**TOWN OF GROTON**

173 Main Street

Groton, MA 01450

**Community Preservation Committee**

Richard Hewitt, Chair – at large

Anna Eliot – Parks Comm.

Russell Burke – Planning Board

Bruce Easom – Conservation Comm.

Robert DeGroot – Historical Comm.

Daniel Emerson – Housing Auth.

Carolyn Perkins – at large



**MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Monday, November 8th, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Members Present: Richard Hewitt, Anna Eliot, Russell Burke, Bruce H. Easom, Daniel Emerson and Carolyn Perkins

Member Absent: Robert DeGroot

Others Present: Please see Sign-In Sheet

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Richard Hewitt at 7:01 PM.

**REVIEW 2021-2022 TWO-PAGE REQUIRED PROJECT SUMMARIES**

**2023-01 Conservation Fund FY2023**

Niko Gualco, Administrator for the Conservation Commission was present and provided overview of project details. This is the annual request from the Conservation Commission to ask for funds to replenish the Conservation Fund which is used for purchasing acquisitions that fall in line with the Town’s Open Space goals.

The Conservation Commission is requesting about $350K in CPC funds. The current balance in the Conservation Fund is approximately at $650K. Typically, the Conservation Fund tries to maintain anywhere between $750K to $1MM. Mr. Gualco noted that the price of land has increased significantly therefore they may need to reassess their target balance in the future. A few members of the Conservation Commission met with the Town Manager to discuss this possibility and he seemed open to adjusting this figure based on the growing value of the land parcels.

**2023-02 Priest Hill Open Field Habitat Restoration**

Niko Gualco, Administrator for the Conservation Commission was present and provided overview of project details.

The CPC funds of about $29.5K being requested will be used towards a wildlife habitat project for the newly acquired Priest Family Conservation area. Primarily the CPA monies would be used to restore the top of a drumlin of the former Chestnut Hill orchard back to open field and shrub habitat.

The Conservation Commission did submit an application for the MassWildlife Habitation Grant and will be notified in November of a decision. If they are awarded the grant, they will withdraw this CPC application.

**2023-03 Prescott Stone Project**

Richard Chilcoat and George Wheatley were present and provided overview of project details. The Groton History Center and Historical Commission are requesting CPA funds to help provide a secure and stable setting for the Prescott Stone by moving it to the Boutwell House.

CPC members agreed that this was a good project idea to help the public learn more about the Town’s history.

**2023-04 Marion Stoddart Riverwalk**

Paul Funch was present and provided overview of project details. CPA funds of anywhere between $20K - $65K are being requested to use towards making the Marion Stoddart Riverwalk a fully accessible trail. Mr. Funch will be submitting a grant application sometime in February in which awardees will be notified sometime during mid to late summer. They did receive a smaller grant back in April to cover the design work for this project.

CPC members liked the idea of having another trail available for use in town.

**2023-05 Prescott Elevator Design and Engineering**

Bruce Easom recused himself from this discussion.

Mary Jennings, Elizabeth Pawlak and Michelle Collette were present and provided overview of project details.

CPA funds are being requested to fund the design and engineering work required for installation of an elevator at the Prescott School. Applicant would like to make the 2nd Floor accessible to the public and ADA compliant.

Carolyn Perkins: Recommended that applicant provide total cost figures that will include full scope of the proposed project estimates therefore both the design and preservation restriction costs should be included as part of this total.

Brief discussion ensued regarding requirements to consider when doing any renovations with town owned buildings.

**2023-06 Housing Coordinator**

Applicant was unable to attend. The Town Manager is submitting his annual request to fund the Housing Coordinator position.

Russell Burke: Asked if applicant can provide an approximate amount for CPA funds being requested.

Committee members also took a moment to review a different request from the Town Manager to increase the funds appropriated for the CPA Administrative Fund to cover the Interdepartmental Administrative Assistant’s time and benefits used for CPC time.

**Russell Burke moved to approve the funding of the costs for the Interdepartmental Administrative Assistant’s CPC time and benefits subject to sufficient funding being available and authorized for use from the CPA Administrative Fund.**

**Daniel Emerson seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**2023-07 Bates / Blackman Improvements Including Accessible Path**

Mark Gerath, Robert Pine and Katy Coburn were present and provided overview of project details.

The Conservation Trust is requesting funds to use towards improving community access and safety at the Bates Blackman Conservation land which would be primarily comprised of doing repair work at the bridge that crosses into James Brook. They are also looking to potentially add a picnic area and maybe create another form of access to the new Indian Hill Music Center in the future.

Bruce Easom: Asked that they keep the original PDF format when submitting the next step of the CPA application due in January.

CPC members agreed that this was a good project idea and felt that the public would enjoy its use.

**2023-08 Tarbell Playground**

Donald Black was present and provided overview of project details. CPA funds of about $97K are being requested to replace the existing Tarbell Playground that is currently outdated and no longer in use. The Select Board gave the Park Commission permission to redo and reuse this space. The park is located on an easement that is still owned by the Town.

Anna Eliot: Does not believe the Town owns the easement in question and has no recollection of anyone coming before the Park Commission to express support for this project and having the Park Commission oversee this property.

Richard Hewitt: The appropriate land owners would need to authorize permission to do any work there. Any issues concerning ownership would need to be resolved beforehand.

Bruce Easom: If it is found that this is private property then it is recommended that the CPC require a Deed Restriction similar to what was asked of the Groton Grange during a previous application cycle. Mr. Easom also suggested that the applicant contact Town Counsel for legal advice regarding this matter.

**2023-09 Walking Track and Parking Safety (Cow Pond Brook Road)**

Donald Black was present and provided overview of project details. CPA funds are being requested to create a half mile walking track around the soccer fields and also to address the current parking situation there with the steep slope and look at ways to make it safe. A certain portion of the labor may be done by the DPW Department since they already have the necessary equipment and workers.

Carolyn Perkins: Asked about projected estimates and recommended that Mr. Black obtain a letter from the DPW stating which parts of the work will be paid for by the Town.

Richard Hewitt: With regard to including the parking lot as part of this proposal, Mr. Hewitt will contact the Coalition to see if this is eligible for CPA funding.

**2023-10 Tennis Court Replacement**

Donald Black was present and provided overview of project details. CPA funds are being requested to remove the existing damaged tennis courts at Woitowicz Fields and replace them with a tennis, pickleball and basketball court.

Carolyn Perkins: Requested that all costs be accounted for and included in the total estimate.

Bruce Easom: Requested that narrative and proposal details be included in the Project Description section of the application.

**2023-11 Groton Country Club Recreation Courts Project**

Sue Adams and Kirsta Davey were present and provided overview of project details. Equipment and labor costs have since significantly increased since they were awarded the CPA funds during the last application cycle therefore, they have returned to request additional funds. They are projecting a need for around $150K but that is still to be determined. They have also been exploring other funding options available to them.

Russell Burke: Encouraged them to research all funding assistance programs available.

**NEW / OLD BUSINESS**

**CPC INVOICES**

Committee members reviewed and signed one invoice.

1. Solitude Lake Management for Open Space and Recreational Restoration of Knops Pond and Lost Lake (CPA Project # 2021-02) in the amount of $1,500.00 with an Invoice Date of 10/28/2021

**MEETING MINUTES**

Committee members reviewed minutes from October 25th, 2021.

**Anna Eliot moved to approve the meeting minutes from Monday, October 25th, 2021. Russell Burke seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**Russell Burke moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 PM. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted by Sammie Kul, Inter-Departmental Assistant

**APPROVED: DECEMBER 13, 2021**