



TOWN OF NORWELL

345 Main Street
Norwell, MA 02061
(781)-659-8000

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Community Preservation Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2022

The Community Preservation Committee meeting was called to order by Bob McMackin, Chair at 7:00pm. Also present were Chris Greeley, Vice Chair, Patrick Kelly, Nancy Dooley, Susan Powell via Zoom, Brendan Sullivan, Rachel Wollam, Brian Greenberg via Zoom and Bob Norris. Guests included: Select Board Members: Bruce Graham, Andy Reardon and Jason Brown. Also present Advisory Board Members: Liz Hibbard, Jesse McSweeney and Community Housing Trust members included Gregg McBride, Brittany Reardon, Don Mauch. and resident Joe Carroll from Knollwood Road. The meeting was held in the Osborn Room.

Administrative Matters

Motion; made (McMackin) to accept the Agenda of December 8, 2022 as written; seconded and passed 9-0-0 by roll call vote.

Motion; made (Dooley) to accept the minutes of November 17, 2022 seconded; and passed 9-0-0 by roll call vote

CPC overview and video. The CPC Historic, Open Space and Recreation, AF Housing, 20 years over 50 projects.

Membership:

Bob McMackin, Chair and Liaison to Conservation Commission

Chris Greeley, Vice Chair, At Large

Bob Norris, Clerk, At Large

Rachel Wollam, Liaison to Historical Commission

Brendan Sullivan, At Large

Patrick Kelly, Liaison to Recreation Commission

Susan Powell, At Large

Brian Greenberg, Liaison to Planning Board

Nancy Dooley, Housing Authority Representative

Bruce Graham asked that we explain Criteria for projects. Determining Project Eligibility see page 4 of the application for criteria.

Susan Powell – shared concerns for the CPC article support vs Advisory Board supporting the articles.

Jesse McSweeney asked for a time line for reviewing the applications and how many applications we received. Jesse asked that we get them the Advisory Board the details on the applications in January.

Discuss 2023 Special Town Meeting Article

- **St Helen's Property**

Chair of the Select Board, Bruce Graham presented the St. Helen's Application. If the Town decides to purchase the property it will need to be bonded through the CPC. \$9,000,000.00 for 20 years is roughly \$900,000.00 per year leaving very little left to work with for new applications making not only vetting projects but prioritizing projects more difficult but also more significant. Roughly two years ago the town learned of the archdiocese closing of the St. Helen's Church. The Select Board met many times in executive Session and unanimously decided it was so important to buy this property. Thinking it would be in the 3-4 million dollar range they put in an offer \$250,000.00 over the highest bid. The Select Board was shocked to hear the highest bid was 8,800,000.000. hence the towns' bid \$9,050,000.00 subject to Town Meeting and funding. The competition spending 8.8 million would likely try to build 350-400 units and the soil would likely support 200-250 units. As it turns out the 8.8 isn't a bad number given the circumstances. There was much discussion over what to do on the Select Board. The Select Board hired Judy Barrett and a sub consultant to discuss options for the property. Also, abutters met with the Select Board with a power point presentation of what they envisioned the property to look like after being built. 25% would likely be used for a ball field, walking trails and open space. Bruce discussed the difference between a 40B development vs a CPC funded affordable housing project. When using CPC funds 100 % of the units need to be affordable vs market rate and affordable units mixed. Bruce explained if we do nothing, we get 250 units and a buffer due to the wetlands and we would get taxes. Plan A do the RFP or Plan B we do nothing and left whatever happen to us. We may be able to approach the developer to buy down the project. An appraisal is being conducted over the next few weeks. The appraisal must fall within the parameters of the CPC and Town Counsel will decide this. Some discussion took place about separating the property out to where there are 3 parcels of land and separating the funding by parcels too. We cannot craft an article specific enough with an affordable housing plan in place so there is some fear of purchasing the land and have the property sit. Susan Powell, CPC member thinks a very specific plan surrounding this application must be in place in order for the CPC to properly vote on the application. 186 units are needed to get us to 10% affordable housing inventory. Brendan Sullivan, CPC Member does not want to see a repeat of the Carleton property 8.8 acres that was set aside for affordable housing and is

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sitting vacant after failing to pass building at town meeting. Chris Greeley's question is, has the Select Board considered reducing the ask to the CPC? Jess McSweeney asked about other town owned property that could be used for affordable housing. Bruce thought it would not be possible to build small scale in neighborhoods like previously planned since we have failed attempts. Liz Hibbard asked for clarification of numbers. \$900 k a year for 20 years leaving roughly 325K a year for projects? Don Mauch thinks this is a foolish and odd business deal. He would like to know why we cannot see the other bids. We would be paying a premium to control affordable housing density. Joe Carroll asks that we don't forget the neighborhood. The neighborhoods will be impacted. Joe said he and the neighborhood do not want to be hearing numbers. He wants the neighbors to be considered. Liz is wondering if the town has thought through the private sector avenue to buy down the density. Liz is suggesting working with the developer to create a friendly 40B situation. Jason Brown thinks the right way to go may be the way Liz Hibbard described by working with a developer to buy down the density to a level the neighbors are comfortable with. Liz Hibbard expressed her concerns about spending the 9 million then not having the resources left to built-out the rest of the project for 20 years. Susan Powell believe we need a definitive specific plan in order to deliberate about this application properly. Andy Reardon addressed the lack of time to prepare a proper plan. The Select Board was only given two weeks and not the time promised.

Question the need to be revisited:

Can Affordable Housing be conditioned in an article to prevent the land from sitting?

Can we look into other types of financing to augment the CPC funds?

Can we do a buy down from a developer should the Town decide to pass?

How do we properly factor in the neighborhood's needs?

The Application discussion is continued to December 22, 2022 7pm Osborn Room.

Vouchers Presented November 17, 2022 through December 8, 2022 for payment.

Maltby & Co. \$3,900.00 Restore Cow Path, 15-194-8101-6799

Merrill Engineers, \$2,930.00 Carleton Prop. Trail Expansion, 15-194-8125-6821

Gale Assoc. \$ 5,672.00 Osborne Field West Side Study, 15-194-8131-6826

Payroll \$570.00 Administrative Payroll

Motion: by (Dooley) to approve the presented bills as amended; seconded and passed roll call vote 8-0-1.

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, December 22, 2022 – Simon Hill, Cushing Center, St. Helen's

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Adjournment:

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 8:47pm and passed by roll call vote unanimously.

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