

Town of Great Barrington Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Minutes of June 19, 2017

Town Hall, 334 Main Street

Members present: Ed Abrahams, Thomas Blauvelt, Martha Fick, Bill Nappo, and Karen W. Smith.

Not Present: Jessica Dezieck, Jeremy Higa, Kathleen Jackson, Nan Wile

Also present: Town Planner/CPA Administrator Chris Rembold

Call to Order 5:30 PM by Chair Blauvelt

Reorganize

Abrahams nominated, Nappo seconded, Blauvelt for Chair and Smith for Vice-Chair. All were in favor.

Administrative Items

Abrahams moved to approve the draft minutes of February 7, 2017, Nappo seconded, all were in favor.

Reports from Committee Members

Nappo mentioned that the Historical Commission hopes respondents to the Housatonic School RFP will apply for CPA funds for historic preservation.

CPA Planning for the Coming Year

There was a discussion about housing, historic, and open space needs for the coming year.

Blauvelt said affordable housing is still a need and that the Housing Trust may request that CPA funds remaining after minimum allocations to historic, open space, and administration, be dedicated to the Trust for housing purposes. Smith said she could never agree to give all of the funds to one group.

Rembold noted that Housing Trusts across the state are most active and effective when the CPA funds them on a regular basis. He said the Committee could consider automatically recommending a certain amount of funding to the Trust every year, without making them apply to the Committee. It could be the minimum 10% allocation, or it could be higher— spending on housing recent years has been about \$200,000 per year. He said the advantage is that the Trust is the town's affordable housing arm and they are the experts, so they would better decide how to spend the funds.

Smith said maybe it would be better to start out with smaller grants, and let the Trust build up a track record of success. Also, this Committee would retain some of the housing funds, and we would still be a granting agency for housing but perhaps a lesser amount than in the past.

Nappo what the Trust would spend the funds on. Rembold said they could grant it out to other housing agencies like the CDC or Construct, or the Trust could do its own projects. They could be both a granting agency like this Committee or an implementer of projects.

Rembold listed a number of Town-owned properties that could be proposed for CPA funding. He said some of these projects could be large and are appropriate for CPA funds. These include the front steps of Town Hall, the pedestrian tunnel under the railroad, the Housatonic School, Ramsdell Library, the next round of a historic resources survey/inventory, open space preservation projects and recreation at Lake Mansfield, as well as the Housing Trust. He said there are a lot of Town projects to do, and the CPA might consider in its Plan for the coming year reserving funds for Town projects. He also mentioned several other projects like the AME Zion Church and the riverfront trail south, as two non-Town projects

that are developing and could be eligible for funding. He asked the Committee to consider whether it would like to specifically reserve funds in the next year or several years for just these projects.

Smith said she would not recommend funding for Ramsdell unless it was clear by a Town vote that the building would remain in operation.

There was a discussion of long deferred maintenance and the Town's significant capital needs for Town buildings. Nappo said the Committee could consider reserving all of the historic funds just for Town projects.

The Committee determined it would review the CPA plan again at the July meeting and get input from the community and other boards in the next month. The public hearing for the Plan would be in early August.

Citizen Speak Time: None

Next Meetings

Tuesday July 11 at 5:30 at the fire station

Monday August 7 at 5:30 at the fire station

Adjourn 6:30 PM

Materials Presented/Distributed for this Meeting:

- Email from Chris Rembold to Committee members dated June 13, 2017, including draft Feb 7 meeting minutes and current 2017 CPA Plan

Minutes prepared by:

