

**TOWN OF GROTON**  
173 Main Street  
Groton, MA 01450



**Community Preservation Committee**  
Russell Burke, – Planning Board  
Anna Eliot, Vice Chair – Parks Comm.  
Bruce Easom, Chair – Conservation Comm.  
Robert DeGroot, Clerk – Historical Comm.  
Daniel Emerson – Housing Auth.  
Carolyn Perkins – at large  
Richard Hewitt – at large

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Monday, February 13, 2023  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Location: Virtual Meeting via ZOOM  
Members Present: Bruce H, Easom, Carolyn Perkins, Anna Eliot, Richard Hewitt, Russell Burke,  
Daniel Emerson, and Robert Degroot,  
Members Absent:  
Others Present:

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**The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Bruce Easom at 7:05 PM.**

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### **REVIEW FY2024 CPA APPLICATION FEEDBACK LETTERS**

#### **2024-01 Housing Trust Funds Request funding request totals \$200,000.**

Carolyn Perkins recused from commenting.

Russell Burke provided a brief overview explaining that the Housing Trust is seeking funds to establish a balance to acquire land if an opportunity arises. Richard Hewitt expressed concerns with the information provided in the application and requested that the percentages of the current Groton residents who qualify under each criteria including, 80%, 100%, and 125% of the annual median income be calculated. He also questioned if the impact on the school district has been taken into consideration once the Groton Farms development is constructed. Anna Eliot said that she found a few inconsistencies within the application and that the agreement that was requested by the Community Preservation Community has not been initiated. The Community Preservation Coalition recommended that the agreement should be between the municipality, the Community Preservation Committee, and the Housing Trust. Anna Eliot expressed that the Committee has been left out of the entire process. She recommended that a work session be held with a Housing member to ensure that a partnership is formed. Dan Emerson said that he had met with the Affordable Housing Trust who were seeking a letter of support and said that their performance has been satisfactory especially during the pandemic when emergency rental assistance was provided to 10 families in need. Dan Emerson also noted that he had met with the Housing Authority who informed him

that the Housing Trust missed out on a perfect opportunity to acquire a 12 unit apartment complex due to not having any readily available funding.

Bruce Easom informed the Committee he would not be voting on any of the proposals due to a conflict of interest.

Russell Burke said that the Planning Board voted unanimously to provide a letter of support for the Affordable Housing Trust. He disclosed that he is a Community Preservation Committee member and would not partake in voting.

**2024-02 Preservation of Lake Massapoag funding request totals \$4,000.**

Bob Accomazzo summarized that the funds requested would be utilized to treat the infestation of invasive species on the Groton portion of Lake Massapoag. Richard Hewitt recommended that the applicant receive letters of support from abutting neighbors, the Invasive Species Committee, the Groton Lakes Association, and the Great Pond Advisory Committee. Richard Hewitt also suggested a comprehensive management plan be submitted. Anna Eliot questioned the estimated \$19,000 needed for maintenance and where that additional funding would be sourced from. Bob Accomazzo said that applications have been submitted to the Towns of Tyngsboro and Dunstable and they have collectively donated thousands of dollars towards the preservation of the lake in previous years. Dan Emerson suggested that the person(s) presenting the proposal at Town Meeting be very knowledgeable and informative in regards to the funds provided by the other Towns.

Laurie Masiello, resident, expressed her support of the project and was willing to provide assistance.

**2024-03 Conservation Fund FY2024 funding request totals \$400,000.**

Bruce Easom said that the Conservation Commission has requested \$400,000 to be transferred into the Conservation fund to be utilized to purchase land that is open space in fee or purchase conservation restrictions that are held by private landowners. The money would not be expensed on maintenance. The Committee agreed that the application was well written. Carolyn Perkins commented if the amount requested is awarded the Conservation Commission's balance would surpass 2 million dollars. She requested that the Conservation Administrator submit a list of properties that are in process of being acquired. Richard Hewitt requested that there be an explanation of the \$600,000 donation that was earmarked.

