



# Town of Sudbury

## Community Preservation Committee

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### MINUTES

DECEMBER 4, 2019

LOWER TOWN HALL, 322 CONCORD ROAD, SUDBURY, MA

**Members Present:** Chair Sherrill Cline, Vice Chair Lynne Remington, Pat Brown, Thomas Friedlander, John Hincks, Eric Poch, and Anuraj Shah

**Members Absent:** Mara Huston and Diana Warren

**Others Present:** Director of Planning and Community Development, Adam Duchesneau

At 7:05 p.m., Ms. Cline called the meeting to order.

#### **Public Hearings for Applications Submitted for May 2020 Annual Town Meeting**

Ms. Cline opened the public hearing regarding four applications seeking FY21 Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. She stated the public hearing had been duly noticed and indicated it allowed the community to hear about the various projects from the Applicants.

#### *Remediation of Water Chestnuts from Hop Brook Pond System*

Jeff Winston, President of the Hop Brook Protection Association and Gary Christelis, President of the Board of the Wayside Inn Foundation, were present to discuss the application.

The proposal was submitted by Mr. Winston, requesting \$60,000 for remediation of Water Chestnuts from the Hop Brook Pond System each year for 5 years. He opened his presentation with a brief overview of the water chestnut problem. Mr. Winston noted that mechanical harvesting and hand pulling were not effective remediation techniques and stated using herbicides was the best way to eradicate the water chestnut problem.

At this time Mr. Poch arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Winston explained the steps they would be taken to remediate. The first step was to seek approval for funding from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Next they would go to the Conservation Commission for their approval and lastly they would apply for the appropriate Federal and State permits. Mr. Winston noted if he did not receive approval from the Conservation Commission, he would not accept the funds from the CPC.

Mr. Winston was hoping to make the first application of herbicide in May or June 2020. He noted the timing was very important in order to have the best chance of being effective.

Mr. Winston stated the risks of inaction included a decrease in water quality, lower oxygen levels, shallower pond depth, repugnant smell, reduction of fish, birds, and native plants, and increased EEE risk.

He explained he had a long term management plan to include a transition to reduced use of herbicide and continuous monitoring and management, with the goal of improved water quality in the Hop Brook Watershed. He stated that the proposal was the use of an herbicide called Clearwater applied by a vendor named SOLitude, both of which have been used successfully in other towns. He will provide testimonials and a vegetation study to the CPC in the near future. Mr. Winston elaborated on the grant request and noted he would like to expand the proposal to include “and similar invasive species” in addition to the eradication of water chestnuts. The funds requested would remain the same.

Mr. Winston stated that, because the mechanical harvesting was not effective, they would not do that again and therefore the balance of funds remaining in the appropriation from FY20 could either be reverted or rolled over to this application – at the pleasure of the CPC.

Mr. Hincks asked if the herbicide treatment would change if the proposal were to include similar invasive species and not just the water chestnuts. Mr. Winston stated the herbicide may change but, if so, they would need approval from the Conservation Commission for each type of herbicide.

Mr. Friedlander, as Chair of the Conservation Commission, noted that the use of herbicides in this manner would be a new consideration for the Con Comm and urged Mr. Winston to file the Notice of Intent by the January 13 meeting of the Con Comm so that consideration of the request could proceed ASAP.

Ms. Brown noted the CPC funds would not be available until after Town Meeting and she asked if that would be a problem with the timeline presented. Mr. Winston stated it would not as they had some funds which were already available.

Mr. Christelis introduced himself and stated he had been following this project closely as it pertained to the Wayside Inn and Grist Mill Pond. He indicated the water chestnuts were a cause of the mill not operating at some points during the season which was a problem for the Wayside Inn’s business of grinding grain and its use as an educational resource.

Ms. Remington asked how the dead water chestnuts would be removed after treatment. Terry Snyder, a Hop Brook Protection Association member, stressed the importance of implementing the herbicide treatment early when the plants were young. She noted the herbicide would be sprinkled on the leaves of the plant and they would die off and not produce seeds. There would also be minimal biomass. She stated that the herbicide would be sprinkled on the leaves and the herbicide would break down within 24 hours. The study showing this will also be provided.

Mr. Shah asked what other towns were using this herbicide treatment. Elyse Rainey, a Hop Brook Protection Association member, stated Framingham, a couple towns further to the west, and a few in New York. They will send a list.

Ms. Cline asked how the herbicide would be applied. Ms. Snyder stated there was a drone and there would also be a person in a boat to manually treat the leaves of the young plants.

