

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
October 13, 2011 Minutes**

Attendees

The meeting was held on the second floor of Town Hall with the following Committee members in attendance: Tom Catalano, Ed Howard, Jeff Hubbard, Leigh Keyser, Jay Butler, Ray Whipple, Keith Glidden, and Ben Ricker. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator was also present. With a quorum of CPC members present the meeting was called to order at 7:35pm

Acceptance of Meeting Minutes from September 8th CPC Meeting

The minutes from the September 8th CPC meeting were accepted.

FY13 CPA Application Review

Town Hall Locks and Bathroom Renovations – Allison Jenkins, DPW, was present to discuss their two proposals, Town Hall Lock Replacement and Bathroom Renovations. The first proposal, to replace the locks system at Town Hall, requests \$30,000 to implement new card access reading hardware and software to Town buildings and properties. The second proposal requests \$75,000 to renovate the bathrooms at Town Hall.

Allison reported that is nearly impossible to determine who is accessing Town Hall. There are countless keys that have been distributed to Town Hall staff and committee members. Keys have not been returned by employees and committee members who are no longer employed by the Town. Town Hall holds all the community's permanent records, historical assets, paintings, etc. The proposed key card access program would enable cards to be activated and de-activated for staff and committee members as appropriate. The program would give us a clear picture of who is entering and exiting the building. Allison reported that she secured her quote from a company on the State contract list. Ed Howard inquired whether the Historic District Commission (HDC) would have jurisdiction over approving the new locks. Allison stated that the locks would look very similar to what is there now. She also noted that some of the Town Hall doors are not historic and were purchased from Home Depot. Tom Catalano noted that the locks could very discrete; but that the sensors would show.

Tom noted that we have been very piecemeal with regard to the improvements made on Town Hall; painting, new steps, heating system, etc. He went on to say that there has never been any comprehensive plan for the building and thought that would be helpful to see. Allison noted that the Town has undertaken an agreement with students from the Boston Architectural College (BAC) to study the building's use function, storage, space, ADA compliance, etc. The outcome of that work would show a comprehensive plan for the building. Ed suggested that the BAC discuss the plans with the HDC. Allison noted that the plan, once finished, would be presented

to the Board of Selectmen and the public. Allison reported that the students are doing this work for free.

Allison noted that the Police Chief has already purchased software to create identification cards. The hope would be that there would be one card providing employees both identification and access.

Tom thought it might make sense to see the results of the student's work before moving forward and so that perhaps more work could be funded. Allison said she wasn't sure that Michael would be ready to move forward with a larger scale project in time for Town Meeting. Allison suggested that the bathrooms be approved contingent on the space plans from BAC.

Allison noted the key access proposal also includes the recreation building. Jay Butler noted that Recreation Board looked into this a year ago and sought quotes. Jay also noted that there were too many people with keys, and that this project would be a great benefit.

There are a few outstanding CPA projects concerning Town Hall. They include the ceiling repairs to the second floor dome ceiling, an ADA assessment, environmental assessment and a space needs study. Allison reported that the ADA study was completed, but that they're using BAC to get a more comprehensive assessment. Allison reported that the bathrooms are not ADA compliant.

Ray Whipple inquired as to whether the CPC can fund this type of work. Christine noted that the CPA legislation specifically calls out bringing historic buildings into ADA compliance. Christine noted that she spoke to the Community Preservation Coalition about locks project and they said it would be very important for the HDC and CPC to discuss whether the historic character/integrity of the building would be maintained. Tom expressed concern that the key project wasn't really historic preservation. Allison viewed the project as preserving the resources within Town Hall from theft, damage, etc.

Tom expressed concern about bringing the building up to ADA compliance because it will cause us to lose space, and noted that building probably needs an addition. Allison noted that we probably won't be re-locating the bathrooms during any renovation. She said the bathrooms need to be done and will be expensive. It will be one component of a greater renovation. She noted that the men's bathroom is the women's handicapped bathroom. She described the utility room just outside of the women's bathroom that could be used to expand the woman's bathroom.

Allison reported that space is an issue. They have spoken about re-use of the upstairs room as the public meeting space and the downstairs Memorial Room for office space.

Ed inquired that whether the bathroom renovation was maintenance, which CPA cannot fund. Tom said that this project could be construed as preservation, particularly bringing the bathrooms into ADA compliance. Keith Glidden wondered

about the key access project for the recreation building. Christine thought that project would be tough to be eligible for CPA funds.

Allison concluded by saying that Town Hall is a town-owned building that we want to maintain and is well used by the public. She would like to see CPA funds put into a town owned building.

