

Groton Community Preservation Committee

Minutes of Regular Meeting of 14 January 2005

Location: Groton Town Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room

Time: 7:30 PM

Members Present: Robert DeGroot, Bruce H. Easom (Secretary), Dan Emerson, Rick Hughson, Carolyn Perkins (Vice Chair) and Mike Roberts (Chair)

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

Attendees: Peter DiFranco

The Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Peter DiFranco began by reporting his findings on how CPA funds are allowed to be used for recreational activities. Peter handed out a two-page summary entitled *Community Preservation Act Observations and Applicability to Recreation*. Peter concluded that the act applies to non-commercial youth and adult sports, that restoration of Squanacook Hall might be eligible for CPA funds as it is an historic structure and changes in the CPC bylaws to add a Recreation Commission member would have to be approved by majority vote at Town Meeting.

The meeting minutes from the meeting of 4 January 2005 were reviewed and discussed. Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the meeting minutes of the 4 January 2005 meeting as amended. Robert DeGroot seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Progress on the action items from the 4 January 2005 meeting were reviewed. Bruce H. Easom reported that no one selectmen has been appointed as our contact person with the Board of Selectmen. Rich Hughson reported on his conversation with the Town Accountant, Valerie Jenkins. The Town Accountant believes that no CPA surcharge could appear on the first two tax bills of fiscal year 2006 but she is still researching the this and other implications of the CPA. She indicated that doubling up the CPA surcharge on the last two bills of fiscal year 2006 would be a possibility. The Town Accountant is still researching software options for handling CPA accounting activities. On the topic of state matching funds, the Town Accountant indicated that she could not provide definitive numbers on the amount of locally collected CPA funds by the state deadline of 15 October. This could result in the state matching funds slipping by a year. On the expectation of revenue, the Town Accountant reported that Groton has a 95% to 97% tax collection rate, which is among the highest in the Commonwealth. The Town Accountant estimated that about \$400,000 would be raised locally in fiscal year 2006. Rick reported that the Town Accountant is concerned about the workload increase in the

first year of the CPA. The Town Accountant will be putting the collected CPA revenue into a separate account as they are received. The Town Accountant reported that the Town can spend the funds before they are received. Tax anticipation loans are cheap and common. Tax anticipation loans of the state match portion are also allowed.

Bruce H. Easom reported that he visited the Tax Assessors office to begin coordination efforts between the Community Preservation Committee and the Assessors. He was asked if he could come back after 1 February 2005 as they were in the middle of processing their tax abatement applications and would have more time after the first of the month.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that there would be a conference in Wellesley, MA for members of Community Preservation Committees in towns that have just adopted the CPA. The Chairman and Secretary announced their plans to attend.

The committee discussed the need to set the length of terms for those offices approved during the 4 January 2005 meeting. Rich Hughson moved that the Committee adopt 1-year terms of office with terms expiring on or about the 4th of January of each year. Carolyn Perkins seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

The committee discussed the need for a representative from the Parks Commission be appointed to the CPC. Carolyn Perkins moved to authorize the Secretary to write a letter to the Selectmen requesting that immediate action be taken on the appointment of a representative of the Parks Commission as required by Chapter 22, Section 1 of the Code of the Town of Groton. Bob DeGroot seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote. The Secretary agreed to send a letter to the selectmen describing our need for a Parks Commission representative and the need to have this person help in the drafting of a Community Preservation Plan. The Secretary agreed to sign it.

The Chairman passed out a document entitled Draft Community Preservation Plan for Groton, MA that contained an outline of a basic Community Preservation Plan. The committee discussed the general layout of the draft document. Members of the Committee volunteered to draft language for the following topics outlined in the draft document.

Dan Emerson volunteered begin working on Regional Setting – political, Environmental Setting, Physiography, Natural Resources and Cultural Setting – population, demography

Mike Roberts volunteer to begin work on Capsule Prehistory/History

Bob DeGroot volunteered to begin work on Statistics – open space, housing, recreation, historic sites, archaeological sites, others

Bob also volunteered to work on How CPA Funds Can Be Used.

Bruce H. Easom volunteered to begin work on Open Space including, Definition, Statistics, Goals, and Community Objectives

Rick Hughson volunteered to begin work on Recreation including Definition, Statistics, Goals and Community Objectives.

Carolyn Perkins volunteered to begin work on Community Housing including Definition, Statistics, Goals and Community Objectives

Mike Roberts volunteered to begin work on Historic Resources including Definition, Statistics, Goals and community Objectives.

The Committee decided to hold off on working on The CPA Funding Application Process, Guidelines for Submissions and Review and Recommendation Criteria until they had a consensus on the above topics. The Committee decided that first drafts of the above topics should be due on Monday 7 February 2005. The Chairman volunteered to assemble the document from the parts submitted by the members.

The web site was discussed next. It was decided to take down the old information on the web site and begin posting approved meeting minutes and agendas. Rick Hughson volunteered to post to calendar pages on the web site so members could check the dates and times of upcoming CPC meetings.

The Chairman reported that a the CPC annual report is due by 15 February 2005. Carolyn Perkins volunteered to draft a report of about 2 paragraphs in length.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce H. Easom

27 February 2005
Date

Secretary
Groton Community Preservation Committee

These minutes were approved as amended by unanimous vote on 7 February 2005.