

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
December 10, 2015 Minutes**

Attendees

The meeting was held at Hamilton Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Chair Tom Catalano, Vice Chair Jay Butler, Ray Whipple, Shawn Farrell, Ed Howard, and Robert Preston. Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox, HW Recreation Director Sean Timmons and Patton Homestead Incorporators: Carin Kale and John McWane also present. Tom Catalano called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

Acceptance of minutes from November 12, 2015 CPC meeting

Shawn Farrell moved to approve the November 12, 2015 minutes. Robert Preston seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Committee Member Reports

Farrell as BOS liaison to the Planning Board reported on how that board is working on Black Cow restaurant expanding into Jolie Tea location, and Canterbrook project. Also, the Board of Selectmen appointed Brian Stein and Anthony Nickas to the Hamilton Development Corporation, renewed liquor licenses, reviewed ULI report, did the Town manager's semi-annual review, accepted the Land Acquisition charge and committee appointment to work on property scorecard.

Catalano, liaison to the Historic District Commission, described project application from Jeff Allsopp for Certificate of Appropriateness to take down the barn behind the Bay Road post office, which will be replaced with a facsimile (with office space on first and second floors), and remains of collapsed cobbler shack will be removed. Allsopp is trying to locate special permit for the current usage on the property. The project has been approved by the HDC although it may not be appropriate from a zoning standpoint. In addition, the HDC will designate the Patton Homestead as a significant cultural resource and/or building.

Discussion ensued about how the historic photos that were digitized with some CPA funds are not quite ready for public viewing, who would replace Bob Gray from Hamilton Housing Authority on the Committee, and friendly Chapter 40B proposed for Longmeadow Way and potential for future CPA funding request. It was noted that the Affordable Housing Trust is working with Habitat for Humanity on proposal for two houses (89 and 270 Asbury Street).

Grant to be considered for eligibility: Winthrop School playground

Representatives from Friends of Winthrop School organization (Jen Daniels, Alice Michel) described interest in seeking \$100,000 in CPA funds (for the \$219,000 project where \$70,000 in private funds has been raised) to revitalize the elementary school playground that is 35-plus years old with some 20 year old recreation pieces. The intent is to centralize a new playground on the school site with age appropriate and ADA accessible equipment which is used by the

school, and when sports activities are occurring at Patton Park (i.e., flag football) after school hours.

Discussion ensued about how capital projects done at the school occurred to bring the building to code. The Friends group is also seeking grants to raise funds as well doing additional private fundraising. Funds raised for Patton Park playground totaled \$270,000.

Discussion addressed how the \$100,000 CPA request is for Hamilton's share of the project. The Friends group is hoping to have the new playground constructed next summer. The Committee emphasized that the Friends group should be approaching Wenham for its share of funds to support the playground project. The HWRSD does not have any funds for the project.

Also noted was that when the CPA was adopted in Hamilton it was explicit that adoption was not an end around to limitations of Proposition 2 ½. The Committee acknowledged that there was a need for a new playground at the school but mentioned that it could cause discord with the public due to the reason why residents initially voted to bring CPA to Town in 2005. It was noted that the Hamilton Education Fund only grants money for education versus recreation programs.

Preston moved that the project be considered eligible for the Committee's consideration of CPA funds. Farrell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Grant to be considered for eligibility: Patton Homestead

Carin Kale from Patton Homestead Incorporators summarized history of the Patton house, establishment of non-profit, and interest in bringing enough revenue in to make the homestead self-supporting (i.e., an event center for up to 100 people). To make the building code compliant could require \$500,000 in capital improvements (i.e., ADA accessibility, sprinklers, septic, HVAC, painting, roof repair, 12-car parking off of Asbury Street). The CPA application request is for \$250,000 and the non-profit received \$250,000 from the sale of a portion of the Patton Homestead land.

Discussion ensued with Kale and her colleague John McWane of Incorporators board about state matching grant being pursued as well as additional resources. Cost estimates have been received by curator at Willowdale Estate and resident/contractor Peter Gourdeau to renovate the Homestead within code requirements. A state grant is pending for the non-profit to conduct an in-depth capital facility review.

Also addressed was the current loss of revenue (\$43,000 in annual real estate taxes) the Town is experiencing having accepted the Patton property as a gift. Some of the options that the Committee raised for consideration were: tearing the Homestead down and keeping the property as open space, reducing the size of the Homestead, and renovating the stables at the site which would provide a larger event space. It was noted that the apartment on the site has a failed septic system. Also mentioned was possibility of curatorship for the property which may or may not be subject to property tax under that scenario. Also suggested was that the

Incorporators could take a two-tiered approach: 1) seek CPA project application eligibility, 2) determine feasibility of project within schedule for spring Town Meeting (i.e., warrant deadline of February 22 for April 2 Town Meeting and CPC meets again on January 14 and February 11).

