

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
May 22, 2013 Minutes**

Attendees

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Jennifer Scuteri, Tom Catalano, Ray Whipple, Jay Butler, Nepo Trepanier, and Robert Preston. Scott Maddern, Selectmen, Deborah Mena, Finance Director, and Christine Berry, CPC Coordinator were also present. With a quorum of CPC members present, the meeting was called to order at 6:30pm

Discussion of the Pirie Property and Consideration of Use of CPA Funds

Scott Maddern was present to give an overview of the proposal to purchase the Pirie property. He stated that the Town set several goals in the Master Plan and that the Pirie property is an opportunity for many of those goals. He added that there are big changes coming to the demographics in Town. He re-capped for the CPC that the Chapter 61 triggered the Right of First Refusal for the Town, and that the current developer plans to build on six large lots. If the Town decides to purchase the property, there are several different alternatives that could play out with community input (i.e. community housing, cemetery expansion, open space, etc.)

Bo Preston noted that there may already be room for expansion of the cemetery within the Town-owned land. Jennifer Scuteri said that that was just one idea. She said they also looked at it for use for a school. Scott said that the Town has the potential to create two miles of trails and recreation fields. Scott reported that field development here would cost about \$275,000 for a well-developed, multi-use field; no site has been identified for parking yet. Bo reported that the Donovan fields are very crowded on weekends. Jay Butler said that you have to plan on having 25 cars per field. Scott said that students from the HWRHS could walk to the fields from school, but that there are no fixed rules about what could happen on the property. He said that this project could generate a lot of revenue for the Town, and that there is a long list of alternatives.

Scott said that a traffic study has been completed, and that it showed that traffic impacts will be similar to other streets in the area, but that sight lines could be handled. Scott reported that the Pirie developer is estimating \$90,000 of added revenue for the Town, but that if the Town develops the property, we could see up to \$270,000 in new revenue.

Bo asked what the costs to the Town would be for added students, public safety, roads, etc. Scott said they are estimating an additional 20 students with the Town's plan. Jennifer said that the added revenue wouldn't come until FY15 and that developer plans to put much of the land back into Chapter 61 classification. Scott said they are working aggressively to move through the RFP process to develop the property. The Town won't manage the development, but will be sure the Town's needs are met. Bo wondered how

people are going to vote if they don't know what it will look like. Tom suggested an option to consider would be cottage/cluster style homes. Ray expressed concerns about possible litigation.

Bo noted the other projects that would fall onto the CPC's plate (e.g. the Patton Homestead, Patton Park Pool, etc.). Scott said that the project would be financed through a BAN and that there would be very low interest costs. Jennifer said this project met so many CPA uses. She added that housing density is a ticking point. Tom said that land consumption is a sticking point, and that the current housing proposal is taking up too much of the land. He would support higher density; that we could achieve more affordable housing if the density went up.

Jennifer asked whether the CPC is comfortable with contributing CPA funds. Deborah Mena reviewed the funding options and explained that the Town could get a very low interest rate. They would allocate the cost based on current land and building value, which gives us an idea of how CPA funds could be allocated. The cost to bond CPA funds in the spring would be very low cost because it would be part of a larger \$6 million bond. She added that the Town Meeting article would be drafted generically and specifics provided in the motion. Deborah went on to say that CPA funds could underwrite community housing and hold the affordability restrictions, or that we could just do the field acquisition. Jennifer said she would just like to have an amount, but doesn't want the Committee to feel rushed. Tom said that he would like to have more CPC members in attendance to render a decision. He said that the Selectboard will move forward with their vote either way. It was suggested that the CPC meet again on May 28th to render a decision.

Jay said that he would have a hard time voting without knowing how the funds will be spent. He noted that the Affordable Housing Trust has yet to spend the \$125,000 in CPA funds they were given. He suggested that the CPC needed to have input on the RFP. Jennifer said that we could specify how the funds would be used; such as only for community housing and the field.

Tom asked how much the CPC would want to fund as a capital expenditure and how do we want to bond. Jay noted that there are several Town CPA grants still outstanding. Jennifer suggested we close out those projects. Jay said that if we need more fields that we should hear that support from the residents. Jay also asked what was considered historic on the property, and wouldn't we have to vote that specific use. Jennifer said that the Sears Catalog house is historic. Deborah said that the BAN gives us time to decide what will happen on the property. Jay suggested we should that the Town doesn't get burdened by the property. Scott said that they intend to get letters of intent from potential developers.

The meeting was adjourned.