

TOWN OF ACTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC) VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

April 7, 2021

7:30 PM

MEETING HELD BY ZOOM TELECONFERENCE AND AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

Note: The Town of Acton in response to the COVID-19 (Corona Virus) is currently following the guidance from the Acton Board of Health, Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the CDC regarding the virus and steps communities can take to prevent the spread. The Town Hall is closed to the public.

Present: Mr. Ray Yacouby (Chair), Mr. Steve Trimble (Clerk), Mr. William Alesbury, Mr. Dean Charter, Mr. Walter Foster, Ms. Carolyn Kilpatrick, Ms. Nancy Kolb, Ms. Alissa Nicol (Associate), Ms. Victoria Beyer

Absent: Mr. Jim Colman

Others Present: Ms. Kristen Guichard, Mr. Joe Will, Ms. Clare Siska, Mr. David Martin, Mr. Andy Magee, Ms. Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ms. Janet Adachi, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Mr. Leo Fochtman, Mr. Joe Cooney, Mr. Matt Post, Mr. Tom Gillispie

Mr. Yacouby (Chair) opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. The Chair read the notice regarding virtual meetings and how the public could access and participate in the meeting. All votes will be by roll call.

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I. Regular Business

1. Citizens' Concerns (7:35 PM - 7:38 PM)

- a. Mr. Yacouby requested from Ms. Guichard if there were any attendees with citizens' concern. Ms. Guichard responded Ms. Siska would like to address the committee.
- b. Ms. Clare Siska wished to speak on behalf of the Dog Park. She is concerned with discussion to date. Mr. Yacouby suggested that she hold comments until the Dog Park item was raised.

2. Review Meeting Minutes (7:38 PM – 7:46 PM)

- a. Mr. Yacouby requested a motion to approve the March 23, 2021 CPC Minutes.
- b. Ms. Kolb moved to approve the minutes for March 23, 2021 seconded by Mr. Alesbury.
- c. Several updates were made as well as a recommendation to summarize in future meetings.
- d. Committee Disposition: "Ayes" Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacouby, Mr. Trimble.
- e. Motion approved unanimously to accept the March 23, 2021 Minutes as amended as final.

3. Administrative Updates & Scheduling (9:32 PM – 9:47 PM; agenda item handled out of stated sequence)

- a. Warrant articles will be drafted by 04/30 so we have some time to complete CPA deliberations. Warrant articles are due 05/28/2021. The committee plans to complete in next 2 meetings (see end of agenda for schedule).
- b. Mr. Yacouby asked what if we cannot get to consensus what is the outcome? We are close but unlikely to gain full agreement. Mr. Yacouby was about to request a motion to adjourn when a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Charter and seconded by Mr. Foster.

- c. Committee Disposition: “Ayes” Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacouby, Mr. Trimble.
- d. Motion to adjourn the April 07, 2021 meeting approved unanimously.

II. New/Special Business

1. **Stonefield Farm CPC Application Review and discussion (withdrawal from current balance) (7:52 PM – 8:08 PM)**

- a. Mr. Magee noted this is a request for authorization for Open Space spend and not an additional application for CPC consideration. There is a separate warrant for town meeting. This is a purchase for an agricultural protection for farming or open space (they are selling their building rights). Boston Area Gleaners holds the bill and sale. ~28 acres farmed and ~23 acres left in natural state. This is the largest proposal of this type under CPA funds to date.
- b. Appraisal on the property was done and it is ~\$2.7M. Reduced value to ~\$800k after the proposed APR/CR Restrictions. Leaves a diminution of \$1.9M which is being obtained for \$1.2M. After purchase Open Space would still retain ~\$712k in its account for future land purchases.
- c. Mr. Yacouby requested a motion to support the application for Open Fund withdrawal. Motion to support made by Mr. Foster seconded by Ms. Beyer.
- d. Committee Disposition: “Ayes” Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacouby, Mr. Trimble.
- e. The motion passed unanimously.
- f. Mr. Magee responded to Mr. Foster’s question on CPC disposition that the town meeting approval is part of overall purchase and sale.

