

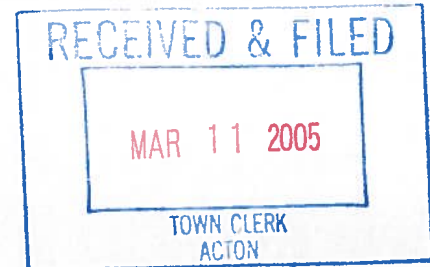
Draft Minutes for CPC Meeting of 2/10/05, 7:30 pm - 10 pm, Library Meeting Room

Attending:

Peter Berry, Walter Foster, Bob Coan, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Catherine Coleman, Nancy Tavernier, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Andy Magee, Matt Lundberg, Stacy Rogers, Roland Bartl

Audience:

Dave Wilson, Tom Dunn, Laurence Ullmann, Anne Forbes



1a. Approval of Minutes from 2/3/05

The minutes of 1/27/05 were approved as amended.

1.b. Discussion Re: Letters Supporting the CPA

A motion was made to send the letter drafted by Catherine Coleman to Governor Romney as written. The motion passed unanimously.

1.c. Discussion of Legislative Issue:

The Metro Mayors Coalition of the MAPC with the active support of MAPC's Executive Director and Exec. Board intend to file budget amendments (which may be filed by any legislator on behalf of MAPC or its subgroup Metro Mayors Coalition) affecting the CPC Trust Fund in the FY 06 budget. The intent is to divert funding out of the CPA Trust Fund to non-adopting municipalities and other state grant programs.

- It was commented that the MAPC's intention is for the CPA adopting communities to receive the highest possible annual match of funds as long as money is available in the Trust Fund.
- It was commented that it is difficult for less affluent towns to pass the CPA.
- It was added that campaign strategy has a lot to do with whether or not less affluent towns pass the CPA. For example, some less affluent towns failed when they adopted the 3% surcharge, but succeeded when they reduced the surcharge to 1% or 1.5%. Ashland is an example of a town which succeeded after reducing the surcharge. Framingham tried once at 3%, but might have been successful if they tried again with a lower surcharge.
- It was commented that cities and less affluent communities have access to numerous grants which suburban towns such as Acton do not.

1.d. Discussion Re: Community Preservation Coalition Regional Meeting on 2/12/05.

Susan, Peter, and Catherine planned to attend along with Walter Foster who was not certain if he could. The group agreed to meet at Town Hall at 8:30 Sat. morning to carpool.

1.e. Report on the BoS meeting on 2/7 where the CPC briefly reviewed the CPA projects and preliminary funding allocations:

It was commented that the meeting went well, the Selectmen were very supportive (Eldridge and Resor were in the hearing room), and there were no real questions or concerns.

1.f. Report on the FinCom meeting on 2/8 where the CPC briefly reviewed CPA project preliminary funding allocations.

- There was some discussion of the public benefit derived from the Jones Tavern Chimney Restoration project as the Jones Tavern is a private entity. The case was made that it's open to the public and the viewing hours are expected to increase, and that it will be important for the applicant to establish the educational piece.
- It was suggested that Anne Forbes could give interested FinCom members a tour of the tavern which would enhance their appreciation for its public benefit. (Had it not been preserved, it would have been replaced by a gas station).
- A FinCom member commented that he would not have funded the Faulkner Plaque, the Community Housing Trust, the restoration of the fire apparatuses, etc. as Acton is having a difficult funding year.
- It was commented that a benefit of the CPA is that there are and will be funding even in difficult funding years.
- The FinCom is concerned that the CPA resources are being spent on small projects rather than on large significant ones particularly during a time when there isn't adequate funding to run the schools, police dept., libraries, etc. properly. It was commented by a FinCom member that a better scenario would be to bank funds for larger proposals such as for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT).
- A CPC member commented that Wayland set aside 80% of its CPA funds each funding cycle as their goal was to purchase a particular farm. The committee member also expressed concern that next year could be the last year with a 100% match depending on the outcome of the state budget battles.
- Re: funding recommendations and whether or not to recommend an array of different projects or to bank for one a CPC member commented that the Committee's job is to make recommendations for Town Meeting which will make the ultimate decisions.
- Another committee member countered that the Committee should make the best choices for the town by building a consensus. Another committee member commented that it's not the committee's role to decide how to spend the money as that is the role for the representatives of Historic Preservation, Open Space, Affordable Housing and Recreation to decide.

2. Public Input on Preliminary Consensus Vote:

- It was commented that the CPC received a letter opposing the Leary Field proposal.
- It was also commented that it is off base for the opponent of the Leary Field proposal to object to funding a Recreation project with CPA funds as the CPA legislation was designed so that funds could be spent for Recreation (once the 10% open space requirement was met) and that it is off base to threaten to vote out the CPA if the Leary Field proposals passes (akin to throwing out the baby with the bath water).
- A CPC member rebutted a comment from the resident's letter about a science journal article which stated that artificial turf creates drug resistant infections due to abrasions with the argument that the article was referring to astroturf, a different product from Fieldturf, which is part of an infill system and not known to cause abrasions, etc.
- (The FinCom voted to support Leary Field. They were impressed by the amount of leveraging and by the applicant's analysis demonstrating that the cash flow is positive).
- It was commented that those who oppose the Leary Field proposal haven't been present for the discussion, debate, or presentations which explained the critical differences between astroturf and its newest and different version, FieldTurf; the discussion explaining how a new field will be created; the discussion about the intramunicipal agreement between the town and the school, and for the discussion which explains how both constituencies will benefit.

