
**Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee (CPC)**  
**February 22, 2018**  
**Acton Memorial Library**

Members Present: Bill Alesbury (Vice-Chair), Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Dean Charter, Walter Foster (Chair), Amy Green, Greg Johnson (Associate), Carolyn Kirkpatrick (Associate), Joe Will (Clerk), Ray Yacouby

Others Present: Roland Bartl (Acton Planning Director), Roland Bourdon (Acton Finance Committee), Cathy Fochtman (Acton Recreation Director), Susan Mitchell-Hardt (Acton Conservation Trust President), Tom Tidman (Acton Natural Resources Director)

Walter opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.

**I. Citizen Concerns**

- none

**II. Minutes of February 08, 2018**

Cathy asked that the February minutes mention the distribution of the NARA Master Plan to CPC members. Also, Tory pointed out that the \$ request for the North Acton School Project should be \$315K.

- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes as adjusted.

**III. Project Deliberations**

Deliberations focused on three projects

- Skatepark

Discussion centered on the reality of getting this project done. There apparently are no “institutional road blocks” to completing this project. The designer, Stantec, has the design done. The project is “shovel ready” to go in April and nothing should stop it this summer. Cathy concurs. The award letter could state that a schedule has to be kept so that the project is done on time.

- Kennedy Building

As had been suggested by the CPC, Tom recast the construction costs funding sources so that CPA \$ would be directed at work directly related to a CPA purpose — making the building ADA compliant. Tom walked the Committee through the cost spreadsheet and the accompanying written narrative. It was agreed that the revised \$ allocations addressed the issue that CPA \$ would not be spent on furnishings. Tom pointed out that widening of doorways and hallways and renovation of bathrooms is very much in keeping with CPA fundings in the past. The 51K requested is a “critical piece”. To say this project will get done without CPA funding is “a stretch.” The building itself is not a beautiful building. But it’s a very public building. Making it accessible is an important project. Also, it’s unheard of to have the Cemetery Commission step up to the funding level that it has on this.

Points made in the ensuring discussion:

- The Kennedy Building is in fact listed as an official historic spot. It's on Acton's Cultural Resource List and the Massachusetts Cultural Resource List, perhaps partially because it exists in a cemetery that is up for nomination to the National Register.
- Using CPA funds for this is still a real reach. It will create issues at Town Meeting (TM). The work is likely to happen anyway, so this is not make or break.
- CPA funding would be better for an 1860 building than a 1960 building, but nonetheless this is appropriate for CPA. Also, this would be supportive of Woodlawn itself.
- It's a big push that this building is an historic resource. It's a wonderful project, but it just doesn't seem to qualify as an historic project.
- The Town should have been stepping up to this work a long time ago, particularly the ADA part.
- Note the project is high on the Town's priority list.
- The CPC has a history of supporting all kinds of projects related to ADA compliance. But the purpose for which this project is being done is not the issue. The \$ bucket s/b the Town's bucket. Why hasn't the Board of Selectmen (BoS) funded this? The Town's cash on hand would permit Town to come up with the \$.
- For the Town, it's a choice of resources. For this building to be upgraded has been on the Town's list for many, many years. But, other things have been more important than this. (A discussion of the Town's budgeting process/thinking ensued.)
- This is a unique moment right now with the Cemetery Commission willing and able to support this project with trust funds.
- While it's awesome and it makes a lot of sense that the Cemetery Commission is stepping up to the plate with \$130K, the project is doable without CPA funding. The \$51K being requested from the CPA should be split between the Cemetery and the Town. Or, the Town should be providing the \$51K and the CPA should be providing \$19K (the amount currently attributed to the Town).
- The Town's bottom-line budget process (at fiscal-year's end) should allow the Town to come up with \$50K in May.
- It's the Town's problem. The BoS and Town Manager could easily come up with the necessary \$.
- Procedurally, the BoS will not amend the Town budget between now and TM.
- After checking out the building, the project's intention is good, but it's not clear that it would meet CPA purposes and intentions. The CPC would get pushback on this at Town Meeting.
- For the CPC to present this at TM, it would be good to have unanimous agreement. It's not true that everything presented in the past at TM has been by consensus. But the Committee vote has never been discussed at TM.
- The CPC shouldn't vote against something just because it could be difficult at TM.
- The CPA could provide some partial funding, say \$20K and specify that it must be used for (building) exterior purposes.
- No, the exterior part is all set.
- The CPA provided for rehabbing the inside of the Woman's Club (and lots of things outside).

