



Minutes for CPC Meeting of Dec. 2, 2004, 7:30 pm - 11 pm, Library Meeting Room

Attending:

Stacy Rogers, Peter Berry, Catherine Coleman, Robert Coan, Walter Foster, Nancy Tavernier (from 8:30 pm), Andy Magee, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Roland Bartl, John Ryder (Fin Com Observer)

Absent:

Matt Lundberg

Audience:

Steve Scanlon, Dave Wilson, Paul DiBona, Anne Forbes, Sue Ruether, Ed Leary, Bill Mullin, Chief Craig, Anita Rogers, Tom Tidman, Nancy McShea, Don Johnson, John Murray, Terry Lindgren, Mary Michelman ... many more.

1. Francis Faulkner Memorial Plaque Replacement
(See Application for descriptive details).

Comments and questions from the CPC and Selectman Hunter's replies:

The applicant, Dore Hunter, stated that if the plaque's costs exceeds \$1000, the budgeted amount, he would pay the overage.

- Town Counsel opined that it is eligible for funding.
- It was stated that no attempt was made at fundraising
- It was asked how the proposed size of the plaque was determined. Dore commented that he got a sense for size by looking at plaques in lobbies of buildings.
- It was asked if Dore will get bids which may reduce the price. He replied that he assumed that town staff will get bids, and they could possibly reduce the price.
- It was asked if he expects there to be an additional cost for renaming Room 204. Dore replied that as nothing physical would be done, there would be no cost.
- It was asked if he considered putting the plaque in the lobby where it would be more visible. Dore replied that since Faulkner was a selectman and town clerk that he hearing room was appropriate.

Public Comments:

Bob Johnson commented that naming significant rooms in Town Hall is a great idea, and that we should move toward naming other conference rooms for historic Acton figures.

2. Presentation by John Murray and Don Johnson about "Borrowing as Authorized by the CPA, (MGL C 44B)"

For a full discussion of the issue see John Murray's Interoffice Memo to the Board of Selectmen entitled, "Borrowing as Authorized by the CPA, (MGL C 44B)", which was distributed to the CPC.

Currently, the Act requires each community to pledge its general tax base as the guarantor of any long term bond. John proposed two amendments which would allow the legislative branch of each community to decide to pledge its general tax base or only the revenue of the Act.

It was concluded that:

- The Committee was willing to consider moving forward with a regional forum to discuss the borrowing issue as well as all other issues communities have come up against requiring legislative changes.
- The Committee should ask for the CP Coalitions' support and for them to coordinate the effort.

ACTION: Peter Berry will take the lead on making the "Borrowing Issue" part of a CPA regional meeting at Town Hall.

3. Antique Fire Apparatus Restoration

The Applicant, Chief Craig, brought the engine to the Library parking area for the Committee to see.

(See Application for descriptive details).

Comments and questions from the CPC and Chief Craig's replies:

- The restored antique fire apparatuses will have the potential to be used for the Memorial Day Parade, Oktoberfest, and Acton Day.
- Fire Chief Craig envisions using the apparatuses for educational programs. 6 firefighters participate in the "safe project" which is similar to the DARE program. Currently they discuss location of smoke detectors and escape plans. The engines will add an educational/historical visual component.
- Town Counsel opined that the project is a qualified YES as CPA allows funding of Historic Resources defined as vessels; the term is defined to include antique fire apparatuses.
- The level of restoration will be to get the engine running and the apparatus presentable.
- It was noted that the project is leveraged.
- Chief Craig has no plan to charge a fee for weddings, funerals, etc. to offset upkeep.

Public Comment:

Anne Forbes commented it's a good proposal. How will we ensure that the public's investment is maintained? Most of the historic preservation projects are in the Historic District, and the HDC will ensure the investment is maintained, and that the projects will meet certain preservation standards. This year there are 3-4 interior projects that are not under Historic District oversite.

- The issue is how to craft a historic preservation restriction on less traditional projects that will ensure restoration is done to certain standards and that it will be around indefinitely in the future. She doesn't know the answer.

Further Q&A:

-Chief Craig stated that there are guidelines from antique car organizations that illustrate how to determine what the original condition is and how to guide the project.

-Chief Craig was asked to put the standards in the application so the Committee knows what they are and can ensure compliance. Chief Craig also agreed to share bids, plans, etc. with the Committee.

4. Friends of Leary Field/Create a new multi-use recreation space at Leary Field

(A large and diverse group of supporters were on hand)

(See Application and "Four Fields in One" handout for descriptive details).

Comments and questions from the CPC and applicant, Bill Mullin's replies:

- Appreciation was expressed for the applicant's having addressed the concerns of the Committee last year, and for having raised \$250,000 privately.
- The application is a model for community outreach; the applicant joined the town and the school and overcame the eligibility issue.

