

**Town of Great Barrington  
Community Preservation Committee (CPC)**

Minutes of September 15, 2022

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

**Call to Order:** Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Present: Tom Blauvelt (Housing Authority), Leigh Davis (Selectboard), Martha Fick (Citizen rep), Jim Mercer (Historical Comm), Karen W. Smith (Parks Comm), Kate Van Olst (Conservation). Also, Phil Orenstein was present to represent the Finance Committee.

Also present: CPA Administrator / Assistant Town Manager Christopher Rembold.

**Minutes:** Blauvelt moved approval of the minutes from the July 21 meeting. Fick seconded. On a roll call vote all were in favor except Orenstein who abstained. (6-0-1).

Patricia Sharpe (Citizen rep) arrived at 5:32.

Blauvelt moved approval of the minutes from the August 23 meeting. Fick seconded. On a roll call vote all were in favor except Sharpe and Orenstein who both abstained. (6-0-2).

Jeremy Higa (Planning Board) arrived. All nine members now present.

**Extension of CPA grant to North Plain Farm LLC for 180-190 North Plain Road:**

Farm Manager / grantee Sean Stanton was present. He and Rembold said the state and federal funds that are also involved in this preservation project are slow because of paperwork. Stanton said they hope to close on the project this year, but he is asking for a 1-year CPA extension just in case. Smith said the wheels of government move slowly. Blauvelt moved to grant the 1-year extension. Higa seconded. On a roll call vote all were in favor (9-0).

**Public Hearing, CPA Plan:**

At 5:35 Smith opened the public hearing. Mr. Rembold said no written comments have been received, and there was just one person in the audience for this meeting.

Sharpe said overall the plan is impressive and thoughtful. She added she has a concern about the item in the Housing section that encourages projects harmonious in design with the neighborhood, because, on South Main St., that could mean another large development. She said that goal could be in contrast to our other goals of encouraging affordable housing scattered throughout the town. She also wanted an idea of the types of units we have supported. The Committee agreed with the goal of integrating housing throughout the town. The Committee determined not to alter the bullet about harmonious design.

Davis asked if the Plan speaks to affordable housing being part of a market-rate project, as long as the affordable units had long term affordability restrictions. Rembold said yes, the Plan does encourage affordable units throughout town and in rehabilitated buildings, and we would require some term of affordability restriction.

Orenstein asked about the Area Median Income (AMI) and wondered how often that figure is updated. Rembold said the up to date AMI for a 4-person household is \$92,100. He will update the plan.

Rembold said he would gather data as to the types of units CPA has helped to build, their sizes, affordability levels, etc. He said most of the projects have been affordable to households earning 60% or less of area median income. Sharpe said that is one of her concerns. It might be too skewed so far. She said people earning above that level are still having trouble finding housing in this town.

Higa said if we want to support scattered projects it will cost the CPA a lot more, since scattered projects do not have the benefit of state and federal grants. Rembold said instead of applications for \$400,000 CPA funds towards an entire affordable project, we would see applications for \$400,000 per affordable unit.

Rembold said he sent the Committee the results of the recent Parks Commission survey. He said it gives the Committee an idea of what the Parks needs and uses are.

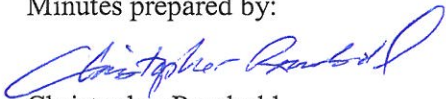
Hearing no further comments, Smith closed the hearing at 6:00. Davis moved to approve the Plan as amended with the updated AMI data, Blauvelt seconded. On a roll call vote all were in favor (9-0).

**Citizen's Speak:** None

**Next Meeting:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 PM.

Minutes prepared by:



Christopher Rembold