Jay Butler moved that this project was eligible for CPA funds. Ray Whipple seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Grant to be considered for eligibility: HW Regional High School Field Renovation

HW Recreation Director Sean Timmons described finding from Recreation Master Plan about how Town fields are over used. The Hamilton BOS and HW School Committee are supportive of conceptual plan of High School complex relative to a field renovation project although Wenham's support is not known at this time. The current proposal is for \$100,000 design cost with \$65,000 as Hamilton's portion, \$35,000 for Wenham, with a funding request by April.

Discussion was on proposed total field project to redo the track and install a turf field for \$2 million. The design aspect of the project will include topography, wetlands, soil testing, construction design plans including tennis courts. Also addressed was how according to the CPA coalition, a project in a stadium is not eligible for CPA funds. Town Counsel Donna Brewer has opined that DOR looks at definition of stadium and Timmons noted that the project does not meet this definition.

Timmons suggested that the away stands could be removed from the project, or stands could be on wheels so they could be moved around the site. He outlined what aspects of field renovation qualify for a CPC project: grading, track, lights. He mentioned that the HWRSD is not willing to take this renovation on as a capital project. The field working group contains members from youth sports, school coaches, facility and athletic directors from HWRSD, superintendent and assistant superintendent for HWRSD.

Discussion addressed how the request for CPA project funds should come from the school department rather than the recreation department because the primary benefit of the fields on school district property is HWRSD versus the entire community. A turf field could be used during week alleviating use of Town fields and on weekend days by youth leagues.

In addition, lighting of the field would be necessary to get the most usage of a turf field and historically there has been a butter resistance to proposed lighting at the High School football field. Also mentioned was if any funds from the sale of a portion of the Patton estate land were allocated for a field at the High School, Wenham would be required to pay its share of the cost for a field at the regional school campus.

Discussion ensued on how any High School field work that is not artificial turf related would be for HWRSD use. The primary focus is to get the football field changed to turf field. If lights were not included then additional High School fields other than the football field would be considered for turf installation. The field project is dependent upon whether or not Wenham is willing to fund its share of this project. The Committee asked Timmons to come back with more

information including Hamilton's focus on the project, and proposal for organized youth sports access versus HWRS D sports only. A goal is to keep High School sports at the High School campus so student athletes can get to games without requiring transportation. Discussion was on safety of infill used for artificial turf fields which will be addressed by the turf field working group.

Future Anticipated Grants

Discussion was on the CPC's ranking of future anticipated grants, and how the Town Hall renovation project and COA project grant applications were tabled by Town officials.

CPA surcharge increase

Discussion was on how some CPC members had attended December 8 FinCom meeting relative to the FinCom's position on proposal to increase the CPA surcharge from 2% to 3% and if a compensating adjustment in the tax rate should be done to make up for increase in property tax bills. The FinCom was generally in favor of increase to 3% and significant resulting increase in CPA state match. The FinCom is going to analyze if there are any projects in the Town's three-year plan and Capital Improvement Plan that could be funded by CPA rather than General Fund to offset the extra \$51 a year that the median household would have to pay if 3% surcharge was implemented.

Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox will inquire with Assessors relative to abatement program for low income residents and CPA surcharge. Also noted is a simple majority vote is needed by Town Meeting to change CPA surcharge. Discussion addressed how League of Women Voters could host a public information session on the matter. Fox will speak to the Town Clerk to understand the number of signatures that would be required for a citizens' petition from a third party to put the increase in CPA surcharge question on the Town election ballot. Finance Director Brian Connelly can provide the Committee with an update on the latest tax rate and home value figures. Catalano agreed to speak to the HW Chronicle after the public meeting is scheduled to explain details for a newspaper article about CPA surcharge increase proposal and related abatements.

Butler moved for the Committee to support getting the 3% surcharge increase on the Town ballot in the spring. Ed Howard seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Sunset clauses/grants to be cancelled

Discussion ensued on seven projects that the CPC has funded which it considered closing out:

1. FY'07 - Community Housing coordinator - \$23,590
2. Town Hall second floor ceiling repair - \$30,000
3. Studies for Town Hall -\$3,200
4. FY'08 School Street well protection - \$27,000
5. FY'07 – Model T fire truck building - \$35,000
6. FY'11 – old library windows - \$7,500 (donation was received)
7. FY'13 Liberty Road markers - \$2,000 (donation was received for \$925 and cost was \$400)

Discussion was on how these projects have to be put in a warrant article for Town Meeting vote to officially close them. Also addressed was how CPA funding could be eliminated for these projects but there could still be interest in some of the projects (i.e., Model T fire truck building). Conversation has occurred with Fire Chief Phil Stevens that when he presents a Model T fire truck building project plan to the CPC the Committee will consider funding it. Discussion addressed how the CPC should endorse CPA projects and that Committee members in their liaison roles to Town boards and as individuals should vote their explicit opinions. Research will be done on how other communities manage CPA projects relative to CPC support for or against projects and Town Meeting's vote.

Adjournment

Whipple moved to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Farrell seconded the motion. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Dooley, Minutes Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Thomas Catalano Chairman