- Every project is its own thing. The CPC has a fiduciary responsibility. The CPC shouldn't look to the past. This doesn't work at TM.
- The CPC shouldn't be tugging at heartstrings on something like this.
- The CPC members are trying to find common ground that would work for this project; that would make it a bit more attractive.
- The CPC shouldn't feel that it needs to spend \$ because it's a project standing in front of us.
- Looking at the whole thing, making the building better makes the cemetery more attractive and useful.
- Providing for the bathroom would be enough to hang a hat on.
- The Massachusetts Office of Disability has ADA-compliant funding available. The Cemetery Commission has not done anything with this.
- Would the CPC want to tell TM that it's funding only half of this and not the whole? That would be a problem at TM.
- Roland Bourdon, member of the Acton Finance Committee and guest at this meeting, responded to a query from the CPC as to how he thought the Fin Comm would view the funding of this project. Per Roland, the Kennedy Building project will be tough sell. The Fin Comm will want to know how the CPC feels about this. The Fin Comm may or may not approve it. Roland stated the he himself is “on the fence.” He has no problem funding ADA-compliance for the bathroom. He would have to give more time to thinking about the whole project.
- If the Fin Comm would feel that this project wouldn't qualify for CPA funding, the response is easy: It does qualify.
- It comes down to the subjective opinion of the CPC members.
- A smaller number makes this palatable. Going with an ADA-compliant bathroom takes away from funding for historic purposes. It's reasonable to see them going for an ADA-compliant bathroom. This could be embedded into the Cemetery as an historic site.
- As discussion came to an end, Committee members confirmed or adjusted their appropriation amounts, the majority choosing \$25K.
- Question for Tom: Do you think that this (not funding at \$51K) will jeopardize the project? Tom: I will have to go back to the BoS. To assume there is money to complete the job is dangerous.
- Open Space Set Aside
- There was minimal discussion as Committee members confirmed or adjusted their appropriation amounts.

#### **IV. Finalize Appropriations**

- The CPC allocated to RHSO housing services and the Hosmer House campus project, respectively, the housing and historical set-aside amounts that had been carried forward (including one small amount that is being recaptured this year), lessening the amount allocated from the 2018 funds, but still leaving both projects with full funding.
- Roland Bartl updated the spreadsheet to show allocations upon which the Committee could likely agree. It was moved to award all the amounts except that for

the Kennedy Building project (which the Committee agreed to vote on separately). The motion was seconded and voted unanimously. The only discussion point was clarification that the Library Trustees' \$3K donation for the Arthur Davis Etchings Restoration Project would be used only after the Project's CPA funds had been exhausted.

- It was moved, seconded, and voted 6 yes, 1 no, and 1 abstention, to fund the Kennedy Building project at \$25K.

For final appropriation amounts, see Roland Bartl's spreadsheet which he will update and make available expeditiously.

#### **V. Finalize Draft Warrant Articles**

- Walter led the Committee through the draft. Some changes suggested were duly noted by Roland Bartl. Other changes were deemed more appropriate for inclusion in the award letters. Roland will edit the warrant articles and add text for the projects finalized tonight. He will have the updated articles by the next (03/08) meeting at which the main topic for the Committee will be to finalize the articles.

#### **VI. Administrative Updates**

- Not an Administrative Update, but Senior Planner Kristen Guichard, who represents the Town Planning Department at CPC meetings on occasion, and her husband have a new baby girl, Grace Ann.

9:55 PM — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.