

Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, November 1, 2006
Town Hall

Members Present: Chris Morely, Mark Kablack, Carole Wolfe, Alan Jefts, Richard Bell, Sheila Stewart and John Drobinski

Not Present: Tara Reed and Sherrill Cline

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Rail Trail Project Presentation

Three proposals were presented for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail by Town Manager, Maureen Valente.

- Title review – CPC requested funds: \$15,000
- Wildlife study – CP requested funds: \$25,000
- Existing conditions base map – CPC requested funds: \$105,000 (\$25,000 and \$80,000)

Ms. Valente explained to the Committee that the project consisted of three pieces which was a continuation of a feasibility study that was done by Thorndike Consultants. The project proposals were the next steps needed and were voted by the Selectmen to submit for proposal to the CPC. Ms. Valente introduced representatives present from the Rail Trail Conversion Advisory Committee: Patricia Brown, William Place, Richard Williamson, Sigrid Pickering and Carole Wolfe who sits on the CPC Committee.

Title Review

The goal of the title review is to trace ownership back to the period when the railroad company originally acquired land. Ms. Valente explained to the Committee that the title review was important to do before the investment of public funds. \$15,000 from the administrative funds is being requested so that the review could start as soon as possible.

Existing conditions base map

Ms. Valente explained that the existing conditions base map is in two portions consisting of a field study for \$80,000 and a wetland study for \$25,000. The wildlife study is not part of the 25% design but is critical to do due to wildlife and wetlands that are characteristic of Sudbury. A four season study will be done over a 12 month period. For the study to be included in the trail project a three year time limit is enforced. Since time is an issue Ms. Valente asked the Committee if funding could come out of the Administrative fund so that a study could commence immediately rather than waiting until funding was available in July.

Discussion

Committee member Richard Bell asked Ms. Valente where the figures for the studies came from and who will write the RFP. Ms. Valente replied that the consultants as well as Debbie from the Conservation gave cost suggestions. An RFP will be written by the railroad advisory committee as well as town staff. Ms. Valente discussed the future of the trail and said that the future vision is still unclear for the railroad. Funding, trail surface, design, shoulder width and public safety were of concern. As the project moves forward more CPA funding will be requested. Mr. Morely asked what the boundary of the railroad would be and if it would include other railroad lines. Mr. Morely also inquired what the anticipated total cost for the rail trail would be. Ms. Valente responded that the preliminary cost estimate would depend on design which would also determine possible funding sources. Mr. Morely asked what the anticipated timeline would be. Ms. Valente said it was hard to determine but possibly 5 or 6 years, 1 or 2 years spend would be spent on design decisions and public process. Towns usually don't pay for the construction just the design if following EOT design recommendations. Mr. Kablack stressed the importance of moving forward in increments and that recommendations should be in place before town vote and that a feasibility study makes sense. On November 9th the Selectman, Rail Road Committee and consultant have a meeting to discuss the trail. Mr. Drobinski discussed the possibility of a hybrid surface but felt that further studies were needed to explore options. Ms. Valente said that future studies will guide design options, especially if there are areas of wetland and ACEC areas. Mr. Kablack asked what order was needed for these studies. Should one at a time be done? Should title be done first and then the other two studies be done parallel to each other? Mr. Kablack explained that a new guide book was released in January of 2006 with new surface guidelines; no trails have been constructed with these new guidelines as of yet. Ms. Valente told the Committee that a presentation would be given to the Recreation Department to obtain their endorsement as well as Conservation, Planning Departments. Mr. Morely asked what would be the next steps after these three studies were performed. Ms. Valente replied that a public process including public visioning.

Public Discussion

Elaine Blum of Sudbury inquired about the administrative funds. Mr. Morely explained \$75,000 was appropriated for administrative funds for this year and that unused funds would be returned back to the CPA fund. Currently the protocol for administrative funds is under draft. He explained that if certain projects fall within the administrative funds guidelines a town vote is not needed. Ms. Blum asked why the feasibility study that was done didn't cover the studies being submitted for CPA funding. Ms. Valente said that the feasibility was a roadmap that points the town in the direction of what was needed to be done. Another resident new to town suggested that the town be asked if they want a trail in town before going forward with any further studies. Ms. Valente explained that it will go before town vote and that the Selectman voted to conduct a feasibility study. She also explained that there has been a long history of support for a rail trail. In the 1990's citizens came before the Selectman requesting a rail road conversion and that the 2001 Master Plan calls for the unused railroad to be converted to a trail. Another resident who abuts the railroad with a farm expressed concern about the cost of the studies being done with out first going to town vote, he also asked why the wildlife study was taken away

from the committee and given to the town manager. Ms. Valente responded that the Conservation Commission will oversee the consultant doing the wildlife study and that the town manager as well as other town employees often work with committees on various projects.

L-S Community Field update

Mr. Drobinski updated the Committee on the L-S. He discussed the striping of the fields. Mr. Drobinski indicated that the Board of Selectmen will not sign until they review the bid package that indicates permanent striping. The committee also had a general discussion about user fees.

Miscellaneous

Template Agreement

Mr. Kablack and Mr. Drobinski discussed the concept of a template agreement and reviewed a sample from the town of Lincoln. Mr. Kablack agreed to draft a template that could be used project to project that could be signed prior to the release of any funds. He would work out the details with Maureen Valente and town council and then resubmit a draft to the Committee for approval.

Administrative Fund Policy

Mr. Morely discussed making the administrative fund policy part of an on going policy and vote on the final form at the next meeting.

Administrative funds

Mr. Morely told the Committee that \$33,000 is left out of \$75,000 administrative fund until the end of the fiscal year. The Committee discussed railroad funding. Ms. Wolfe suggested that the Conservation Commission should give input on the RFP for the wildlife study. The Committee had a general discussion on the proposed projects, timing and funding and felt an RFP is needed in order to respond to the proposed projects. The Committee discussed the need to be cautious on funds because it is uncertain what will come up during the year. Mr. Kablack suggested that the Committee be careful not to set a precedent on not funding a project if it is controversial and therefore waiting until town meeting. Mr. Drobinski suggested that the CPC needs to remove itself from the project and be objective making sure decisions within the established criteria of the administrative fund policy. The Committee agreed that they first needed to iron out the administrative policy before voting on final projects.

Town Meeting Report

The Committee discussed having Tara write the report due this year since she had written last years. The Committee asked that if Tara isn't available to write the report if Ms. Burney could.

CPA Coalition

The Committee asked Ms. Burney to attend the future annual Coalition meeting to be held in 2007.

Minutes

Minutes from February 15, 2006

A motion was made by John Drobinski and seconded by Richard Bell to accept the minutes from February 15, 2006.

Vote 4/0/3 Mark Kablack, Carole Wolfe, and Alan Jefts abstaining

Executive Session Minutes from February 15, 2006

A motion was made by John Drobinski and seconded by Richard Bell to accept minutes from Executive Session from February 15, 2006.

4/0/3 Mark Kablack, Carole Wolfe, and Alan Jefts abstaining

Minutes from April 3, 2006

A motion was made by Mark Kablack and seconded by Carole Wolfe to accept minutes from February 15, 2006.

4/0/3 John Drobinski, Carole Wolfe, and Mark Kablack abstaining

Minutes from May 4, 2006

A motion was made by Mark Kablack and seconded by Carole Wolfe to minutes from February 15, 2006.

4/0/3 John Drobinski, Sheila Stewart, and Alan Jefts abstaining

A motion to adjourn was made by Richard Bell and seconded by Chris Morely.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.