- This is a model for the type of proposal the Committee would like to see.
- It was requested to see the Intramunicipal agreement.
- It was asked what the life of the material is to which Bill replied that it's guaranteed for 8 years. The oldest in play is 12 years. Lifetime is estimated to be 15-20 years. One doesn't necessarily need to replace the whole thing; just the top layer may need to be replaced, or sections of turf maybe sewn in.
- It was asked if maintenance equipment was needed to which Bill replied there is a machine which costs \$5000.
- They would like to improve handicap access from the upper parking lot and replace the stands, however, those items are not in the current budget and stands don't qualify for CPA funding.
- It was asked if the new field will offer the potential for increased revenue. The answer was no, that any revenue will go to the managers of the facility; \$1200 is the total revenue from last year, and it's not a revenue source to share.
- It was asked how much it would cost to replace the entire field. There hasn't been enough experience to know.
- It was asked about the ripple effect on other fields in town to which Bill commented that it is conjecture rather than supported by data
- The intra municipal agreement guarantees the town access to the field.
- Bill replied to a question about continuing to fundraise for extras. He said they would stay focused on their goal.
- It was commented that Town Counsel stated that in terms of eligibility that FOLF was a Qualified YES, but then opined that it is an unqualified YES.
- It was asked what would happen if the project came in more costly than expected. Bill replied that their engineering/architecture firm has reviewed the budget, and the cost estimates are reasonable; however, if it were necessary, they would do more fundraising.
- Nancy McShea, Director of Recreation Dept., emphasized that FieldTurfing Leary Field will not eliminate the need for more fields as field space is a growing need.

Public Comment:

Dore Hunter underscored that the town acquired 10 acres on School Street under lease from the state. He supports FOLF, but it doesn't obviate the need for going forward with developing other fields. The Committee should consider future development of some natural fields.

Ed Leary commented that the new Leary Field will increase the opportunities for all ages, seniors such as himself as well as kids.

Before the very large crowd that came in to support the FOLF left, Walter took the opportunity to encourage residents to apply at Town Hall for the vacant CPC Associate Member position.

5. Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT)
(See Application for descriptive details)

Bruce Stamski, Town Engineer, Nancy McShea, Tom Tidman and Roland Bartl in addition to Don Johnson contributed to writing the proposal.

Tom Michelman, Secretary for the Friends of BFRT, gave the overview. The "Friends" moved the proposal forward, and he applauds their effort. Tom and Roland will spearhead the planning, engineering, design and construction phase. Nancy McShea of Recreation Dept., will manage the rail trail after its completion.

Tom Michelman stated that Friends of the BFRT have incorporated, will file for a 501C3, and will fund raise.

Besides contributing funds the Friends of BFRT can support the trail in non-monitory ways such as trail clearing and maintenance; which will cut down on the cost of survey work. The land stewards are also enthusiastic about helping out.

Comments and questions from the CPC and the applicant's replies:

Nancy Tavernier wanted to know if the Rex Lumber challenge is a deal breaker. (Rex Lumber is currently using the right of way without permission and would like to continue to do so). Don Johnson replied that it can be worked around.

Susan pointed out that the application should include horseback riding under the heading of "Serving Multiple Needs and Populations" (p N 4 of 5) as a significant number of equestrians have attended meetings of Friends of the BFRT to assert their need to use the trail, the double rail part which extends from Rt. 2 to Rex Lumber.

It was asked if there is any way to avoid spending so much on legal fees. Some costs come from the appraisals, survey for easements, and actual acquisition.

Walter commented that not everything necessarily requires lawyers. Don's staff will go directly to landowners and will capitalize on in house knowledge of the trail.

Walter took the opportunity to thank the 6 town staffers who worked on this proposal and stayed late to attend this meeting. He urged everyone to support our staff so that projects like this can happen.

It was commented that the \$660,000 local match would be 2/3 of next year's total CPA funding. Bonding could be considered; we need to think of alternatives. It's a lot of money for one project. (ARRT was \$170,000).

Public Comments:

Bob Johnson commented that it's a lot of money spread over time. We could do sections such as Wetherbee St. to Nara Park, or couple the trail with that of Westford and Carlisle.

6. Consideration of Proposal for Town Character Research (received by the Committee this week)

It was observed that the proposal was incomplete, didn't address points in the appendix, nor follow guidelines.

A motion was made to accept the proposal as if it were filed on time. If we vote to accept it, we will put it on the agenda for the next meeting and send it to Town Counsel.

The motion passed; 6:1.

7. Other Business

Peter commented that he received two letters, one from Acton Conservation Trust about their efforts to work with land owners in response to concerns and a package from EOEA containing biomaps, living waters maps, and core habitat maps for Acton. Roland will make copies for the next meeting.

Tour for Jones Tavern: Stacy will choose two times for next weekend.

Peter commented that Town Counsel says it's good practice to post site visits.

8. Approve Minutes of November 8, 2004

The Minutes of the Meeting on Nov. 8 were approved as amended.

9. Appoint Liaison for HDC Projects (Historic District Signage and Cultural Resource List)

Bob Coan volunteered to be their liaison. He will get them information and bring their questions back to the Committee.

Liaison for Town Character Research proposal: The Committee will wait to see if Town Counsel approves it before assigning one.

10. Publicity:

Notice of the application review has been sent to all town boards and the Beacon.

Next Meeting: December 16, 7:30 pm, Library Meeting Room

Respectfully Submitted:

Susan Mitchell-Hardt