**2024-04 Rebuild Major League Baseball Diamond funding request totals \$80,000.**

Carolyn Perkins requested that the applicant include additional details in the project description.

**2024-05 Construct 2 Softball Diamonds at Cutler Field West Groton funding request totals \$90,000.**

Anna Eliot said with the elimination of playing fields and the growing number of participants there is a great demand for softball fields. Cutler Field once contained two defined softball diamonds however, they have since overgrown and been taken over by the lacrosse and soccer programs. Carolyn Perkins requested that additional information be included in the project description.

**2024-06 Conceptual Site Engineering Costs funding request totals \$120,000.**

Dan Emerson said that the land was given to the Housing Authority from the Town to conduct a 5 year plan. They are requesting funding to ensure that the site is safe to be utilized. Carolyn Perkins requested that the ultimate goal be identified and additional information is included in the project description. Richard Hewitt said that it is important that the application references the fact that the Housing Authority was granted the land for 5 years from the Town. Bruce Easom suggested there be a sequence of the assessment process including access, ownership, and contaminants.

**2024-07 Housing Coordinator FY2024 funding request totals \$55,791.**

Carolyn Perkins summarized the request as an annual request that finances the housing coordinators salary and benefits. Anna Eliot recommended that the name of the housing coordinator be omitted from the final application.

**2024-09 Squannacook River Rail Trail (SRRT) funding request totals \$90,000.**

Bruce Easom recused himself from the discussion.

Carolyn Perkins said that the request is to finalize phase 4 of the Squannacook River Rail Trail. The total distance of construction is 2.5 miles. Richard Hewitt said he would like to see photographs of the completed sections.

Bruce Easom informed the Committees that there was a request from the Select Board to compile a list of projects that would benefit from a preliminary round of funding investigation where an engineer would be hired to determine reasonable cost estimates. This would eliminate a surprise at Town Meeting when the costs may exceed what was expected. Russell Burke questioned who would complete the estimates and said that estimates are time sensitive. The Committee briefly discussed that the request is an imperfect solution. Professional quotes can be received however; they can significantly increase as seen in today's economy. Bruce Easom said that he would inform Mark Haddad that the Community Preservation Committee would not be providing a list at this time.

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## REVIEW CPC BUDGET

Bruce Easom informed the Committee that there have been no changes.

Russell Burke asked if the \$80,000 from the Prescott Elevator project would be returned to the Community Preservation funding. Bruce Easom said that the \$80,000 was expended to conduct the engineering design. The \$250,000 that has been previously encumbered is now available in historic applications. Bruce Easom clarified that in FY2023 the \$75,000 came from Historic and \$175,000 came out of unallocated reserves. Anna Eliot asked if the Committee was \$80,000 short for FY2024. Bruce Easom said that he would calculate the numbers and recommend the appropriate amount that should be paid down for the month of February on the debt service of the 1 million dollar note.

Russell Burke moved to authorize Bruce Easom to determine the amount of middle school track debit service to be paid out of the FY2023 numbers.

The Committee said that they had settled on paying down \$900,000 previously. Bruce Easom said that he would confirm those numbers.

**Russell Burke moved to add an additional \$75,000 to pay down the principal of the 1 million dollar debt service on the middle school track. Daniel Emerson seconded the motion and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

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## REVIEW PROJECT UPDATES IF ANY

2020-03 Conservation Fund (BRUCE EASOM)- Bruce Easom said that the Conservation Commission is still working on the Purchase and Sale of the Casella Property.

2019-08 Duck Pond Restoration (RICHARD HEWITT)- no updates.

2021-10 WWI Cannon Restoration (BRUCE EASOM) Bruce Easom said that the project is close to completion and that the cannon was placed in front of the Legion Hall.

2022-01 Maintenance Shed Restoration (ROBERT DEGROOT) - Bob Degroot said that the project is on hold until spring.

