

**Town of Hamilton  
Community Preservation Committee  
January 8, 2009 Minutes**

**Attendees**

The meeting was held in the Memorial Room of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Chris Davis, Dave Carey, Ray Whipple, Leigh Keyser, Peter Dana, and Peter Briton. Marcie Ricker was in attendance to represent the Planning Board in Peter Clark's absence. Bob Bullivant as liaison with the Finance Committee and Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator were also present. With a quorum present the meeting was opened.

**Fence and Landscape Restoration of Hamilton Cemetery**

Marcie Ricker was present to discuss this proposal with the CPC. Marcie recommended that the CPC go forward with the so-called "keep the trees" plan. This landscape plan will ensure that the sight lines remain open and that there are long periods of bloom. This plan ensures that many of the historic plantings will remain and that more of the historic fence will be seen. This plan also calls for the fence to be sanded and painted rather than restored or replaced. The plan would cost \$7,444.00. The CPC expressed interested in securing additional estimates to restore or replace the fence. They also expressed interest in contributing an additional \$150.00 towards the project for signage acknowledging CPA funds as the source of funding for the project. Christine will find out the status of the gravestone repairs previously approved for CPA funding. The CPC expressed willingness to contribute additional funds if necessary to complete that project.

**Asbury Grove Tabernacle Restoration Project**

Brad Tilley was present to discuss this proposal with the CPC. Asbury Grove has made significant progress on this project, but is still in need of funding to complete the project. They are requesting \$26,000 in CPA funds; a reduction of \$9,000 from last year's request. Asbury Grove has been working to secure partnerships with other entities in Town. They have reached out to Acord Pantry. They are not able to partner with the school district due to separation of church and state issues. The Grove has applied to the National Historic Register. However, that application process may take one to two years. Tom suggested they seek an expedited application review. There is a strong case to be made due to the state of disrepair. Once Asbury Grove has secured listing, it will be easier for them to seek grants.

The chain link fence surrounding the tabernacle is still in place. Asbury Grove does not want the tabernacle wide open during the winter months. They have also embarked on a private audit to address any financial concerns. Brad reminded the CPC that Asbury Grove contributes approximately \$138,000 in taxes each year and that they pay into the CPA fund. This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Asbury Grove. Wetland issues have triggered Conservation Commission review of this project.

The CPC expressed concern about having a "new story to tell" if they choose to recommend funding for this project. Christine will prepare a list of benefits associated with this project. The presentation at Town Meeting, if recommended, should include impressive photos and show what has been done so far and what still needs to be done.

### **Liberty Road Markers at Patton Park**

Paul Rigol, DPW Park Staff, requested \$2,000 in CPA funds to cover the cost of new coverings for the Liberty Road Markers at Patton Park. The markers are a gift from France for General Patton's role in the liberation of France. The markers are made of cast stone and are susceptible to damage due to weather and salt from Bay Road. The markers are currently covered with tarps. The company that completed the marker restoration may have recommendations as to how the markers are best protected from the elements. Rather than pay for new covers, this project may be a good candidate for an Eagle Scout project. Tom will explore that possibility.

### **Ferrini Auditorium Follow-up Discussion**

Bill Bowler was present to discuss this issue with CPC. Bill had suggested to the Friends of Arts that they apply for CPA funds to cover the cost of the engineering study needed for the Ferrini Auditorium. He felt that the auditorium is significant to the culture of the Town as much as the old library is and wanted to understand the rationale of the CPC for deciding the request was not eligible for CPA funds. Bill also inquired whether it was the position of the CPC not to fund any school project. The CPC expressed concern that 70% of the residents' taxes already go toward funding of schools and that CPA was a revenue source for other types of projects. The CPC did not want the CPA to be viewed as an end run around school overrides. When the CPC was formed, it discussed what the priorities would be. It was felt at the time that the school had other funding sources. It was also discussed that the Wenham CPC would not likely support this project. The CPC agreed that the condition of the auditorium is appalling. The renovation would be significant and would include a new HVAC system, lights, asbestos removal, new seating, etc.

The CPC discussed the historic role of the old library to the Town and its original purpose as such. The auditorium was constructed for the school. Its role as host to Town Meeting is ancillary. It was discussed whether CPA could provide funding for a portion of the project, such as the seating.

It was agreed that Christine would inquire with the Community Preservation Coalition whether CPA funds have been used to fund renovation projects on the interior of a school currently in use as such.

### **Weaver Pond Update**

Christine asked if the CPC would be willing to approve funding for signage associated with the Weaver Pond restoration project approved at the May 2008 Annual Town Meeting. The CPC voted to approve \$240.00 for that request.

### **Conservation of Historic Town Documents**

Christine invited the CPC to view a sample of the records which were restored and paid for by CPA funds appropriated last year. Jane Wetson, Town Clerk, asked Christine to express her gratitude to the CPC for recommending the project.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45pm.