
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES**Monday, September 13, 2021**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted via remote means. Members of the public who wish to access the meeting may do so via ZOOM. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted and public participation in any public hearing conducted during this meeting shall be remote means only.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Roll-Call Attendance

Recognizing the presence of a quorum Glenn King, Chair called meeting to order (via ZOOM) at 6:30 PM; Rainer Forst, Barbara McNamee, Harry Berkowitz, Michael Proto, and John O’Brien were in attendance, with Erin Donahue and Lenny Smith absent. R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner/CPC Admin was also present, with Christine Johnson (resident), Christopher Allen (resident) and Larry Pearson (Metacomet Land Trust) in attendance.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

August 02, 2021

Upon motion duly made (B. McNamee) and (H. Berkowitz) seconded the Community Preservation Committee voted to accept meeting minutes of August 02, 2021; vote was 5-0-1 [O’Brien abstained].

III. COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION

Clerk

G. King, Chair informed the Committee of the need to appoint a Clerk. John O’Brien indicated he would no longer be able to prepare draft meeting minutes. G. King sought nominations for CPC Clerk; having none, the Committee tabled appointment of Clerk.

IV. Project Pre-Applications

Review & Determination of Eligibility

G. King noted Committee is in receipt of three (3) Project Pre-Applications; 1.) Linwood Basketball Court Improvements, 2.) Fire Department Artifacts Display Cabinets & 3.) Watson Farm Property Land Acquisition. G. King noted he provided and reviewed project applications with Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition.

G. King suggested the application for Linwood Basketball Court Improvements and Watson Farm Property Land Acquisition are considered eligible projects under Community Preservation Act (CPA). G. King indicated based upon his discussion with Mr. Saginor the project pre-application submitted by the Northbridge Fire Department for display cabinets of historical fire apparatus is not eligible for CPA funding.

G. King explained although other communities may have used CPA funds for similar projects in the past, the Coalition cautions utilization of CPA funds for this purpose is not a good idea, suggesting those towns may need to reimburse their CPA accounts with town funds.

Upon motion duly made (B. McNamee) and seconded (H. Berkowitz) the Committee voted (6-0) determining project pre-application for Linwood Basketball Courts Improvements to be eligible for CPA funding. G. Bechtholdt indicated he would notify the Applicant, inviting them to submit a Project Application.

Upon motion duly made (M. Proto) and seconded (R. Forst) the Committee voted (6-0) determining project pre-application for Watson Farm Property Land Acquisition to be eligible for CPA funding. G. Bechtholdt indicated he would notify the Applicant, inviting them to submit a Project Application and to explain the property owner needs to sign a Project Application, consenting to and authorizing such submittal.

Based upon information provided the Committee determined project pre-application for Fire Department Artifacts Display Cabinets is not eligible under the CPA. G. Bechtholdt indicated he would contact the Fire Department and advise them on ineligibility of project. Mr. Bechtholdt reminded Committee Project Applications shall be received by October for consideration of CPA funding at the 2022 Spring Annual Town Meeting.

V. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Correspondence & Communications

Committee noted receipt of the three (3) Project Pre-Applications discussed above.

CPA Projects Report (CP-3) -Due September 15, 2021

G. King explained the Town (Community Preservation Committee) is to provide the State on an annual basis a CP-3 Report, detailing projects funded through the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Castle Hill Farm Property

G. King updated the Committee, explaining that he and Mr. Bechtholdt met with the property owner (via ZOOM) to review recent decision to pursue potential development options instead of land acquisition via CPA funds. G. King suggested the owner desires to monetize landholding and may submit development plans with the Town, noting the owner did not completely rule out land acquisition with the town. G. King also noted that he and Christine Johnson (resident) spoke with Lisa Moczynski (Metacomet Land Trust) on potential partnership and collaborated efforts for future open space land acquisitions. G. King explained if the Town (CPC) was to pursue or consider land acquisition of Watson Farm (or any property) the need to have an appraisal prepared and perhaps environmental study of the property. G. Bechtholdt suggested the Committee may consider sponsoring an additional article at the Spring Annual Town Meeting to allocate additional CPA funds for this purpose. Christine Johnson offered a brief update on her Watson Farm efforts to contact the property owner in hopes of potential land acquisition via CPA Funds. Larry Pearson, member of Metacomet Land Trust noted his support of preserving the Castle Hill Farm property offered to assist as needed.

Vacancy -Member at-Large

G. King once again noted the Committee has a vacancy for one of its Member at-large positions. G. King also mentioned the town is looking to update its Open Space & Recreation Plan, suggesting if Christine or Christopher were interested in serving on the update committee they may contact the Town Manager/Board of Selectmen's office.

Future Agenda Item(s)

G. Bechtholdt noted Project Applications, once received will be included on future agendas; additionally, discussion items will be included as it relates to potential land appraisals, environmental studies, etc. including potential warrant articles for the Spring Annual Town Meeting.

Scheduling of Next Meeting

G. King noted next meeting shall be scheduled for Monday, October 04, 2021 (6:30 PM -via ZOOM).

VI. ADJOURN MEETING

Having no additional business, the Community Preservation Committee adjourned its meeting at or about 7:150 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

R. Gary Bechtholdt II, Town Planner

Date approved: _____

Cc: Town Clerk