- It was commented that it is possible to make a motion to consider a proposal separately and to reduce the amount of the funding award. (Town Meeting may not vote to increase the amount of the funding award).
- It was commented that another resident suggested using CDEC grants to fund the project; it was pointed out that the grant is very competitive, and Acton is too wealthy to be awarded the grant.
- It was commented if the applicant raises more funds than agreed upon, the surplus can be used to build out bleachers and the walkway.
- Dave Wilson, a proponent of the proposal, commented that FOLF's goal is to raise more than \$250,000 privately, and they will know the number by Town Meeting.
- It was asked what happens if the bid comes in for less than the allocation. It was suggested there might be a contingency in the warrant stating the CPC gets back the surplus.
- It was commented that the leveraged private funds are always spent first.

3.a. Draft Warrant Article - Proposed Funding

Civil War Artifacts

It was suggested that there was not good basis for reducing the funding request by \$750; other projects received the benefit of the doubt when there was uncertainty due to costs, and a reduction of \$750 is too little to make a difference to the bottom line. As a result the award was reinstated to \$30,150.

Discussion of Town Hall Slate Roof

It was asked what would happen if the contingency allocation were not high enough.

- It was replied that question could be asked of any project.
- It was asked if the town could get a bridge loan if the contingency allocation ran out. It was replied that the town could float that amount until fall Town Meeting when the town could ask for a transfer from the Reserve Fund. It was agreed to leave the funding decision at \$120,000.

Discussion of Habitat for Humanity Revised Proposal

Committee members commented that they support the project but would like Habitat to return next year with more detail and a tighter plan.

- Walter encouraged Habitat representative Megan Foley to form the Acton committee as a prerequisite to funding - to which she agreed.
- It was commented that if Town Meeting accepts the proposal for putting \$160,000 into the Community Housing Program Fund, that that fund could be a source of revenue.
- It was suggested that additional funds could be put in the Community Housing Program Fund, and the trustees could earmark them; however, it's not a guarantee.
- It was suggested funds for next year could be put in a housing set aside.
- It was suggested that Habitat use FOLF's strategy of fundraising privately (\$35,000 in Habitat's case) and asking for that amount to be matched with CP funds.
- It was suggested that it would be confusing for Town Meeting to earmark a housing set aside and less confusing to add funds to the Community Housing Program Fund.
- It was commented that not having a site is problematic as there could be difficult natural constraints, neighborhood opposition, etc. while funds are tied up - better to have site control.
- It was suggested that the Committee might prefer a duplex (a deviation from standard Habitat practice) and if we allocate funds now, they might get tied up in this debate.

VOTE:

Ken moved that the Committee not fund Habitat this year. Bob Coan seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Warrant Article/Memorandum of Understanding

It was discussed whether to use the same format as last year with respect to the Warrant Article or to exercise tighter control by means of establishing a Memorandum of Understanding with the applicants.

- It was suggested that a MOU or pro forma be set up with each applicant to ensure both parties are in agreement.
- It was commented that those documents are not legally binding.
- It was also commented that the committee can check what was done against what was in the proposal and withhold funding next time if there wasn't agreement.
- It was also suggested that built into the meeting with applicants can be a report on past projects.

ACTION: Contact people for the various past projects need to get a project update.

- It was commented that if a project doesn't move forward, the funds will flow back to the unencumbered fund after a period of 3 years.
- It was commented that the words "funding up to \$X" are very important with respect to having funds left over.
- It was commented that it is necessary to certify when a project is over to ensure that no more funds are allocated.
- It was suggested that it's important to not give a large contingency fee in order to create incentive to get the project done; it is important to stress that leveraged funds will be spent first.

3.b. Vote final slate of proposed funding:

It was commented that last year \$70,000 was unencumbered, and this year it would be reduced slightly to \$55,910.

It was commented that having some cash ready is desirable.

VOTE:

Walter moved the rest of the slate as it stands.

Robert Coan seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

4.a. Meeting Schedule

The CPC meeting of Feb. 24 was canceled.

The next meeting of the CPC will be on Thursday, March 10, 7:30 PM, Library Meeting Room.

Town Meeting will begin on 4/4.

4.b. New Business:

It was suggested that Bill Mullin should make the presentation on the Leary Field proposal as this is an item of great interest, people don't know about the details, and as a result it needs a separate presentation.

ACTION: Contact Bill Mullin.

It was commented that the BoS will determine the language in the Warrant Article.

ACTION: Roland will draft a Warrant Article and circulate it for comments and suggestions.

VOTE:

Bob Coan made a motion to authorize the Chair and Vice Chair to sign off on the Warrant Article.

Ken seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Action: Roland will circulate the list of last year's projects and respective contact persons as well as the latest spread sheet representing final funding decisions.

Respectfully submitted:

Susan Mitchell-Hardt