

**Town of Hamilton  
Community Preservation Committee  
January 10, 2008**

**Attendees**

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Dave Carey, Chris Davis, Leigh Keyser, Ray Whipple, Peter Clark, and Lindle Willnow. A quorum was present. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator and Bob Bullivant as liaison with the Finance Committee were also present.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The minutes from the November 29<sup>th</sup> and December 20<sup>th</sup> meetings were approved.

**FY09 CPA Application Review**

**Replacement of Floor at Senior Center – Preliminary Application**

Mimi Fanning, representing the Hamilton Council on Aging (COA), was present to discuss this proposal. The COA is seeking \$9,000 in funding to replace the flooring at the Senior Center. Dave Carey provided an update on Reinhardt's study of the building, which is expected to be completed in February. Reinhardt has determined that the high traffic location and small size is not advantageous to a developer. Currently the second floor cannot be occupied. Partitioning or the addition of a small wing could provide expanded office opportunities, including document storage. Deficiencies cited by Reinhardt include the inadequate lighting, flooring and old windows. The COA currently uses approximately ¾ of the downstairs, including the kitchen, for its programs. Other uses of the old library, notably use as a teen center, should be further explored in the Reinhardt study.

This application was submitted under the Recreation and Historic Preservation criteria. Concerns were raised that this project would not fit under the recreation criteria set forth by the CPA statute, particularly as the funds would support maintenance which is not a permitted use under recreation. Currently, the building is not deemed historic under the criteria set forth in the CPA statute. If the CPC were to approve this project under the historic resources criteria, the Hamilton Historic District Commission (HDC) would need to determine that this building was significant to the history or culture of the Town. Tom said that he would check with the HDC and Chris Beard on this issue. The question was also raised as to whether this project would have to be completed under the standards set forth in the Department of Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The Committee voted to accept this request for CPA funds. The HDC will need to make a determination on this issue by early February. The Committee also asked that COA secure a more firm estimate of the cost to replace the flooring.

**Town-Wide Survey as follow up to Master Plan and Open Space Plan Survey**

Jean Nelson for Planning Board was unable to attend to tonight's meeting to discuss this proposal. She will be in attendance at the next CPC meeting.

**Asbury Grove Tabernacle Restoration Project – Final Application**

Brad Tilley and Bill Meyer were present from Asbury Grove to discuss this proposal. The applicant is seeking \$35,000 in funding to make repairs to the historic tabernacle located in

Asbury Grove. The applicant discussed various ways in which the Tabernacle could be used by the larger community such as use as a rain site for the Patton Park summer concert series. There are approximately 50 parking spaces that could support this use. The CPC requested a site plan from the applicant detailing where the Tabernacle is located within Asbury Grove as well as the parking spaces that could be utilized. The ball field at Asbury Grove is also open for community use. The applicant discussed the involvement of Grove residents in the Town and reiterated that the Grove is part of the community.

The Tabernacle is the last remaining wooden tabernacle in the country. Asbury Grove has submitted an application to the National Historic Register seeking approval to add this property to the Register. The restoration of the Tabernacle has the backing of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Essex National Heritage Commission.

The CPC expressed concern over the political ramifications of funding this project when the Town is experiencing financial hardship. The Tabernacle is not currently town-owned, used or operated. There was general support for preserving the structure, but concern over funding a private property perceived as religious. Asbury Grove is affiliated with the Methodist Church, but not part of the organization.

Asbury Grove contributes approximately \$140,000 a year in taxes to the Town. The Grove contributes approximately \$2,800 per year to the CPA surcharge. The majority of their residents are summer only so there is no strong burden on the school system from this sector of the community.

If the CPC decides to recommend funding this project, the Town Meeting presentation should detail the other sources of funding committed and spent to date. The CPC voted to continue with the application, where a decision will be made at a future CPC meeting which will be advertised publicly.

### **Congregational Church**

The Committee began a discussion about the Congregational Church application. This final application will be presented at the next CPC meeting. The current building was constructed in 1840. Research should be done to confirm ownership and rights in the clock. Rooms were originally rented to the Town to conduct town business.

The total request for CPA funds for this project is \$180,085. The total request includes \$66,000 for the clock repairs. The Church did have the means to raise significant funds for the construction of the new building. Most of the repairs proposed appear to be cosmetic in nature.

The Committee voted to continue entertaining the application for the funding for the clock only. The clock is a clear public resource to the Town. Christine will inform the applicant of the Committee's vote in advance of the Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> CP C meeting.

### **Other**

The Harvard Forest CPA application is being deferred at this point.

The Hamilton Housing Authority project may have hit a delay. Christine will contact Jim McCurdy from the Department of Housing and Community Development and discuss the project's status with him.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 7th at 7:30pm in the Memorial Room at Town Hall.

**Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15pm.