

Town of Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
Minutes of July 9, 2019
Great Barrington Town Hall

Members present: Thomas Blauvelt, Lisa Bozzuto, Leigh Davis, Martha Fick, Jeremy Higa, Don Howe, Jim Mercer, and Karen W. Smith
Absent: Patricia Sharpe
Also present: Town Planner/CPA Administrator Chris Rembold

Call to Order 5:30 PM by Chair Blauvelt

Administrative Items

Smith moved to approve the minutes of June 11, 2019, Bozzuto seconded, all were in favor.

Rembold gave a review of all past and current CPA project status.

CPA Planning for the Coming Year:

The Committee reviewed the 2019 CPA Plan. Blauvelt had suggested to edit the decision making timeline, since we usually finish sooner.

Housing section:

Fick suggested we use CPA funds for a study to review who wants to buy versus rent and the need in each category. Blauvelt said we should encourage an application from somebody for this work.

Howe said we should have a list of how many types of units of different types there, including Section 8, etc. He said somebody has those statistics we don't know them.

Higa said the data we have is old and probably has changed. If that's the case we need to do a study, but we shouldn't stop funding housing.

All others agreed.

Rembold suggested the draft CPA Plan include language to encourage an affordable housing study application from a Town board or other entity.

Fick suggested that the Plan discuss a need for housing at scattered sites. Howe said these programs used to exist but they can be expensive. Mercer said there are parcels in Housatonic near the housing authority that could work for a workforce housing site. There are ways to have starter housing subsidized and then families can begin to move up the ladder, from a rental into a new home for example.

Higa said the Housing Trust is set up to respond to scattered site opportunities, but last year the CPC rejected an application for that. He said we as CPA gate keepers could empower scattered site housing to happen.

Howe said the Trust has not proven their wherewithal that they can accomplish the project. They should have a developer on board or supporting their application with a real plan, so we know they will have a successful project. Higa said we should give the Trust more leeway in terms of demonstrating results.

Open Space section:

Blauvelt asked if there are projects we want to prioritize.

There was a brief discussion of using CPA funds to support trail connections and bike path planning, the CHP trail and the Housatonic rail trail.

Historic section:

Howe briefly reviewed some of the historic projects pending and possible. Mercer asked about potential plans for a green space in front of town hall. Rembold thought that could be an Open Space project but it would not be a Historic project.

Reports from Committee Members

Smith said Parks and Rec. will probably have some CPA applications for the next round.

Davis said the Selectboard and Planning Board will be talking about affordable housing needs.

Bozzuto said the McAllister work is progressing and there may be another phase ready this year.

Upcoming Meetings:

August 6 at 5:30 for the CPA Plan Public Hearing

The Committee will finalize the CPA Plan and the CPA applications for the next round.

Citizen Speak None

Adjourned at 6:50 PM

Minutes prepared by:

