

Groton Community Preservation Committee  
Minutes from March 25, 2013 at 7:00pm  
Town Hall, 2nd floor conference room

Members Present: Bob DeGroot, Dan Emerson, Russ Burke, Bruce Easom, Gineane Haberlin, Laurie Smigelski  
Members Absent: Richard Hewitt  
Others Present: Dawn Dunbar, CPC Administrative Assistant

Chairman DeGroot called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. He said that he wanted to start the meeting by discussing a dilemma that was in front of them; a possible funding deficiency.

**1. Ledge Rock Fields – Project #2014-05**

Member Easom said that he had a meeting earlier that day with Patricia DuFresne, Town Accountant, Laurie Smigelski, Jon Strauss, and Town Manager Mark Haddad. He said that a letter was issued by DOR that the first round match of 26% was to be used for forecasting. Using the state match number at 26%, there would only be \$309K available instead of the \$360K that had been forecasted. Member Easom said that they could write a letter to DOR with supporting evidence and potentially be allowed to use his forecasted numbers, but they decided that the meeting not to do that.

Mr. Strauss said that because they were applying for a PARC grant, the plan was still to encumber the CPC funds (if approved by town meeting) until the PARC grant was awarded in the fall, should they be awarded the grant money. If they were not awarded the grant, they would go back to the spring 2014 town meeting to request the \$591K needed. Member Smigelski said that Town Manager Haddad had suggested putting the warrant articles together requiring a 2/3 vote. Chairman DeGroot said that a 2/3 vote would be required if the articles were put together, whereas a majority vote would be required for just the CPA article. Ms. DuFresne said that she didn't feel as though they would have a budget shortfall as it would be two (2) different funding sources under one (1) warrant article requiring a 2/3 vote. She added that she would need the revised budget to be voted on by the Committee and updated numbers to be placed on the warrant.

Member Burke asked what the bond amount was. Ms. DuFresne said \$591K instead of \$500K. Chairman DeGroot asked because of how the funding was proposed, would it affect the PARC grant. Member Easom said that since he only had experience with Land Grants he didn't have an answer but assumed that because the application packages were similar the reimbursement would be the same in that you would have to show that the money was available. Chairman DeGroot stated that money coming in the form of a bond from a town would hopefully speak volumes. Mr. Strauss added that he was asked to provide the warrant article wording which Town Manager Haddad was talking care of.

Mr. Strauss asked if it was possible to encumber future funds now. Chairman DeGroot asked Mr. Strauss if he was asking if future money could be set aside now. Ms. DuFresne said that they would be obtaining the authorization to bond \$591K for the project but when it actually came time to bond the project, they could bond for less. She said they wouldn't be bonding the money right away.

**Member Burke moved that the original recommendation to Town Meeting for Project #2014-05, Ledge Rock Fields, be amended to show \$309,000 to come from the Unallocated Reserve in order to be consistent with the estimation guidelines from DOR. Member Easom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Strauss reiterated that if the article was successful, they would encumber the CPA funds. If the PARC grant was unsuccessful, they would go back to town meeting in the spring of 2014 to request \$591,000 to fund the cover the costs of the project. He added that they met with the Dunstable CPC that day to discuss the project and get on their radar as a possible additional funding source for this project.

Member Easom said that based on this new information, he revised the budget numbers to reflect the 26% state match they were supposed to be basing their budgets on. He said the bins had the following amounts available:

- Community Housing - \$251,295.68
- Historic Reserve - \$130,762.80
- Open Space - \$3,725.73
- Unallocated Reserve - \$309,371.68

(The amount in Open Space and Unallocated Reserve bins reflected what was available after Surrenden Farms had been paid.)

**Member Easom moved to adopt the new amended budget. Member Haberlin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Chairman DeGroot moved to authorize Member Easom to sign off on the amended budget amounts for the warrant. Member Emerson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **2. Project Updates**

1. **2010-01 – Field of Dreams** - Member Smigelski had no updates.
2. **2012-08 – Boutwell House** – Chairman DeGroot had no updates
3. **2013-03 – Cons Com Fund** – Member Easom said that they were now the proud owners of the Walker/Cox property adding that he would have a detailed report at the next meeting.
4. **2013-04 – Fitch’s Bridge** – Member Easom said that at the last meeting they talked about how and where money might be transferred and who would be approving the invoices. He said that in the past the invoices had been submitted to the CPC for signatures. The warrant article because of how it was worded said that the Town Manager would be the person in charge of expending the funds. He said that the DOR had responded and would not allow CPA and stabilization funds to be placed in the same account. Two (2) separate accounts will need to be set up. Member Easom said that Town Manager Haddad would be authorizing the invoices instead of the CPC. Member Burke said that they would get periodic updates. Member Burke added that some items would be blended but that it would be set up so money would be spent on specific budgeted items. Member Easom added that a 10% contingency had also been put in place. Member Easom said that he guarded the CPC money very closely and felt they should keep a tight rein on their money. Member Burke said that a request for contingency funds would have to come in the form of a change order which would be reviewable. It was decided that a simple request by the CPC to be able to review change orders would be suitable.

## **3. Minutes**

**Member Easom moved to approve the meeting minutes of 2/11/13 as drafted. Member Emerson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Member Haberlin abstained from the vote.**

**Member Easom moved to approve the meeting minutes of 2/25/13 as amended. Member Emerson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **4. Budget Update**

Member Easom said that according to the Registry of Deeds, the February numbers were 2.67% lower than February FY2012. He said that the numbers were still 17.76% above where they were last FY. He said that if the trend continued this way, they could expect to receive \$201,064 like in FY12 plus an extra \$34,000.

Member Easom said that because the state match had dropped from 100% in earlier years, the Community Preservation Coalition had been trying to come up with a way to help member communities. Because raising the registry fees was not possible they were able to arrange that the first \$25 million of any state surplus would go back to the CPA communities.

**Member Emerson moved to adjourn at 8:16pm. Member Smigelski seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Dunbar  
CPC Administrative Assistant