

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
Arnold Room, Wellesley Free Library
Minutes – February 21, 2009

CPC Members Present: Kit Bowry, Jim Conlin, Rose Mary Donahue, Joan Gaughan, Dona Kemp, Jack Morgan, Tony Parker, Helen Robertson

Others Present: Barbara Searle – BOS; Caren Parker and Rusty Kellogg – Advisory; Peg Plansky and John Schuler – WHDC; Margaret Moran – WHDC Consultant; Bob White-- Trails; Neal Seaborn – NRC.

Chairman Jack Morgan called the meeting to order at 9:03 am.

Citizen speak: There were no other citizens present who wished to speak.

Jack Morgan reported on several CPC matters. No further information has been received on final Sprague Field and Phosphorus Deactivation costs. A \$48 invoice was received from the Townsman for meeting notices and was paid. Small administrative expenses do not require a formal vote. CPC funds are treated as cash in the Town's investment instrument so there has been no investment loss.

Minutes: The minutes of the January 6 and 20, 2009 CPC Meetings and the January 20, 2009 Public Hearing were reviewed and approved unanimously on a motion made by Jim Conlin, seconded by Dona Kemp.

Lower Falls Railroad Bridge Project: Tony Parker reviewed the Project going back to its inception a decade ago; tracing it through inclusion of its use in the Comprehensive Plan of 2006 and the Lower Falls Plan; and summarizing the coalition recently formed by Wellesley, Newton and the Commonwealth to create a plan joining trails in Wellesley and Newton. The Phase I design phase, already funded, will examine user concepts, including who, what, site plan and boundary issues. It is hoped the design phase will be completed at the end of the summer, and construction will begin by year's end under Governor Patrick's "accelerated bridge program."

Support for the project was discussed. Barbara Searle reported the Selectmen voted to support access to the bridge through their land. The Historical Commission has written a letter of support. The Recreation Commission Board will be asked for a letter of support. The 27 Washington Street development will tie trails into the bridge if it goes ahead, but the project will proceed without the development if necessary. This is a "stand alone" project.

The issue of timing is significant. There are two options. If the requested funds are appropriated at this Town Meeting, and if Newton votes to appropriate \$100,000 toward the project, a matching \$200,000 state grant can be applied for this fall for Phase II. The state has indicated that funds will probably be available. If CPC waits to obtain more information, particularly about the possibility of extending trails to Riverside in Newton, the funds could be appropriated at the 2010 Town Meeting. Concern, however, was

expressed that state funds might not be available next year if the appropriation is put off. It was suggested that an appropriation this year could be worded with contingencies to protect the funds from the unexpected. If Al Robinson approves, Jack Morgan suggested he would support going ahead with an appropriation of \$100,000 to CPC, which would then be in a position to decide whether or not to go ahead with the project after the completion of Phase I. CPC took a similarly pro-active position with the OTH project, which also had questions to be answered post appropriation by TM.

It was moved by Tony Parker and seconded by Helen Robertson that, an appropriation of \$100,000 from undesignated CPA funds be made to the Community Preservation Committee for the purpose of providing funds for a DCR Matching Fund Program Application for Phase II of the Lower Falls Railroad Bridge Project, subject to the City of Newton matching at least the contribution from Wellesley and the Commonwealth matching the aggregate contributions of Wellesley and Newton; and subject to the approval by CPC and other Town Boards (Recreation, Trails, Natural Resources Commission, Board of Selectmen and Historical Commission) of Phase II plans and the broader integration of the Project into Wellesley's plans. The motion passed unanimously.

Barton Road Master Plan: Representing the WHA, John Schuller reviewed the history of Barton Road dating back to the original Cedar Street Project report delivered to the Planning Board in 2001. The report focused on the Cedar Street area as a neighborhood and issues about integrating it into the town as a whole. Changes since the founding of Barton Road Housing, including loss of nearby bus service and local markets, have served to isolate the residents. The WHA has focused from early on issues involving bricks and mortar. Complicated issues must be dealt with to achieve the goal of integrating these residents into both the immediate neighborhood and the town. The Town is eligible for a matching grant from the state to undertake the necessary studies: \$50,000 town and \$25,000 state. Committee members expressed concern that the interest of the state in providing more units may not jibe with our interest in the social fabric. The issue: can we design a study meeting Wellesley's needs, or do we have to do a study the state wants. Wellesley needs "a road map for where we want to go." Changes need to be both social and physical. Tony pointed out that to change the community, the program must be changed, and that requires a study. Concern was expressed that housing alone was not the answer. Peg asked if they could bring in more information. Tony suggested funding parts 1-2 and maybe 3. Tony moved that CPC appropriate \$50,000 to WHA, to be supplemented as possible by the state, to move on objectives 1-3 on the 2/21/09 request-document (see attached) contingent on approval by the WHA. Dona seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Sprague Clock Tower: The major issue is what will it take to keep the tower standing, and a report was prepared by an engineer hired by the Department of Public Works, at the request of CPC, to address this concern. The other concern is the work must be done in a historically appropriate manner. The scope of the work contained in the report falls within the original \$65,000 requested by the DPW. Jim moved CPC appropriate to the DPW, according to exhibit 3 in the original Full Application filed by DPW, up to \$65,000, with the concurrence of CPC and WHC on the RFP and selection of a

contractor. Joan seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Kit and Helen will meet with Mike Pakstis of the DPW.

Report for the Advisory Book: Jack will write this and send a draft around for corrections.

WHS Tower: Jim reported that he and Bob Sechrest had examined the tower with an engineer. They learned the cost of shoring up the tower during demolition was prohibitive. The retention and reuse of the elements above the brick section is being looked into. Bob is not going ahead with article 42, and no CPC funding is required.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:20 PM

Submitted by Helen Robertson