

Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
May 11, 2017
Acton Memorial Library

Members Present: Bill Alesbury (Vice-Chair), Tory Beyer, Walter Foster (Chair), Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Carolyn Kirkpatrick (Associate), Joe Will (Clerk), Ray Yacoub

Others Present: Roland Bourdon (Acton Finance Committee), Kristen Guichard (Acton Assistant Planner)

Walter opened the meeting at 7:31 PM, thanking Bill for running the 04/20 meeting.

I. Citizen Concerns

- None

II. Minutes of April 20, 2017

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

III. Finalize & Issue Historic Award Letters

Here is the paragraph of concern in the Award letters to the Acton Historical Society (for re-roofing the Jonathan & Simon Hosmer House) and Iron Work Farm (for the Jones Tavern Preservation Project):

“e) (3) Certification by the Acton Historic District Commission or its agent that the completed work meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 C.F.R. Part 68. This CPA Fund award may be used to pay for such certification if prepared by a qualified outside professional.”

At issue is the use of “Certification,” and the verification required of the completed work. Town staff will consult with the Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition on these. Checking with Littleton, the Littleton CPC does nothing with such a paragraph. Because of the nature of the two 2017 Acton projects, concerns about the above paragraph do not affect these two letters. In the future, however, applicants for projects (whether within or outside an Historic District) requiring certification that the work meets Federal standards should be alerted up front to the issue and should address the suggested monitoring in their proposals. The monitoring may require independent peer review and possibly intermediate (in-progress) photo review, and its nature, amount, and cost could vary from project to project.

It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to accept the (Acton Historical Society and Iron Work Farm) Award letters as drafted.

IIIb. Updates and Other Business

- Continuing the discussion from the previous (04/20) meeting on the Community Preservation Act (CPA) portion of Town Meeting (TM): Essentially there were several communication issues, both with the Warrant Article wording of the Acton

Housing Authority (AHA) project and with TM procedures re the CPC presentation of CPA projects in general and the AHA project in particular.

Re the wording: This is a classic case of jumping to a conclusion. Although the CPC had reviewed the wording, the AHA proposal did read as if it was for the River Street project. Also it was missing two or three lines of text. It is understandable that the principal objector to the article had no clue that it was not project specific. Also, it is possible that the CPC was “too close” to the project to detect the problem in its initial review of the wording.

Re the procedures: TM had asked that presenters streamline their presentations. The CPC response was to omit presentation of projects that were virtually identical to past, readily-approved projects. Doing such, however, assumes a lot about the TM audience. Also, each CPA project that elicits a “hold” at TM should, after non-held items are approved, be debated by TM before being voted on. This did not happen.

As for the future in general, the CPC should return to its prior procedure of going through all the projects for the TM audience. For the special TM in December (probably 12/04 or 12/05), the AHA could re-submit its proposal to the CPC if it finds itself with a \$ problem, and the CPC could act expeditiously on the proposal. For any subsequent similar proposal, the AHA should make it clear that the proposal is a non-site-specific general funding request. It should keep the proposal “generic” and not reference any project.

- Walter will send the CPC a couple dates on which he would host a “Thank You” get-together potluck.
- There is no new information on possible Boxborough funding to help with the T.J. O’Grady Skate Park. As for other pending Recreation projects, Kristen will check and send an update. There was also general discussion on rail trail projects.

IV. Finalize Meeting Schedule – Spring & Summer

- The next meeting will be July 13. The agenda will include election of officers, a review of the “Community Preservation Plan 2018”, setting things up for Fall, and any necessary catch-up tasks from 2017. Next scheduled meeting dates after July 13 are September 14 and 28.

8:06 PM — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.