

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
March 10, 2011 Minutes**

Attendees

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Ray Whipple, Ed Howard, Leigh Keyser, Jay Butler, Peter Britton, and Ben Ricker. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator was also present. With a quorum present the meeting was called to order at 7:30pm

Acceptance of minutes from February 10th CPC meeting

The minutes from the February 10th CPC meeting were accepted.

Review of FY12 CPA Applications

Old Library Restoration – John Tomasz, DPW Director was present to discuss this proposal. It includes various restoration improvements to the Old Library, including repair to gutters, paint, repair to trim, repair to roof, replacement of concrete walkway, and a new ADA accessible side entrance. The CPA request for this project is \$26,950. John reported that there are many activities taking place at the Old Library, including discussions of moving the elections to this location. He reported that there have been many investments made to the building over the last several years such as new carpet, windows, interior paint and a new boiler. Both Jay and Ed reported that the Recreation Department and other town-sponsored activities have a big stake in the building and the programs that are held there. Ray stated that we need to refer to the building as the “Old Library” and not the Council on Aging to demonstrate the broad use of the building.

John did not have time to go out and seek formal bids. He said the prices he provided are his best estimates. He reported that the new side entrance would be created by knocking out an existing window. Ray inquired as to whether these improvements would be considered maintenance and therefore not eligible under CPA guidelines. Christine reported that maintenance under CPA is considered as more day to day maintenance such as new light-bulbs, vacuuming, etc. Tom also stated that much of the work would easily fall under restoration/preservation.

Peter Britton asked whether the CPC should consider raising the recommendation to \$30,000 in case quotes come in higher. Tom suggested that John could just modify the scope if that's the case. John reported that the work would be completed using a combination on in-house staff and outside contractors. Tom asked if there was room for one 20 amp circuit for the Model T building. John said there was. John estimated the work would be completed before the fall.

Peter Britton reported that many town-owned buildings have suffered and that the CPC should support this project. Tom moved that the CPC vote to approve the application for the restoration of the Old Library at \$26,950. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous.

American Legion Building – Tony Heath and Joe Hanson were present to give an update on this proposal. Christine sent Tony Heath the information to contact National Grid and MassSave, but Tony has not had any response yet. Joe Hanson circulated copies of the bids that were obtained for the heating work, new windows, doors, etc. The bids totaled

nearly \$150,000. Ray stated that we need to make sure residents are clear that the American Legion is more than just a bar room. Peter Britton stated that the Legion's primary focus is private, versus the Old Library which is very public, and suggested the CPC consider a phased approach. Tom stated that the Legion needs to demonstrate their public service, that we need a clear scope of work, that fundraising can be accomplished, and that we need to have a sunset clause. Tony said that it will take time for them to fundraise.

Peter Britton stated that he is uncomfortable with \$100,000 of CPA funds going towards this project. Tony stated that their heating bill last year was \$6,800 and that the project involves switching from oil to gas. Tom asked what the payback on the new system will be. Joe estimated that they will save at least \$3000 a year. Ray asked Tony what the priority is, and Tony responded that the heating system was. Tom stated that the heating system considered in the bid is top of the line, and may not be necessary.

Jay stated that the Legion has more public access than we think. He said that there are many levels of membership. Tony said that it was very easy to join and acknowledged that their public relations is not what it should be. Peter Britton suggested that we package the CPA project around the boiler replacement. Ed stated that he would be abstaining because he is a member of the American Legion. Jay made a motion to support the \$100,000. Ray seconded. Joe said the work would be completed within 6-8 months. Tom made a motion that the CPC fund the work in a phased approach starting with the heating system. All members present, except for Ed who abstained, voted to support \$42,200 to the American Legion for the heating system.