Ms. Cline asked for justification of the request of \$60,000 for 5 years. Mr. Winston stated it would take several years of treatment to get control of the water chestnuts. He would follow up with the documents and supply the CPC with a pond management plan. The vendor advised a 5 to 10 year horizon and to treat with herbicide for the first 5 years, then perhaps go to hand pulling. Mr. Winston stated that the size of the grant is due to the number of unknowns involved, including whether there are other invasives that need treating, the expectation that the cost will increase, and the unpredictability of the process.

Ms. Cline stated the CPC would need the statements from other towns, proposal and estimate from Solitude Lake Management, and documentation regarding the treatment. Mr. Winston stated the he would provide the CPC with Chemical/Safety review of Clearcast and a Vegetation Survey & Pond Management Plan.

Mr. Winston confirmed that the Town had issued an RFP for mechanical harvesting and no one applied for the job because it was more expensive than budgeted.

*Sudbury Housing Authority Acquisition, Creation, Preservation, and Support of Affordable Rental Housing*

Ms. Cline, as a member of the Board of Commissioners for the Sudbury Housing Authority (SHA) and liaison for the Housing Authority to the CPC, and Sheila Cusolito, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, were present to discuss the request. The proposal was requesting 10% of the estimated annual revenue for housing for acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of affordable rental housing.

Ms. Cline opened her presentation with a brief history of the SHA. She noted the SHA owned and managed 92 units of affordable rental housing, with 64 of those units at Musketaquid Village which are reserved for the elderly or disabled. Ms. Cline stated the SHA owned 28 units of family housing, mostly duplexes. The SHA serves a population with incomes that are below 80% of the area median income. The SHA seeks to house individuals and families with incomes that are 30 to 50% of area median income. To accomplish the SHA's mission, the SHA had a multi-pronged strategy that included acquiring and developing more property. The SHA was constantly looking for property to purchase. However, because the SHA is subject to public procurement requirements, it must issue an RFP, wait for a response and then negotiate a price. Although several RFP's have been issued, and several responses received, the process has not resulted in a purchase, either because the property was not suitable or the parties had not reached agreement on the sales price. Another part of the strategy is to perform a feasibility study on some properties owned by the SHA and some owned by the town. The SHA was seeking support from the Board of Selectmen for a grant from the Sudbury Foundation to assist in hiring professionals to determine if these sites were suitable for development.

Ms. Cline hoped the feasibility study on 11 sites the SHA has identified, and the accumulated appropriations from the CPA fund would put the SHA in a good position to leverage matching funds from the State and/or private lenders through a mortgage.

Mr. Hincks asked what 11 properties were identified for the feasibility study. Ms. Cline stated 3 properties were owned by the Town and the other 8 properties were owned by the SHA. She noted there were 4 single family homes which may be suitable for converting into duplexes. There were 4 other properties that might support another house.

Ms. Remington noted the CPA required communities to allocate 10% of their CPA funds received every year specifically for housing.

*Library Historic Room Conversion*

Goodnow Library Director, Esme Green, and Samantha Greenfield, Development Director for the Goodnow Library Foundation, were present to discuss the request. Ms. Green indicated they had originally requesting \$130,000 to refurbish the library's Historic Room and now they were asking for \$150,000. The focus of the current application is capital improvements to rehabilitate the Historic Room (1895) and the mezzanine of the original 1862 octagon. The total cost of the project is \$200,000. She also

pointed out additional committed funds from the Goodnow Library Foundation totaled \$50,000. Ms. Green stated the project included rehabilitating the existing shelving in the Historic Room for local history books, and obtaining secure and customized storage for documents, maps, and artifacts. This room is usually locked, but if the artifacts were protected, the room could be opened.

In 1999, the renovations included shelving upstairs in the original octagon. However, because the area is not accessible by the public, the shelves are empty. The height of the bannister in the mezzanine would be raised to meet current code. Ms. Green also stated the octagon shelving would be removed and repurposed to house artwork from the Hosmer collection rather than books.

Ms. Green explained the scope of the project included rehabilitating bookcases to fit book collections and to create locking storage, lockable credenzas for display of historical artifacts, map cases, locking file cabinets, a computer station, the installation of acoustic panels so that it will be a quiet place for study and painting, wiring, and other miscellaneous items.

Ms. Green stated that the application complied with the historic preservation requirements of the CPA in that it would rehabilitate an historic space for today's use, would secure, protect, and display an historical collection, and would make the room accessible.

Ms. Green stated the estimate received from Vauna Construction totaled \$202,581.00. Ms. Green indicated the Goodnow Library Trustees and Goodnow Library Foundation both supported this project. They intend to approach the SHC in the near future. About three years ago, the Library created an Historical Collections Committee to work on assessing, inventorying and creating policies around their collections. This proposal is the result of their work.

Ms. Cline asked if the shelving being removed from the octagon would be reused. Ms. Green stated the shelving would be repurposed where possible.

