

Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, December 1, 2004
Town Hall

Members Present: Mark Kablack, Carole Wolfe, Steve Swanger, Dick Bell, Peter Glass, Chris Morely, Sheila Stewart (7:45 p.m.)

Not Present: John Drobinski, Tara Reed

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

The committee reviewed the project proposals that were presented at the last two meetings to determine which projects the Committee would like to recommend for presentation at the Public Forum. The Committee also discussed if conditions needed to be set for each project or if additional information was required from the proponent.

Libby Land Acquisition

As of this date, the soil testing has not been completed and the Conservation Commission has not forwarded a dollar amount for its proposal to purchase the Libby property. The Committee expressed its concern that this proposal is a phased acquisition and if the Town votes to purchase this land, the members would like conditions set for the option to purchase the whole property.

Without having a value for the Libby property at this time, the members also noted their concern regarding the amount of money they would feel comfortable adding to the debt service since commitments have already been made for the Cutting and Dickson properties.

Steve Swanger noted that he hoped that the Community Preservation funds would not all be committed for open space so that future opportunities to acquire affordable housing would be available to the town.

The following conditions were agreed upon for the purchase of this property:

- 1) Negotiate with the property owner for the town to purchase the whole property over time.
- 2) If a phased purchase, have option (with formula for calculation of the price) for the other phases of land to be sold.
- 3) If phased and owner not willing to enter into agreement for future purchase, Phase 1 purchase would have to be at a discounted price.

Chris Morely suggested that the Town hire a real estate person to negotiate the terms of the sale. Mark thought that it would be premature at this time without having an appraisal of the parcel in Phase 1.

A recommendation will be made to the Town Manager to bring in a real estate negotiator on behalf of the town to setup the terms and conditions of the purchase of the Libby Land and that administrative funds be used to pay this consultant.

Davis Field Construction

Sheila Stewart raised several concerns regarding this proposal and she does not feel that Davis Field is the best place for the new fields. Specifically, she noted concern that the proposed parking area is over a stump dump which could cause future problems, the concession stand would have to be moved, parking and traffic at Davis are a concern, as well as the total cost to develop this property. She felt that other organizations should contribute to the development of these fields.

Chris Morely agreed that he would like to see additional funds contributed from other sources, but he felt that Davis Field was the right location for this project.

Steve Swanger raised his concern that CPC funds should not be used for projects that can be funded by the Town Budget and that he wondered if there was another source of funding for this project.

Peter Glass noted that the Park and Rec Department has no money for the development of property. He also noted that for many years, money was not spent on field development and the Master Plan indicates the Town needs to address that issue now.

Chris Morely noted that as part of the CPC, Recreation is eligible for funds. He does agree with the development of Davis Field but is concerned that the timing is not right for this funding request.

Mark Kablack noted that at the last meeting, the funding issue was discussed to split the cost over 2 years if the town committed to the completion of the project.

Dick Bell noted that environmental issues may prevent construction at this site and that information would not be available until after a design study was completed.

Mark noted that Sheila Stewart's concerns could be answered during the design study phase.

Sheila asked why not develop just one field at Davis. The response was that it is more cost effective to develop 2 fields at the same time.

The Committee will request that Park and Rec revise the proposal to fund the design of the fields, have Park and Rec secure commitments from other user groups associated with the field use and address environmental issues.

Peter Glass questioned whether this prevents Park and Rec from requesting funding for the whole project. Mark Kablack responded that it is the consensus of the committee to support the design phase only at this time.

Rail Trail Committee

Carole Wolfe, as a member of the Rail Trail Committee, reported that they have only met once for an organizational meeting and have not met again to conduct business. She stated her concern was whether the \$25,000 would be sufficient for a feasibility study.

Mark replied that the figure was presented by the Town Manager based on her research on the other communities currently undergoing or having recently completed feasibility studies.

Sheila Stewart was not convinced that this study has to take place this year.

It was the consensus of the majority of the members present to endorse this request up to \$25,000 and that the Town Manager will make sure that the scope of the study meets the parameters noted in the documentation from the application.

Willis Dock

Peter Glass noted that the Board of Selectmen has issued the permit for the 32 foot dock and that the Conservation Commission is scheduled to discuss this topic at their meeting later in the month. Peter will report back on whether the Conservation Commission supports this project.

Sheila Stewart noted that she was opposed to this proposal because she believes there is potential for vandalism and liability to the Town.

It was the consensus of the majority of the members present to endorse the Willis Dock funding request of \$6,000.

Willis Pond Study

Peter Glass reported that he did not have any success in locating data from any previous study. Carole Wolfe reiterated that she was aware of at least one study done about five years ago.

Mark suggested that the presentation at the Public Form for this proposal be made by Dennis Mannone as a representative of Park and Rec.

It was noted that the Conservation Commission will meet later in the month and will comment on this request.

Mark Kablack stated that he felt that Willis Pond is a great resource to the town and that a study on the pond will help to improve conditions there.

It was the consensus of the committee to endorse this request, pending support from the Conservation Commission, and that the Town Manager determine that the study can be performed within the parameters of the documentation submitted with the proposal at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.

Housing Buydown

Mark Kablack noted that the Warrant Article wording for this funding should be for any 40B project and that if the money is not spent within a set time period, that it reverts back to the CPA.

Carole Wolfe noted that she agrees with the concept of this proposal, however, is concerned that the developer may change the density of the project to allow the Town to purchase units.

Steve Swanger noted that he felt that as long as the Warrant Article is written to allow the town to purchase units at more than one site, there would be no reason to overdevelop one area.

Mark Kablack agreed that the town's interest in buying units will not affect the zoning requirements. He also felt that a joint venture with developers may increase the input from the town.

It was the consensus of the committee to endorse this request with the following comments:

- 1) Purchase of the units should not in anyway affect the density of the project.
- 2) A commitment from the developer must be received within 2 years
- 3) Units must be purchased within 3 years of April 2005.

Steve Swanger recommended that the wording of the Warrant Article be reviewed by Town Counsel prior to submittal.

Mark assured the committee that Town Counsel and the Town Accountant would review wording of the Warrant Articles prior to their submittal.

Housing Extension

The committee endorsed the proposal for the housing authority extension without condition.

Hosmer House Restoration

Carole Wolfe responded to questions brought up at the last meeting pertaining to the possibility of a business plan being developed to help generate revenue for this property. She commented that the upgrade of this building will allow for additional use, however, the Hosmer House is staffed by volunteers and as their time is limited, she did not expect to see a huge revenue gain from a business plan.

She also noted that the construction work will be put out for bid and that she was hopeful that all of the funds would not be spent. The timeline for completion will be dependent on how quickly contractors can be retained for each part of the renovation.

It was the consensus of the members present to approve this proposal without conditions.

Historical Survey

It was the consensus of the members present to approve this proposal without conditions.

Annual Report

Mark Kablack noted that the Annual Report was revised to include the projected revenues for FY04 and FY05.

Minutes of November 17, 2004

The Minutes of the November 17, 2004 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Dick Bell, seconded by Steve Swanger, to accept the Minutes as submitted.

Vote 7-0 Unanimous

Public Forum

It was noted that the Public Forum will be held at the Lower Town Hall on December 15, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. Mark Kablack will forward a copy of the Press Release to the newspaper.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.