Tom moved that we postpone the decision until the CPC has an opportunity to review the work from the BAC. There is plenty of time before Town Meeting to decide. Leigh seconded the motion. Ed proposed an amendment that the proposal be brought before the HDC. Tom said they would need a certificate of appropriateness from HDC, and suggested they schedule a public hearing, with employees and the public. Jay clarified that the recreation building keys are not an appropriate use of CPA funds. The recreation office will coordinate on tag/key access system for Police Department.

Essex Street Sidewalk/Trail

Rudy Pizzano, Hamilton resident was present to discuss his proposal for \$600,000 in funding to create a sidewalk along Essex Street from Wenham to Essex. Rudy noted that trails are called out in CPA legislation and noted as important in the town's Master Plan.

Until CPA passed there had been no funding mechanism to fund trails. Much of the focus for trail creation has been safety. Rudy said that he could come back with a tighter cost figure. Rudy noted that a number of studies have shown support for sidewalks and trails. He admitted that there could be concerns with trees coming down or having paved trails. Wenham has made great strides installing sidewalks, and they are being actively used.

Tom suggested that Rudy look at the cost of the Woodbury Street path to gain a rough estimate, and noted that the trail was very expensive to build. Tom noted that the Master Plan highlighted the importance of linking trails and getting kids safely to schools, and that this path doesn't seem to accomplish those objectives. Keith asked what type of trail would it be; a bike path component or just a sidewalk. Rudy said that it may be a combination of both. Tom noted that what Wenham built was not compatible with bikes at all. Rudy said that he doesn't expect there to be a lot of meandering on Essex Street as it is relatively flat. Tom asked if Rudy knew the scope of the right of way, and whether it could be accomplished within that way. Tom noted concern that may come from the residents.

Ed asked whether Route 22 was a state highway. If so, the Commonwealth would have the layout. Tom noted that the project would have to use state procurement rules, and that there would not be a clear picture of cost until there is some engineering work completed. He thought the Committee would have a hard time funding \$600,000 for this project given the state of the reimbursements. Ed agreed.

Jay noted similar projects that have come before the Committee that were derailed because of neighbors. Ray noted that there are trails in the area behind Chebacco

Woods. He also reminded the Committee of the request they received for a sidewalk on Chebacco Road. He said the CPC could not fund all sidewalk requests in Town; that there are many roads needing sidewalks.

Christine will work to find the old Road Safety Plan that Town had completed. Rudy will work to secure a better estimate and will come back before the CPC again. Christine will also find the contact for Meridian who worked on the Woodbury Street path. Ed suggested a good first step would be to figure out who the landowner was. Keith said he should come back with all these questions answered and some sense of what it is really going to look like. Tom suggested he show how this would tie into the existing trail network. Jay said that there is an existing trail link off Old Cart Road that links to Chebacco Road, but he said the trail wasn't marked. He said only the local residents know about it. He thought the Essex County Trails Association might have a map showing it.

New Business

Jeff Hubbard presented four new CPA proposals hoping to seek feedback and comment to see if any of them have traction. The first three proposals seek to make improvements to downtown to support merchants. The Railroad Avenue area could use improvements, and they would be within reasonable means – new benches, new historic- type lighting, and tree replacements. The hope would be to make the downtown more pedestrian friendly. Tom asked what the results of the downtown design charette were. Jeff wasn't sure but would try to find the results.

Christine spoke with the Community Preservation Coordinator in Newton who has Ph.D. in historic preservation. She provided some advice on the matter and said it was helpful that they had photos to document what had been there. Christine can provide more of an update on this conversation at the CPC's next meeting.

The Committee inquired whether this proposal could be expended beyond Railroad Avenue, perhaps onto Bay Road. They also asked whether the Meals Tax would better cover this type of work.

The last proposal was for various improvements to Patton Park. Myopia donated the land to the Town and the American Legion gave funding for pool. Some members of the Historical Society noted that the pool and Park could be considered historic. Jeff found some of the old drawings showing the original field house and pool. Jeff envisions tables, a kiddie pool, fire pit, lights, more of a community center. He felt this could be an opportunity for community support and fundraising. Keith thought the proposal might have some components that might not qualify. Christine will speak with the Coalition to see if there is some precedent similar to Patton Park and the downtown proposals.

Ray noted that years ago there used to be a warming hut, a place to get hot chocolate – a great destination. Christine will research the issue of whether this would qualify because the park was “gifted” which may fit under the CPA definition of “acquire.”

Meeting Adjournment

At approximately 9:20pm, Jay Butler moved that the CPC adjourn. The motion was seconded was Leigh Keyser. The vote was unanimous.