

**Town of Hamilton
Community Preservation Committee
December 20, 2007**

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 Britton, and Lindle Willnow. A quorum was present. Christine Berry as CPC Coordinator and Bob Bullivant as liaison with the Finance Committee were also present.

FY09 CPA Application Review

Preservation and Restoration of Weaver Pond at Patton Park

Jim Hankin, Hamilton's Conservation Agent, was present to discuss this proposal on behalf of the Recreation Department, DPW, and Conservation Commission. The condition of Weaver Pond has diminished markedly in the past several years due to invasive weed populations overtaking and destroying the biological function of the pond. The applicant proposes to preserve and restore the pond by dewatering it during winter months to freeze this vegetation. The funding request of \$10,000 would cover the cost of pump rental and operation.

Although this spring-fed pond is actually functioning as a wetland, the Conservation Commission believes its function as a recreational resource for skating in the winter and ponding during the warmer months is a high priority.

A Vegetation Management Plan for the pond has been drafted and approved by the appropriate Town Boards. In addition to the drawdown of water, the Plan also calls for the use of herbicides in the spring to address the weed population. If the herbicide is successful, CPA funds for the pump may not be necessary.

The Committee voted to approve this proposal as eligible under "preservation" of a recreational resource.

Finance Committee Liaison

Bob Bullivant, a new member to the Finance Committee, has been appointed liaison to the Community Preservation Committee. Bob discussed his role as being our advocate to the Finance Committee and offering clarity on procedures. Bob will plan to attend CPC meetings. Christine will copy him on all relevant CPC matters.

Discussion of CPC Goals and Draft Community Preservation Plan

The CPC began a discussion of the goals and priorities of the Committee. The Committee discussed the idea of setting aside of certain percentage of funds in the undedicated reserves every year, perhaps as much as 50% to fund large projects in the future; and also being more critical of proposals. There was discussion of not funding every eligible project; that there be some other test by which to guide decisions. The Committee expressed interest in not being the only source to fund a project; that there be other funding sources. There was additional discussion of looking to other Town boards and committees to take more of a role in the development of CPA proposals.

Christine will work to incorporate this discussion into the Draft Community Preservation Plan. She will also work to come up with a timeline for holding a Special Town Meeting, which includes bonding, advertising deadlines, etc. if the need to act quickly arises.

CPA Budget Update

Christine gave a brief update on the status of the CPA budget. Actual receipts from tax assessments, state match, and interest are in excess of \$1.5 million. There is \$59,870 in the open space reserve, \$28,870 in the historic resources reserve, and \$91,418 in the community housing reserve. The projected year-end fund balance undedicated reserve will be approximately \$703,000. Approximately \$782,000 has been appropriated for projects during FY07 and FY08, but only \$80,000 has been expended. Several of the high expense projects such as the Hamilton Housing Authority projects and Town Hall projects have not yet submitted bills.

MHP/CHAPA CPA Workshop Briefing

Christine gave a brief update of the Massachusetts Housing Partnership/Citizens' Housing and Planning Association sponsored workshop on Affordable Housing and CPA that she attended on December 13th. The workshop discussed various ways that CPA funds could be used to advance affordable housing. Many of the more successful communities have funded housing projects through the creation of an affordable housing trust fund. Several communities have either hired consultants who specialize in housing or part-time housing planners. Any of these expenses could be covered under the Community Housing CPA criteria. It was suggested that the Housing Partnership explore the possibility of presenting an affordable housing trust fund to annual Town Meeting.

Community Preservation Coalition Meeting

Stuart Saginor, Executive Director of the Community Preservation Coalition, will be coming to Hamilton to make a presentation on the Community Preservation Act. The presentation will take place on **January 31st at 7:30pm in the large meeting room at the HW Library**. Stuart will be covering such topics as CPA trends, legislative changes, future match estimates, etc. Other topics of interest to the CPC include CPA funding of affordable housing and bonding CPA dollars.

Christine will extend the invitation to attend the meeting to all Town Boards. The CPC approved use of \$50.00 out of administrative funds to cover the cost to use the Library's meeting room after their regular hours.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 10th at 7:30pm in the Memorial Room at Town Hall.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:15pm.