

Town of Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Minutes of July 31, 2023

This meeting was held in-person and via Zoom as noted on the meeting agenda.

The members made a site visit at 5:15 to see the completed work at the Great Barrington Historical Society and Museum.

Call to Order: Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Eight active members were present: Leigh Davis (Selectboard), Martha Fick (Citizen rep.), Richard Geiler (Finance Committee), Jeremy Higa (Planning Board) via Zoom, Jim Mercer (Historical Comm), Patricia Sharpe (Citizen rep.), Kate Van Olst (Conservation) via Zoom, and Karen W. Smith (Parks Comm).

Missing was the Housing Authority appointee John Grogan, for whom we still do not have any official appointment notice.

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

Minutes: Sharpe moved to approve the minutes July 11, 2023. Davis seconded. On a roll call vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

Community Preservation Coalition Dues: Rembold said this is the statewide advocacy and training group for the CPA. Their database has a list of all CPA projects as well as technical assistance for municipalities. Higa moved to pay the FY24 dues. Geiler seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

CPA Project Updates: Smith said the main business tonight was to decide whether or not to have a special application round for awards at the special town meeting.

Rembold said the Town will likely have a special town meeting in October regarding a school district vote. He said there are a few unknowns including if there actually will be a meeting, whether other items like CPA will be included, and whether the CPA fund will have monies available to appropriate. He said there could be up to \$600,000 available in CPA, but that will not be known until the town's accounts are certified. He hopes that will happen by the end of August.

All members were open to having a special application round. Some at first wanted to emphasize housing. After comments from Sharpe and others, all agreed it would be more in the spirit of the CPA to accept applications from all categories. It was decided that only urgent applications would be invited to submit a Step 2 in this special round. Therefore the Step 1 application will have questions or criteria to determine the urgency of the application. The application must demonstrate that funding this fall is time sensitive and that the project cannot wait until FY25 (July 2024). In discussion the Committee suggested that urgency might include a project that is shovel ready and needs to begin, a land acquisition opportunity that will expire without funding, or a budget gap that needs to be filled as the last step to begin a project. The applicant will have to be able to demonstrate or verify the urgent funding need.

The Committee set the following dates for the special funding round:

Step 1 due August 28.

Committee will meet on September 5.

Step 2 due September 11.

The Committee will meet on September 14.

Reports from Committee Members:

Davis said the Planning Board and Selectboard will meet this Wednesday the 2nd to review the housing subcommittee's recent proposals. Smith remarked that it would be good for the Housing Trust to have funding sources other than CPA.

Mercer said the restoration of the trolley shelter is underway and the historical commission is working on a trolley timeline and signage to install there.

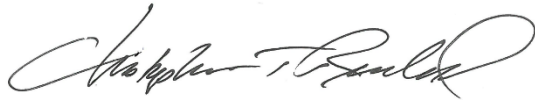
Fick asked for a status update about 100 Bridge Street's open space.

Higa asked that the Committee keep in mind that the Housing Trust is part of the Town just like us, and he said the CPA funds are important to the Housing Trust. CPA funds allow the Trust to act quickly on housing opportunities without going through long procurement process. Having to rely solely on other funds means the Trust has to work slower.

Citizens' Speak: None

Adjourn: Davis moved to adjourn, Fick seconded. The meeting adjourned meeting at 6:39 PM.

Minutes prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Rembold', written in a cursive style.

Christopher Rembold