

## TOWN OF WENHAM

Community Preservation Committee  
 Meeting of Wednesday, October 29, 2014  
 Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Committee members, a meeting of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held on OCTOBER 29, 2014 at 7 PM in the first floor meeting room.

With a quorum present, Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 7 PM

Committee Present: At-Large Members: Harriet Davis; Patrick Waddell, Clerk; Kennon Anderson; Tom Starr; Town Representatives: Arthur Burt, Wenham Housing Authority; Leo Maestranzi, Conservation Commission; Virginia Rogers, Planning Board; Barbara Locke, Historic District Commission.

Not Present: Dennis Curran, Joint Recreation Department

Also present: Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary

Town Officials present not participating: Selectman Ken Whittaker

Public Information:

This meeting was recorded with permission by HWCAM.

Agenda

Minutes – October 6, 2014

CPA Revenues, Appropriations, Expenditures 2006-2014

Approval of Minutes October 6, 2014

*Mr. Maestranzi moved, and it was seconded, to approve the minutes of October 6, 2014. The motion carried unanimously.*

Public Hearing

Ms. Davis opened the public hearing at 7:02 PM.

Brief outline of the four areas of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding by current CPA members

*Arthur Burt* gave an overview of affordable housing in Wenham stating that currently 8.69 percent (122 units) of Wenham's housing meets the criteria of affordable housing. The goal is to reach and maintain the necessary ten percent affordable housing as set by the state to avoid *The Comprehensive Permit Act* which allows developers to override certain aspects of municipal zoning bylaws and other requirements if they designate twenty-five percent of the units as affordable; this is also known as "40B".

*Mr. Waddell* went on to explain the definition of "affordable housing" as housing subsidized by the state/ town. He noted there are various ways to provide affordable housing and suggested the Town work with other organizations to achieve the affordable housing goal. Currently, a comprehensive permit has been submitted to the Town. If this project were completed, it would meet and exceed the desired ten percent affordable housing goals. If the town does not reach the ten percent ratio of affordable housing, a large 40B project could be forced onto the town. One example of this type of development in Wenham is Middlewood off Burley Street. This development was built after years of legal battles.

*Mr. Maestranzi* observed that open space is a part of Wenham's character and development would not only change the way Wenham looks but would impact the town's budget, public safety departments, and schools. He stressed the importance for Wenham to remain proactive.

In the absence of *Denis Curran*, Ms. Davis reported that Mr. Curran is on the Working Group for a new affordable pool (cost not to exceed \$2 million.) Hamilton / Wenham are working together towards a new plan for a pool. Fairhaven Field, behind the library, has been brought forward as a possible alternate site to Patton Park. The Working Group is seeking public input. It is anticipated that an application for CPA funding for a pool will be submitted in both towns.

*Barbara Locke* noted the historic district in Wenham is from the Wenham/ Beverly Town line to the Wenham/ Hamilton town line. She reviewed that CPA funding for the historic category has included paying the debt on the renovation of the historic town hall, the restoration of the civil war memorial fence, and the preservation of town documents; the preservation of historic graves in town continues to be addressed.

Brief outline of current (CPA) fund balances

Ms. Rogers provided copies of the CPA Revenues, Expenses & Appropriations for Fiscal Years 2006 through 2014 to the Committee and the public and summarized the fund balances.

CPC

APPROVED 11.3.14

Total revenue collected: \$4,153,969 (Total collected in taxes: \$2,438,025; Total State match: \$1,609,411; Total Earnings on investments: \$106,533)

Less Total Expenditures: \$1,836,605 (Historic, Town Hall, Housing, Recreation, Administration)

Less Total Appropriated: \$197,825 (plus \$30,000 Cemetery Preservation)

Remaining balance in the fund: \$2,089,541 (Undesignated - \$1,333,519 (can be spent on any of the four areas)

Reserved Open Space - \$467,293 (no funds spent to date); Reserved Housing - \$156,000; Reserved Historic - \$132,732

Brief discussion of prior CPC funding

It was noted the town has not yet used CPA funding to purchase Open Space. Mr. Maestranzi noted the importance of letting this money accrue in the event that an open space parcel of interest / value to the Town becomes available.

Ms. Davis announced that applications to request CPA funding must be submitted no later than January 9, 2015. The hearing was open to the public for comments and questions.

*Jamie White*, Affordable Housing Trust, asked that the CPC view the CPA funds with a strategic view going forward, stressing that CPA funds were designed to be used by communities as a "smart growth tool" to address growth while preserving a town's character. He noted Wenham has the highest tax rate in Essex County, and Wenham real estate sales are down 52% compared to other area communities. He supported that CPA funds be used strategically to help reduce the tax rate, be used towards affordable housing, and be applied toward the purchase of open space to protect large properties from development. Mr. White went on to suggest the CPC/Town to work with other organizations, obtain conservation easements, and be open minded to senior housing, which demands less on the town services and meets a current need.

*Ken Whittaker*, Selectmen, offered some edits and updates to the CPC written public information regarding the purpose, opportunities, and criteria.

*Fire Chief Bob Blanchard* talked about the possibility of bringing the old "Enon 1" 1849 pumper fire apparatus back to town that has been on loan to a museum in Newbury since 2006 when the Town Hall / Police Station building project began. The first step is to ask the Town for a location, then have plans, and cost estimates done to provide the proper storage to bring it back to town. A CPA application is being considered for next year.

*Josh Anderson*, Affordable Housing Trust, Chair first thanked the CPC for their volunteering their time/ service.

He reiterated the vulnerability of open space to 40B developments and the need to achieve the affordable housing goal and protect the tax rate, citing benefits to working together on a friendly 40B project.

It was questioned if CPA funds are used for affordable housing, if those housing units must remain affordable in perpetuity.

*David Geikie*, Planning Board Chair, explained how the Planning Board has used development opportunities to acquire funding for affordable housing. He estimated about \$850,000 was in an account to be used for affordable housing and together with CPA funds would show "good faith" on the part of Wenham for additional funding from the state. He specifically referenced Harborlight and the Maple Street property as being a good project to invest in, and encouraged the CPC to support the Maple Street project opining that it is the right project for Wenham at this time.

The Chair recognized Shawn Farrell, Hamilton, who asked the CPC to support the pool, and weigh all options in a favorable light. He reported on the Hamilton Wenham joint meeting regarding the pool.

*Arthur Burt* referenced his hometown of Woburn saying it has changed from open space to being heavily developed. He strongly urged the town to make an effort to meet the ten percent affordable housing to prevent what has happened to many other north shore communities.

Ms. Davis closed the hearing at 7:48 PM.

The next meeting of the CPC is Monday November 3, 2014 to discuss the application process, and timeline.

The Committee unanimously adjourned at 7:59 PM

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley

10.30.14