2. **Review and Approve Recapture Memo (7:40 PM – 7:54 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacouby requested Ms. Guichard why this was in review again. The Planning Department noted an additional recapture of \$68.92
- b. Mr. Yacouby requested a motion to approve. Motion to approve the Recapture Memo made by Mr. Alesbury seconded by Ms. Nicol.
- c. Committee Disposition: “Ayes” Ms. Kilpatrick, Mr. Alesbury, Ms. Kolb, Mr. Charter, Ms. Nicol, Mr. Foster, Ms. Beyer, Mr. Yacouby, Mr. Trimble.
- d. Motion to approve the Recapture Memo with added \$68.92 approved unanimously.

3. **Review Committee Member’s Input to CPC Worksheet (7:54 PM – 8:07 PM)**

- a. Mr. Yacouby asked Kristen to display the revised Committee members revised funding.
- b. Consensus & Near-Consensus projects: Textiles & Clothing Collection, Regional Housing Services, CPA Program Support, Main Street Development, 53 River Street, Nara Sports Pavilion, Elm Street Tennis Courts and Preliminary Archeological and Historical Review allocated similarly by the committee.

4. **Project Discussion and Deliberations (8:07 PM – 9:32 PM)**

- a. **Community Housing:** Operates like the Open Space Fund where funds are collected for future anticipated opportunities. Housing is important. CPC settled at \$40k and this will move to the Consensus Projects noted in 3.b. above.
- b. **Open Space:** The Committee is split roughly between \$400k and \$500k. Several members seek to rebuild the balance given the planned expense for Stonefield Farm and perceived future opportunities.
- c. **53 River Street:** The Committee settled at \$100k. Some concern that a dam removal effort is under the Recreation Project Group. It was pointed out that the town has made considerable expenditures toward this endeavor.

- d. **Jones Playground:** The Committee is between \$114k and \$120k to finish this part of the Jones work. Mr. Alesbury commented as done in past meetings on the starkness of the current playground and desire to see an overall plan for recreation playgrounds. Several noted that there was a \$114k figure but others noted they did not want the project stalled over \$6k.
- e. **Gardner Playground:** The Committee is split on funding but as a group are fully in support of the project. Several expressed the opinion that based on the prior 2 CPC presentations and one made at the Select Board Meeting on April 5th that the dollar figures are aspirational and not ready for prime time. Those that allocated funds did so to show support. Some would prefer holding the money back for release when an appropriate amount of funding and/or better clarity of the work was determined. Mr. Alesbury wants Recreation to fully vet and come back for Gardner and Jones plans. He would like better vision and does not want to pit 2 parts of town against each other for park funding.
- f. **Dog Park:** The CPC Committee is split on supporting with some concern raised on abutting neighbors and some with parking and safety concerns. Others felt the project was fully vetted with significant leverage; the location is a good choice. They are fine with Acton Town Meeting weighing in on the disposition. Funding consideration is the focus of the group.

Ms. Siska was given the floor for 5 minutes. She acknowledged neighbor objections and the Dog Park Committee is not insensitive to abutters. They did look elsewhere as noted previously and spent significant time reviewing all options. They researched the parking concerns with parks of similar sizes and the proposal is in line with other towns. This location represents the best option and no safety concerns emitted from the Police Department. She recounted the 3+ years work encompassing BoS presentations 4 times, 2 surveys, many other forums. She noted that no site will be without detractors and this was as top 2 site by survey. The Select Board and Acton Board of Health approved its location. Community benefits were restated.

Mr. Foster asked Ms. Siska if she ran a dog walking business and suggested she employed someone on this committee. Ms. Siska acknowledged to Mr. Foster she owns a dog walking service but employs no one on the CPC Committee. In response to his question on whether the town might charge such private enterprises to use public facilities Ms. Siska responded that the dog park could reduce her business, but this topic has not been discussed. She also noted that day care companies take children to parks and the town does not charge them to use the parks.

Mr. Gillispie responded to Mr. Trimble that \$25k is the minimum funding required. \$25k from the town is for construction grant and this this money is for the design. He noted the foundation only awards 10 grants per year. If awarded to Acton, the \$25k would be returned to the CPC.

Next Scheduled Meeting(s):

1. APR 21 - Wednesday
2. APR 28 - Wednesday

Items used at the meeting:

1. Stonefield Farm Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)
2. 2021 Recapture Memo 03-31-21.pdf
3. CPC Agenda 2021-04-07.pdf
4. Draft CPC Minutes 03 23 21.pdf

Additional materials can be found here: <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-13482>

For more information about Community Preservation Committee contact
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