Discover Hamilton Trail - Alex Van Alan, Executive Director of Essex County Trails Association (ECTA), was present to discuss this proposal. Christine noted that she circulated a revised application via email previous to the meeting. Alex noted that ECTA was very excited about this project. The project now includes mapping, trail improvements, acquisition of trail easements, deed research, and relocating trails off roads. The total project cost is \$39,000 and ECTA is asking for \$20,000 in CPA funds. Christine reminded the CPC that the CPA legislation requires the Town to co-hold the easements and that the CPC should consider adding in some additional costs to cover Donna Brewer's legal time on this. Alex noted that they have permission from the Schooling Field to start the trail on their property rather than at Town Hall. Alex circulated a map showing all the public and private trails in Hamilton. Tom stated that the trail needs wider public use and outreach beyond the equestrians. Alex stated that ECTA is primarily doing permanent trail easements now. Peter Britton made a motion to support \$25,000 in CPA funds for this project. The vote was unanimous.

Municipal Affordable Housing Trust – Fred Mills, a member of Hamilton's new Municipal Affordable Housing Trust (MAHT) was present to discuss this proposal. Fred has revised the MAHT's request to \$125,000 in CPA funds. The funds will be used for a 7-month project to fund a coordinator for the MAHT and the purchase of deed restrictions on existing homes. Fred reported that there are over 300 homes in Hamilton that fall within the affordable definition. Peter Britton stated that the MAHT will follow a variety of strategies. The example Fred gave is just one of the programs they can offer. Fred stated that although there will be not much of a change in value for the foreseeable future, this program will ensure that it stays that way for 20 years. They will work to change the affordability perception of Hamilton.

Fred acknowledged that this program could possibly lower the tax assessment if the owner files for an abatement. Christine suggested that Fred discuss the proposal with Michael

Lombardo since it includes hiring staff. Fred reported that the likely participant is someone over 65 and retired who wants to stay in Town. Peter Britton stated that the Town voted to enact the MAHT, which is run by a Board of Directors with approval from the Board of Selectmen. This would be the first funding of this program. Tom stated that this program would just be one of many of that the MAHT could use the funds for. Jay asked whether the coordinator will have to have unique qualifications. Fred said, yes. Jay made a motion to approve the \$125,000. Christine said there is \$70,000.75 in the Community Housing Reserve and suggested the CPC use that reserve, along with new FY12 CPA revenues to make up the \$125,000. Tom revised the motion to reflect this suggestion and the vote passed.

Patton Park Cannons – Paul Rigol, DPW Park Staff, provided a quote of \$2,300 to repair the four wheels for the cannons at Patton Park. Tom reported that the Historic District Commission voted that both the Legion and the Cannons were significant to the history of Hamilton and therefore eligible for CPA funds. Ed made a motion to approve \$2,300 in funds for this project. Tom seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Essex County Map – Christine reported that we just got the map back from Brown's River Restoration in Vermont. She will bring it to another conservator in North Andover that was recommended to her by Mass Archives. Currently, the only quote we have is from Brown's for \$10,925 for the restoration and framing. Tom made a motion that the CPC approve \$10,925 in funding for the map. Ed seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Donovan Property Acquisition – Christine included a copy of the bond schedule in everyone's packages. It is a 10 year bond and this year's debt service will cover the required 10% open space allocation. The CPC voted to approve \$56,837.50 for the debt service for the Donovan acquisition.

CPA Administration – The 5% set aside for CPA administration for this year is no more than \$21,945 of FY12 CPA revenues.

Christine said that she will update the budget and draft warrant language for the CPC's review.

CPA Signage Update – Christine reported that the Board of Selectmen will have to approve the CPA signage that the Committee has been discussing. The CPC said that they need to pick a sign that would be visible, at least 30x30 or 36x36. Tom suggested the political-type corrugated plastic signs that he saw in Falmouth and noted that they would be very inexpensive. We could put the signs up ourselves rather than asking for the DPW to assist.

Model T Building Update – Tom reported that he met with Chief Stevens on the Model T Building. Tom reported that the Chief is anxious to get started on the project, but that the Old Library's uncertain future has been slowing things down. The building will be sited behind the Old Library. There is an underground utility that they can access. It will have a moveable wood floor that can be moved to the south side of the property if necessary. The Fire Department plans to purchase a building kit, and do the installation themselves. The Model T would be able to fit through its large doors. Residents would be able to look through the windows and see the Model T.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm.