

Minutes
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
December 21, 2017
Acton Memorial Library

Members Present: Bill Alesbury (Vice-Chair), Tory Beyer, Dean Charter, Walter Foster (Chair), Amy Green, Greg Johnson (Associate), Carolyn Kirkpatrick (Associate), Nancy Kolb, Joe Will (Clerk), Ray Yacouby

Others Present: Bettina Abe (Acton Natural Resources Department), Roland Bourdon (Acton Finance Committee), Ann Chang (Acton Memorial Library Trustee), Joan Gardner (Acton Board of Selectmen), Kristen Guichard (Acton Senior Planner), David Hardt (Acton Conservation Trust (ACT)), Bill Klauer (Acton Cemetery Commission), Andy Magee (Acton Open Space Committee Chair), Susan Mitchell-Hardt (ACT President), Wanda Null (Acton Historical Society Arthur Davis Curator), Franny Osman (Acton Commission on Disabilities), Dana Snyder-Grant (Acton Cemetery Commission), Tom Tidman (Acton Natural Resources Director)

Walter opened the meeting at 7:31 PM.

I. Citizen Concerns

- none

II. Minutes of December 07, 2017

- It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the minutes as presented.

III. Review of the CPC Annual Report

- Walter led a walkthrough. Later in the meeting:

It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to approve the Annual Report as presented.

Walter pointed out that the Report was essentially an update of the previous year's Report. He urged members to take some time away from this meeting to review it, and if there are any concerns, they can be addressed at the next CPC meeting.

IV. Project Hearings and Review

- **Kennedy Building Rehabilitation at Woodlawn Cemetery — \$51,000**

Bill, Tom, and Dana presented using PowerPoint slides.

Comments/Questions:

- The building with its public facilities also supports (passive) recreation.
- Do plans include anything specifically for fire protection — for the building and its records? Building will have fire alarm, but no fireproof vault is planned yet. Cemetery folks should think about scanning and placing records somewhere else — the Library, online.
- Consider looking into Massachusetts disability funding.
- It's a struggle to consider this for historic preservation.

- It's not historic preservation, it's rehabilitation of an historic resource.
- There could be an issue of CPA money being spent on furnishings.
- What staff uses the building? A secretary, the Cemetery Superintendent, and four full-time crew members.
- What about the future? What if the building grows? Are we all set with this design? Would there have to be a new building? Will it fit with wherever Morrison Farm is going to go? We should be sure that planning is done for 20, 40, 60 years. Tom: We have had this discussion. The building as proposed should work perfectly well into the future.
- The leverage from Cemetery funds is interest earned on trust funds.
- Joan: It's a shock to go into the Kennedy Building from a funeral home. It's an unpleasant situation that doesn't say much for the Town and its caring for this situation.

• **Woodlawn Cemetery Gates — \$31,000**

Tom and Bill presented the project.

Comments/Questions:

- There is no leverage on this? Correct.
- The cost numbers are from June of '16. Are we sure of them? Tom: If costs are greater than expected, we will ask the Cemetery Commission to cover them.
- The gates' wrought iron is in good shape, but needs to be painted.

• **Handicapped–Accessible Campsite at Camp Acton CL — \$10,012**

Bettina presented using PowerPoint slides.

Comments/Questions:

- The Acton Commission on Disabilities has submitted a letter of support.
- Is there a timeline? Activity will begin as soon as there is funding. This project would be completed next spring, summer, or fall at the latest.
- This project is fairly well-leveraged and (for Town Meeting) this should be shown better. It's a modest amount of money for what is being planned. The Natural Resources' in-kind contributions and the volunteer input is really good.
- Maintenance should be relatively easy.
- There seems to be no "nearby" accessible camping.

• **Arthur Davis etchings restoration — \$12,000**

Ann presented the project.

Comments/Questions:

- The Library Trustees \$3,000 donation will be spent (i.e., not contingency \$).
- Does the Library loan out items like these? Not sure if it's policy, but the Library does not loan out pictures.
- The Library (which is running out of wall space) should consider rotating exhibits, or traveling exhibits (e.g., at the Town Hall, or The Gallery in West Acton) — some ways to showing things like these to the larger public.
- There are 84 items (not all etchings) in the collection. Larry Powers of Powers Gallery in Acton has identified the etchings that are worth restoring and the ones that were "beyond restoring." Some of the etchings are duplicate. 8-10 will be matted and framed. Some items will go into albums.

- Is there any risk to (the restoration process)? There is always a risk, but nothing (bad) is expected to happen. To help minimize risk is one of the reasons Larry looked at the items first.
- It's never a bad idea to have something like this (the framing) go out for bid, but this is under \$10K, so a bid is not required.
- Visuals of Davis's work could be helpful at Town Meeting. Could show a restoration "before" and "after".

• **Open Space Acquisition/Protection Set-Aside Funds — \$450,000**

Andy thanked the CPC for its support in the purchase of the 161 Newtown Road property, then presented this proposal using PowerPoint slides. He noted that the request is changed from \$450K for Open Space set-aside to \$420K for set-aside and \$30K for the Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Fund. The latter is used for non-acquisition costs necessary to meet CPA acquisition requirements, e.g., appraisals, conservation restrictions stewardship. Sometimes (but not always) it is possible to write most of these costs into an acquisition proposal.

Comments/Questions:

- The \$2.3M in the Open Space set aside before the Newtown Road purchase has been the "high-water mark" of the set aside.
- What's the current balance in the Acquisition and Preservation Fund? Don't know for sure, but probably around \$8K.
- The ACT is looking for a way to have a CPC member as part of a working group for any land purchase so there is better communication with all parties involved (including the Town) and to make sure that any process is expedited. The ACT will get back to the CPC as to how it proposes this will happen.
- The CPC urges, and Andy agrees, that the Open Space Committee re-file this revised proposal.

V. Administrative Updates

- Closing on the purchase of the 161 Newtown Road property is tomorrow.
- AHA should have revised proposals in before the January 11 CPC meeting.
- The CPC has received a rewrite of the Hosmer House Campus Landscape proposal.
- Whereas the project for which Greg is liaison has been dropped, Greg offers his availability if anyone else needs help.

9:23 P.M. — It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn.

Next meeting: Thursday, January 11.