Ms. Remington felt the sound attenuation did not necessarily meet the historic criteria. Ms. Green thought perhaps not, but it would be a capital item as it would be maintaining the historic character of the room and rehabilitation of the space.

Mr. Friedlander felt rehabilitating bookcases did not fit the historic resources criteria of the CPA. Ms. Cline pointed out the preserving historic documents is an allowable project. However, Ms. Cline asked what books were in the book collection. Ms. Green stated the books were the about the history and genealogy of Sudbury, or historically aged books, some of which were 300 years old, unique, valuable, and irreplaceable.

Mr. Friedlander pointed out that the Historical Commission should be consulted as to whether the documents and books qualify as historically significant. Ms. Cline suggested Ms. Green contact the Historical Commission to assess the book collection and submit a letter to the CPC confirming the Historical Commission considered it a historical collection. Ms. Cline added that knowing what was intended to be stored on the bookcases, credenzas, map cases, and the filing cabinets would be helpful for the CPC's analysis of the application. Ms. Cline referenced the Community Preservation Coalition's website and guidelines which would be helpful in the analysis of the application. The Local History Librarian itemized some of the documents in the collection including about 200 of the books that were in the Library when it opened in 1862, as well as genealogies, High School yearbooks, etc. She emphasized the importance of being able to display these items safely and to be able to open the room to the public.

Ms. Cline suggested that the restoration of the Library is similar to the restoration of Town Hall in that not every aspect of the restoration may be historic, like acoustic panels, but the overall renovation is of an historic place. Town Counsel has issued an opinion regarding Town Hall which may be applicable here.

Mr. Hincks agreed that not every piece of the work has to be “historical”, but it is important that the historical room be assessable and it is a laudable goal. Town Counsel’s opinion should be consulted.

Mr. Shah asked if the new bannister would make the mezzanine safe for the public. Ms. Green stated the public would not have access to the space even if changed, but it was used by staff. The new bannister would make it safe for the staff to work there and hang the art collection. Ms. Cline asked about the current height of the railing and Ms. Green indicated she was unsure. Mr. Shah stated he would like to know the height of the railing.

Ursula Lyons stated she supported the project. Ms. Lyons asked if it would be possible for the Historic Society to assist the Historical Commission in the assessment of the items as the Society may have some information about the items in the collection. Ms. Remington asked if the library was on the Massachusetts Historic Register. Ms. Green stated it was and was also within a local Historic District.

Jim Hill, a member of the Library Historical Committee, noted CPA funds were allowed to be spent on historic resources for rehabilitation and restoration, which is to make capital improvements or extraordinary repairs to make the assets functional for its intended uses. Mr. Hill felt the project fell under those guidelines. He also noted the Park Department’s United States Department of the Interior considers rehabilitation and acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property’s historic character.

#### Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Membership Fee

Adam Duchesneau, Director of Planning and Community Development, was present to discuss the application. He indicated the proposal submitted was requesting \$30,000 for a portion of the Town’s FY2021 RHSO membership fee. Mr. Duchesneau noted the complete RHSO membership fee was \$67,000, of which \$37,000 would be paid by the Sudbury Housing Trust.

Mr. Duchesneau stated this was the third year the RHSO would be funded through separate CPC articles and the application met the CPA criteria because CPA funds may be spent on the “acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing.”

Mr. Duchesneau explained the RHSO was comprised of eight communities. He noted the RHSO provided services through an inter-municipal agreement. Mr. Duchesneau stated the importance of the request as it would help to ensure the Town’s monitoring of the housing stock to maintain the state’s required affordable housing thresholds. He listed all the work performed by the RHSO to fulfill the monitoring requirements. He pointed out that without the RHSO, the Town would have to increase staff hours or hire a consultant, and there were no operating budget funds available to fund this type of contract. He further stated that the RHSO was very helpful to the Town and he was happy with their assistance.

#### **Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Duchesneau indicated the January 29, 2020 CPC meeting might interfere with the Hazardous Mitigation Workshop that same night and asked the members if they would be willing to meet at 7:30 p.m. on that date. The members agreed that time would work.

Ms. Cline stated that at their December 18, 2019 meeting, the CPC would start their review and deliberations of the applications. By that time, the CPC would like to receive additional information from the Library Foundation and the Hop Brook Protection Association. Mr. Friedlander discussed the schedule of the Con Comm vis a vis the Hop Brook Protection Association permits.

Ms. Brown suggested setting a date to discuss the CPA plan. Ms. Cline suggested the meeting be held on March 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. by which time, it was hoped that the Master Planning process would be nearing its end so that the CPA Plan could use the information gained from the public hearings for its plan. There was discussion as to the requirements of the CPA and whether public forums in addition to those held for the Master Plan would be necessary.

On a motion by Ms. Brown, seconded by Mr. Hincks, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.