

**Community Preservation Committee**  
**August 29, 2002**  
**Town Hall**

Present: Judy Sheldon, Steve Swanger, Carole Wolfe, Mark Kablack, Sigrid Pickering, Kirsten Roopenian, Sheila Stewart, Maureen Valente, Jody Kablack

Maureen Valente opened the meeting and distributed the Town Facility Study and the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Any members who do not have the full complement of reports should inquire at the Planning Board office.

**Bedford's Experiences**

Cathy Cordes from the Town of Bedford was present to discuss Bedford's CPA program with the CPC. She is on the Bedford Board of Selectmen and she chairs the Bedford CPC. Bedford has benefited from 2 years of projects – the first year was without state match. They have also had 1 year with state matching funds. She outlined how Bedford passed the CPA. It was championed by the ConCom, Housing Partnership Committee and the Historical Commission, and passed both ATM and ballot on its first try.

They used the description in the law in developing their action plan study issues, put together a plan, held a public hearing and implement. A process for project evaluation, plus criteria was needed. A sub-committee was formed to do this quickly. A project application form was developed. Any resident or town official can submit a project. Projects are brought to CPC – CPC does not initiate projects themselves. The CPC advertised that they were seeking projects by sending project application form to many groups, including Rotary, LWV, etc. Existing town plans were reviewed. The CPC met every week to move forward. Formulated a schedule in order to get everything ready for their next town meeting. Invited Planning Bd, Conservation, Historic Commission and Park and Rec to pre-hearing meetings to get their background information. Outline of existing proposals was reviewed.

CPC agreed that all 3 areas would be addressed. Not necessarily 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 spending, but each area should be given equal consideration. 1 criteria used to evaluate potential projects is additional funding from other sources. Other criteria are listed in their program.

Bedford's CPC adopted the same process their capital expenditures committee used – they formulate a 6 year CPA plan. This got them going. First project was a historic renovation. No housing projects, nor land acquisition projects, in line. Went to boards seeking recommendations for Town Meeting. Took some getting the FinCom and the Selectmen to understand that they didn't have control over CPC budget. Both boards did give positive recommendation though. Residents have to get used to the procedure and time deadlines to follow. CPC had a booth at Bedford Day for publicity. Lots of questions, but excellent opportunity for public awareness.

Staff – administrative assistant to Town Manager goes to every meeting. Compiles materials, answers questions, liaison with other town staff – town accountant, etc. Does not take minutes. Rotate minute taking by committee members. Minutes need only comply with the law – votes, members present, etc. Good relationship with Finance Office and Assessors Office. Budget preparation done by CPC. Helps to have someone with FinCom experience on CPC. Developed budget based on declining state match each year. They promised residents they would go to Town Meeting each year and review the surcharge percentage, which could mean declining local revenue. 3<sup>rd</sup> year of state match estimated at 75%. Expect a large city to pass CPA and draw down fund. Then down to 50%, then down to minimum.

Some projects on their list are real, others are not. Projected to 10 years because their first project (Old Town Hall) was costly and needed to be bonded for that length. Some residents had difficulty with that since it tied their hands to keep CPA on books for 10 years. However, that debt can be repaid with other sources. Or, CPA surcharge can be collected, but no other spending can occur. The project did pass at Town Meeting for a 10 year bonding period.

CPC had difficulty in determining eligibility of Park and Rec projects, based on the law.

DOR says power is in Town Meeting. If it fits within definition and TM approves it, then it is ok. Wrinkle with Old Town Hall. Exterior of building had been renovated with other funding sources. Interior was unusable – no handicap access. Received TM approval for 10 year bond. Bond Counsel said doesn't fit definition of law. Petitioned state legislators to amend CPA law to allow flexibility in historic preservation projects to include handicap access. Federal law says preservation, restoration and renovation.

Questions:

When CPC began and was working out process and criteria, did they also develop mission statement included in Bedford's program? No, it came from Master Plan.

Did CPC write goals for projects after learning about project? No, Project proponents formulated goals (ConCom, Housing, etc.), CPC used them.

Who is their housing proponent? Housing Partnership, Housing Authority, Housing Trust (most housing people are on multiple housing committees).

All members of CPC wrote Bedford program. One person compiled the report, but all participated.

Dynamics of Town Meeting? In discussing bonding over greater than 5 years, were alternatives discussed so that bonding didn't have to go beyond 5 years? Showed scope of budget over 10 years in order to get people comfortable with idea. Used same format as capital expenditure budget.

When groups were first applying to CPC, many times just ideas. No real cost estimates. Placeholders put in, but need actual numbers for town meeting.

Bedford reserved money for recreational use, no specific project. Although reserving funds for recreation is not a statutory requirement of the Act, Bedford did have a future skateboard project that they reserved \$40,000 for. Still needs to go back to TM to define project and spend reserve.

Evaluation strategy for projects – Did Bedford defer to other reports and groups who have done evaluations? Yes, first level. Bedford CPC assumed that project proponents have done this already. CPC is not doing this.

Administrative costs – has Bedford budgeted for this? Minimal amount to cover cost of public hearing notices (\$1500). CPC has own website. Don't use town's website, but is linked. Pay for this out of admin. cost. Next year will increase administrative costs for housing. Need someone to qualify residents, hold lotteries, etc. Using a consultant in conjunction with another town. Also part of Home Consortium. Consultant working for Housing Trust. CPA administrative money is going to Housing Trust. Doing more than just CPA work, so is outside CPC jurisdiction.

### **Committee Organization**

Nominations for Chairman: Kirsten Roopenian nominated Mark Kablack and Sigrid Pickering as co-chairs, seconded and voted unanimously.

Carole Wolfe was nominated as Clerk, seconded and voted unanimously.

### **Other Business**

Jody Kablack volunteered to put together the first draft program in order to distribute it at Sudbury Day, September 21, 2002. She will use existing information contained in Town plans, and will distribute a first draft to all CPC members.

Maureen Valente will work with Town Staff can produce a generic budget spreadsheet.

Subcommittees should promote the CPA within the community in order to get them ready for 2003 ATM in each area – housing, historic, open space, recreation.

Kirsten Roopenian volunteered to revise pages 21-22 of Bedford's CPA Program..

All members should review page 18 of Bedford's Program - Selection Criteria.

Sheila Stewart will work on budget preparation with Finance Director.

Sigrid Pickering will do a calendar to determine meeting dates in preparation for April 2003 Town Meeting.

Steve Swanger will review Newton's housing criteria.

Judy Sheldon will review Newton's open space criteria.

Carole Wolfe will review Newton's historic criteria.

Paul Griffin will review Newton's park and recreation criteria.

Mark Kablack will prepare an agenda for the next meeting.

**Project Update:**

Dickson: Board of Selectmen solicited comments from the Historical Commission and ConCom. Both boards support using CPA funds for purchase of this property. Memos dated Aug. 16, 2002 from Historical Commission and Aug. 22, 2002 from Conservation Commission distributed.

Next meeting was scheduled for **Thursday Sept. 19, 7:30 pm** at Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45 pm.

Minutes taken by J. Kablack. Approved 9/19/02