2022-02 Feasibility Study for Cow Pond Fields; Waitowicz Field; Cutler Field (ANNA ELIOT) Anna Eliot said that they would be submitting an informal review with MEPA for the parcel between Cow Brook Pond Road and Hoyts Wharf Road. Matt Waterman has been hired as an engineer for the project.

2022-04 Affordable Housing Site Assessment Study (DANIEL EMERSON)- no updates

2022-06 Squannacook River Rail Trail (BRUCE EASOM) Bruce Easom said that work is being conducted between the North Crossing of Crosswinds Drive and the railroad down to Bertozzi. The project should be completed prior to the middle of April.

2022-09 Groton Dunstable Natural Field Restoration Plan (BRUCE EASOM)- no updates

2022-12 Groton Country Club Recreation Courts Project (ANNA ELIOT)- Anna Eliot said that the project is 90% complete, they are hoping to have a ribbon cutting tentative 5/6/23.

2022-14 GDRSD Middle School Track Construction (BRUCE EASOM) Bruce Easom said that the track came in \$7.8K above the second budget. Mark Haddad suggested financing the amount owed from the Town Budget rather than requesting additional funds from residents.

2023-03 Prescott Stone Project (ROBERT DEGROOT) Carolyn Perkins said that a second estimate was received from Josh Degen, and there are alternative stonemasons that need to be contacted.

2023-04 Nashua Riverwalk (CAROLYN PERKINS) Carolyn Perkins said that DCR denied the request to install observation and rest areas due to the restrictions posed by the Wetland Protection Act. There are plans for a six foot wide accessible trail including benches and signs. Grants are being explored for the construction and materials.

2023-05 Prescott Elevator Design and Engineering (BRUCE EASOM)-Bruce Easom said that the lowest bid came in at 1.2 million dollars. The project is being suspended and all borrowed funds would be returned to the Community Preservation Committee. A rescinding letter will be sent to the State. Bruce Easom said he is committed to the project and would be submitting another application at a later date.

2023-07 Bates / Blackman Improvements Including Accessible Path (RICHARD HEWITT) - Richard Hewitt said that the project is on hold until spring.

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## **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

### **CPC INVOICES**

Committee members reviewed the following invoice(s):

- 1) Anna Eliot moved to approve the invoice from Tobies Restoration for a reimbursement to the Groton Cemetery Association in the amount of \$1,477.18 with an Invoice Date of 02/23/2023. Richard Hewitt seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**
- 2) Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the invoice from the Groton Electric Light Department for the Duck Pond Restoration in the amount of \$7.65 with an Invoice Date of 01/31/2023. Russell Burke seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**
- 3) Russell Burke moved to approve the invoice from Solitude Lake Management for the CPC project FY 2021-02 Open Space and Restoration of Knops Pond and Lost Lake in the amount of \$750.00 with an Invoice Date of 11/03/22. Richard Hewitt seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

- 4) **Russell Burke moved to approve the invoice from SHEPCOINC for the CPC project FY 2022-06 Squannacook River Rail Trail for the amount of \$29,000. Daniel Emerson seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**
  - 5) **Carolyn Perkins moved to approve the invoice from the Community Preservation Coalition for the annual membership dues in the amount of \$3500.00 with an invoice date of 1/04/23. Richard Hewitt seconded and the motion carried. Bruce Easom abstain**
  - 6) **Anna Eliot moved to approve the invoice from The Groton Herald for publishing the public hearing notices in the amount \$89.70. Richard Hewitt seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**
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#### **MEETING MINUTES**

Committee members reviewed the minutes from December 19th, 2022.

**Anna Eliot moved to approve the meeting minutes from Monday, December 19, 2022 as presented. Carolyn Perkins seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

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**Anna Eliot moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Daniel Emerson seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

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Respectfully submitted by Kristine Fox, Minute Taker

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_10/16/23\_\_\_\_\_