

Groton Community Preservation Committee

Minutes of Regular Meeting of 4 January 2005

Location: Groton Town Hall, 2nd Floor Lunch Room

Time: 7:30 PM

Members Present: Robert DeGroot, Bruce H. Easom, Dan Emerson, Rick Hughson, Carolyn Perkins and Mike Roberts

Members Absent: As of yet unnamed representative of the Parks Commission.

Attendees: Peter DiFranco

At the start of the meeting, all members indicated that they had been duly sworn in by the Town Clerk. The Committee consists of the following members:

Robert DeGroot	Representative of the Historical Commission
Bruce H. Easom	Representative of the Conservation Commission
Dan Emerson	Representative of the Housing Authority
Rick Hughson	Member at Large
Carolyn Perkins	Representative of the Planning Board
Mike Roberts	Member at Large

The position of the representative of the Parks Commission has not yet been filled but a quorum of all seven members of the Committee was present.

The first task of the Committee was to decide what officers the Committee should establish. It was voted unanimously to adopt a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary as the Committee's officer positions. The second task of the Committee was to decide who would be the Committee's first Chair. Bruce H. Easom asked who is interested in being Chair. Mike Roberts responded that he would be interested. Bruce H. Easom asked if there was anyone else interested in being Chair. No one else expressed interest. Carolyn Perkins moved to elect Mike Roberts as Chair. Dan Emerson seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mike Roberts moved that Carolyn Perkins be elected Vice Chair. Dan Emerson seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote. Dan Emerson moved to elect Bruce H. Easom for the position of Secretary. Mike Roberts seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The Committee discussed the procedures for taking, approving and posting meeting minutes. Mike Roberts emphasized the need to keep the posted meeting minutes up to date.

Bruce H. Easom moved that the Committee adopt Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition, and its provision for small committees, as its parliamentary authority, to the extent that those rules do not conflict with any Town, State or Federal laws. As part of the discussion, Bruce gave out paperback copies of Robert's Rules to the Committee members and highlighted the section dealing with small committees on page 482. Carolyn Perkins seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mike Roberts asked the members of the Committee what they believed to be the important issues concerning the Community Preservation Act.

Robert DeGroot reported that the Historical Commission has a limited budget and sees the CPA as a way to help the Commission carry out its objectives. Robert mentioned the task of archiving the physical attributes of Groton's historic resources as an important task. Mike Roberts noted that the Historical Commission plays an important role in the administration of the Community Preservation Act because the Commission's approval is required on CPA project proposals that claim historical benefits.

Rick Hughson said his initial interest in the CPA came from the observation that the town was already spending money on CPA issues and thought the Town could use the state matching funds. Rick said that he wants to see that the CPA does save the town money. Rick also mentioned that housing is an important issue for the town. He said 40B housing projects are already having an important impact on the Town's financial well being.

Bruce H. Easom said his interest in the CPA came from the realization that the Town was already spending money on CPA-related projects and that the Town's residence could benefit from the opportunity to get state matching funds to help fund these projects. Bruce said that the CPA would be useful to help preserve the rural and historic character of the town that make it such a desirable place to live.

Dan Emerson said that he was interested in providing additional affordable housing stock in Groton and to help mitigate the effects of the 40B process. Dan said that an affordable housing group, in combination with the CPA, could go a long way toward addressing housing issues in town.

Carolyn Perkins said that she thought the CPA will help implement and supplement what the town wants to do in the Master Plan. Carolyn reported that our housing plan has now been approved by the Department of Housing and Community Development so, as long as the Town shows progress toward its goal of 10% affordable housing, 40B's can be limited or stopped. Carolyn said that she has been in Groton for 12 years and has seen Groton grow and its people struggle to preserve the land. Carolyn said that she likes to see that people care about the future of the Town. In other towns, she has not seen the

level of commitment that sees here in Groton. Finally, Carolyn recommended that the Committee use planning documents that have been developed by other towns that have already adopted and implement the CPA. Mike Roberts responded that he would bring to the next meeting a draft of a Community Preservation Plan that he put together during his time on the Community Preservation Research Committee. Mike said that the people understanding the process is key to implementing a successful CPA program. Mike said that the plan should be a source of inspiration for people to bring forward ideas to benefit the Town. Mike recommended that people visit the Community Preservation Coalition's web site to see other town's Community Preservation Plans. Mike said that Acton has an excellent plan.

Dan Emerson said that he was interested in the CPA because it can be used for 40B buy-downs where the funds are used to increase the number of affordable units from the 25% minimum in a 40B development. The CPA funds are used pay the developer the difference between the market value and the affordable price of a unit.

Peter DiFranco asked how the CPA could be used to address recreation interests. Mike Roberts explained how CPA funds are allocated among open space, historical preservation, affordable housing and recreation. Peter noted some needs for funding including restoration of a building and restoration of a historic painting in the possession of the recreation department.

Mike Roberts moved that the Committee establish a subcommittee to liaison with the Assessors, Treasurer and the Town Accountant. Carolyn Perkins seconded the motion. During the discussion Mike Roberts suggested that having this subcommittee have a timeline and scheduling function. Rick Hughson suggested having people help Groton residents get information about the exemptions they may be entitled to. Bruce H. Easom said he was prepared to vote against the motion because it seemed that establishing a subcommittee would be too bureaucratic for a committee of just 7 members. He said that he would prefer to just get one person to act as the committee's contact with the Assessors office and another member to act as the contact with the Town Account and Treasurer. Mike Roberts tabled the motion. Mike then moved to appoint Bruce H. Easom to be the liaison with the Assessors office. Rick Hughson seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote. Mike Roberts moved to appoint Rick Hughson as the Committee's liaison with the Town Accountant. Robert DeGroot seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Peter DiFranco mentioned that Mr. Gary Blau at the Department of Revenue might be helpful to the Committee in implementing the CPA. Peter asked if the Committee would vote to generate a warrant article to add a member of the Recreation Commission to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). The committee discussed the idea but the general consensus is that it would be more appropriate for the Committee to provide a recommendation to the Selectmen and ask that the selectmen write and sponsor the warrant article. Bruce H. Easom volunteered to contact the Selectmen's office to see if one of the Selectmen has been appointed to be a contact person for the CPC.

Carolyn Perkins moved that the Committee recommend to the Selectmen that they appoint a member of the Recreation Commission to the CPC as a voting member because Parks and Recreation are separate entities in the Town. Mike Roberts seconded the motion. During the discussion Bruce H. Easom said that he thought that it was a bad idea for the Committee to begin recommending changes the Towns by-law's at its first meeting. Bruce said he was not opposed to having a Recreation Commissioner as a Committee member but thought that such a change was premature. Bruce recommended that the Committee re-visiting this after it had some experience with the current make-up. Carolyn Perkins withdrew the motion.

Bruce H. Easom volunteered to contact the Selectmen's office to find out if one of the selectmen is the principal contact with the Board of Selectmen. Bruce also volunteered to begin talking with the Assessors about implementation of the CPA. Rick Hughson volunteered to talk with the Town Accountant about budget issues and to the Tax Collector and Treasurer. Mike Roberts volunteered to generate agendas for the next meeting and get them posted.

Peter DiFranco suggested putting together a budget for community outreach. Peter suggested finding out if (or how) the committee could spend funds for outreach in fiscal year 2005 when the first CPA funds would become available in fiscal year 2006.

Robert DeGroot moved to adjourn the meeting. Carolyn Perkins seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce H. Easom

14 January 2005
Date

Secretary
Groton Community Preservation Committee

These minutes were approved as amended by unanimous vote on 14 January 2005.