

Town of Great Barrington
Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
Minutes of November 10, 2020 special meeting

This meeting was held via audio/video teleconference as noted on the agenda for this meeting.

Call to Order 5:00 PM by Chair Blauvelt.

Chair Blauvelt called the roll. All members were present: Thomas Blauvelt, Leigh Davis, Martha Fick, Jeremy Higa, Don Howe, Jim Mercer, Patricia Sharpe, Karen W. Smith, and Kate Van Olst.

Also present: Christopher Rembold, Assistant Town Manager / Director of Planning and Community Development.

Minutes:

October 6, 2020 meeting. Smith moved to approve; Higa seconded. Roll call vote: Davis-aye, Fick-aye, Higa-aye, Howe-aye, Mercer-aye, Sharpe-aye, Smith-aye, Van Olst-aye, and Blauvelt-aye. Passed 9-0.

October 20, 2020 meeting. Smith moved to approve; Higa seconded. Roll call vote: Davis-aye, Fick-aye, Higa-aye, Howe-aye, Mercer-aye, Sharpe-aye, Smith-aye, Van Olst-aye, and Blauvelt-aye. Passed 9-0.

Review FY22 Step 2 Applications in the Historic category:

Town, for Ramsdell Library archeological study

Blauvelt recused himself from this discussion and Smith took the chair's role.

Library Director Amanda DeGiorgis gave a presentation. She said this archeological study is required in order to do anything on the site, whether a temporary handicapped ramp or a full scale renovation. She said there were two recent studies about the library. The 2018 work was a community study, survey, and meeting. And the second was in 2020 and funded by CPA. It was a building program study. Both have been published and are available for review.

Higa asked about restrictions. DeGiorgis said there is a restriction that says it must remain a library, or be offered back to the Ramsdell family.

Smith asked how many visits there were to Ramsdell. DeGiorgis said there were 7,009 visits in FY19.

Smith asked about community support for the library work, and asked that the Town voters know the full cost to see if they will renovate the building, instead of funding it piecemeal. There followed a discussion on this topic. DeGiorgis said ten years ago a full renovation was projected to be \$2.5 M. She said now it is closer to \$6 or \$7 M for the same plan. Rembold said this study is needed to move forward to develop any plans.

First Congregational Church restoration of masonry at the Manse

Pat Sharpe recused herself.

the drainage problem and help make the building functional, particularly now in times of COVID since these doors will be used for audience access. One of the two doors will be ADA accessible, also.

Howe asked if there would be a foundation under the alley slab so it is not subject to frost heaves again. And, he asked if there would be an awning over the doors. Wilson said we cannot put much of an awning. Large trucks use the alley and large projections wouldn't work. Howe reminded the applicant that the HDC will have to review the work and can review the details then.

Clinton Church Restoration, second phase

Eugenie Sills presented the CCR application. She said we believe this proposal fits almost every category in your application including the town master plan and the CPA Plan, not just for its architectural significance, but also for its cultural significance, and significance for the history of civil rights because of its connections to W.E.B. DuBois. She said they are seeking \$200,000 from CPA for this second phase of work which totals \$637,122. She described the work involved in this second phase.

Van Olst said there is a lot to be done, listed in the spreadsheet. She asked what the CPA will be used for. Sills said each grant has its own conditions. For example in the first phase some grants could not be flexible, but the CPA was flexible. She hopes that is the case this time.

Citizen's Speak: None

Next Meetings: November 17, 2020 to continue review of other Step 2 applications.

Blauvelt adjourned the meeting at 6:32 PM.

Minutes prepared by Christopher Rembold

