



TOWN OF GROTON
173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

Community Preservation Committee
Bruce Easom, Chair
Timothy Siok – Parks Comm.
Carolyn Perkins - Planning Board
Robert DeGroot – Historical Comm.
Daniel Emerson - Housing Auth.
Michael Roberts - at large
Richard Hewitt - at large

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday, March 12, 2018
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall, 173 Main Street
Members Present: Robert DeGroot, Bruce Easom, Daniel Emerson, Richard Hewitt, Mike Roberts, Carolyn Perkins
Absent Members: Timothy Siok
Others Present: Russ Harris, Steve Lieman, June Johnson, Leslie Lathrop, Robin Eibye

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Bruce Easom at 7:04 p.m., and the agenda was reviewed.

FY2019 APPLICATION PROPOSALS

2019-01 HOUSING COORDINATOR

- Richard Hewitt said he was not interested in how Fran Stanley spends her time. He's interested in the state of community housing and how well the Town is achieving its goals. Mr. Hewitt said he would like another letter sent requesting that the application provides an update on the state of the housing needs in the Town of Groton and how well the Town is meeting those needs. Mr. Hewitt said the information should also be included in an annual report.

2019-02 FIRST PARISH – PHASE 2

- Bruce Easom read the following: The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court's decision on the Acton church case concluded that the constitutionality of such grants must be evaluated under our three-factor test: a judge must consider whether a motivating purpose of each grant is to aid the church, whether the grant will have the effect of substantially aiding the church, and whether the grant avoids the risks of the political and economic abuses that prompted the passage of the anti-aid amendment. We also conclude that, in light of the history of the anti-aid amendment, a grant of public funds to an active church warrants careful scrutiny. Because the judge applied this three-factor test incorrectly in denying the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction to prohibit disbursement of these grants, we vacate the order denying the motion. As to the grant to preserve the stained-glass windows in the main church building, we remand the case to the Superior Court for entry of an order allowing the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction barring disbursement of the grant. As to the grant to fund a "Master Plan" to preserve all three of the buildings belonging to the church, we remand for further proceedings consistent with this opinion.

A discussion ensued about the three-factor test and the SJC decision on a Missouri case that involved funding preserving a church playground.

Leslie Lathrop said she strongly hopes the CPC will wait for the SJC ruling before endorsing the application and moving forward. Ms. Lathrop noted the importance of the separation of church and state and said the public should not be compelled to pay for a church they do not support. Ms. Lathrop asked if any Committee members attend the First Parish Church. Michael Roberts said he is a member of the First Parish Church.

A discussion ensued about Town Counsel and the Committee agreed to send a letter to the BOS requesting Town Counsel's opinion on how the ruling impacts the CPC's decision to recommend the project. It was noted that the CPC needs to hear from Town Counsel prior to March 26. Committee members agreed, if there's a meeting with Town Counsel, they would like to attend such meeting.

Steve Lieman said the Committee should think about the three-factor test, and the fact that the motivating purpose of the application is historic preservation and substantial aid was not received.

Ms. Lathrop said the application offends her and she should not have to pay for another religious facility that she does not benefit from.

The Committee agreed to defer to Town Counsel on whether or not to move forward with the application at this time.

2019-03 PRESCOTT SCHOOL UPGRADES

- Bruce Easom said he is on the Board of Prescott Inc., and that he would leave the room if anyone was interested in discussing the application. No further discussion ensued.

2019-04 JD POOR MURAL PRESERVATION

- Nothing new to report since the last CPC meeting

2019-05 BADDACOOK POND RESTORATION – YR. 3

- Nothing new to report since the last CPC meeting

2019-06 MARION STODDART RIVERWALK

- Nothing new to report since the last CPC meeting

2019-07 LIBRARY POCKET DOORS

- Nothing new to report since last CPC meeting

2019-08 DUCK POND RESTORATION

- NOI for compressor has been filed.

2019-09 CONSERVATION FUND

- Nothing new to report since the last CPC meeting

CPC BUDGET UPDATE AND REVIEW OF CURRENT AVAILABLE CPA FUNDS

Mr. Easom provided an update on the monthly CPA Trust Fund Deposits from the Registry of Deeds and the CPC budget. (see attached)

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

A discussion about Surrenden Farms and affordable housing ensued.

The Committee reviewed and signed invoices.

MINUTES

Draft minutes from January 22, 2018, were reviewed.

Carolyn Perkins moved to accept the January 22, 2018, minutes as drafted. Robert DeGroot seconded and the motion carried 6:0. (Timothy Siok, absent)

Draft minutes from February 12, 2018, were reviewed.

Daniel Emerson moved to accept the February 12, 2018, minutes as drafted. Michael Roberts seconded and the motion carried 6:0. (Timothy Siok, absent)

Draft minutes from March 1, 2018, were reviewed.

Robert DeGroot moved to accept the March 1, 2018, minutes as drafted. Michael Roberts seconded and the motion carried 6:0. (Timothy Siok, absent)

Robert DeGroot moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Daniel Emerson seconded and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Eibye, Executive Assistant

APPROVED: MARCH 26, 2018
