

MEETING MINUTES

Town of Acton of Acton Community Preservation Committee

February 28, 2008

Acton Memorial Library

Attending: Andy Magee, Walter Foster, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Nancy Tavernier, Ed Starzec, Jon Benson, Ron Schlegel, Tory Beyer, Roland Bartl (Planning Department), Anne Forbes (HDC Observer) and Steve Noone (Finance Committee).

The meeting was called to order at 7:40PM by Ken Sghia-Hughes.

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of February 14, 2008.

The Committee took up a number of items under Old Business.

Andy Magee reported that the Open Space Committee decided against the purchase of the non-buildable 6.9 acre parcels abutting conservation land off Newtown Road. The OPC determined the purchase price of \$50,000 was too expensive. Andy indicated the parcels would most likely be sold by the decedent's estate to the neighboring land owners who probably would grow the land out as lawns.

Roland Bartl provided the legal opinion requested of Town Counsel whether CPC funds for the Sachem Way pre-development project can be used instead for pre-development work at another site or for the purchase of additional affordable condominium units. Steve Anderson's recommendation was not to allow for the requested conditions for several reasons. First, as the CPC recommends specific project applications and Town Meeting makes appropriations, both public processes, it is not known whether the AHC back-up plan would meet with CPC and Town Meeting approval. Additionally, CPC conditions could not be written for an unspecified back-up plan; the back-up plan would "short-circuit" the CPA's specific statutory process for reserving funds for future years; and by adopting the AHC proposal for the Sachem Way project, "the line will form for future projects". The Committee decided against the AHA's proposed conditions.

Christine Price, principal of the Conant School, arrived with the requested letter in support of the Conant Nature Trails



application from the Acton Public School Committee. Andy Magee reported that land adjacent to the Conant School, although much of it is wetlands, is one of six possible sites under consideration for a new senior center. The Committee approved the Conant School request for consultant's fees of \$15,000 to determine possible trail sites with the condition that Ms. Price delay moving forward until the land adjacent to the Conant School is ruled out as a senior center site or other amicable resolution with the site committee is reached.

Next the Committee discussed Roland Bartl's request for \$10,000 to retain a peer review architect to determine whether the Exchange Hall restoration is in compliance with historic preservation requirements prior to his authorization of the CPC's reimbursement payment. After considerable discussion the Committee agreed that our financial commitment of \$231,948 (all by way of reimbursement after the full exterior and interior restoration is completed) is for the scaffolding and the restoration only of the roof, windows and front porch and that the necessary review and certification mechanisms will be in place to assure compliance with the historic preservation requirements without the need for a limited peer review architect.

The Committee conditioned the Trail Through Time application on Linda McElroy obtaining the approval of Land Stewards and the Conservation Commission's approval of the landscaping portion of the project.

Nancy Tavernier asked and the Committee agreed that the Community Housing Fund Program request for \$200,000 be reduced to \$170,000. Nancy added the \$170,000 request would level fund the program from the current year.

The Committee moved to New Business and took up the CPC's draft warrant article. Town Counsel's suggested revisions appeared in the further draft. The Committee's revisions involved separating out project application conditions and making substantive revisions to the warrant article.

Ken Sghia-Hughes reported that the Finance Committee recommended all of the project applications.

Jon Benson and Andy Magee engaged in a discussion over the possibility that the \$247,000 in NARA improvements and repairs might not be included in the Town's capital request. Jon contended that the NARA repairs and improvements was a critical

element of the NARA Pavilion project application. Andy took strong exception to that characterization.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 13 at 7:30.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10PM.

Jon Benson