



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

Community Preservation Committee

Richard Hewitt, Chair – at large
Aubrey Theall Vice Chair – Historical Commission
Bruce Easom, Treasurer – Conservation Comm.
Carolyn Perkins, Clerk – at large
George Barringer – Planning Committee
Daniel Emerson – Housing Auth.
Rob Foley – Parks Commission

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday, October 27, 2025
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall 173 Main Street
Members Present: Dan Emerson, Aubrey Theall, Bruce Easom, Carolyn Perkins, Richard Hewitt, Rob Foley
Members Absent: George Barringer
Others Present: Micaela Moore, Don Barry, Fran Stanley, Alison D Peterson, Judy Anderson, Kenneth Martin

The meeting was called to order by vice chair, Richard Hewitt, at 7:02 PM.

Discussion of Preliminary Proposals with Verbal Feedback- Richard Hewitt Explained the process of accepting projects as CPC eligible and giving preliminary feedback.

2027-06 Petapawag Housing- Kenneth Martin, the Director of the Ayer Housing Authority, introduced himself and explained that there is a partnership between the Ayer and Groton Housing Authorities. Mr. Martin explained to the committee the importance of a generator for seniors who are aging in place. He also gave the committee a history of other similar projects that have received funding from local CPCs. An engineer has gone out, so they do have an idea of the cost.

The committee agreed that this project is eligible for funding. The committee asked for more details and discussed the generator that has already been funded for the site. Richard Hewitt asked for urgency to be included. Mr. Martin explained the importance of this project for safety. Mr. Hewitt asked for the estimate to be tightened up. Aubrey Theall asked for letters of support and for contingencies to be built in so the project is fully funded. The committee also asked other questions about the generator.

2027-01 Electrical Upgrade of the Prescott School- The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Aubrey Theall stated that the Historic Commission has not yet been approached about this project. Richard Hewitt stated that he would like a sense of how urgent this project is. Carolyn Perkins asked if they had looked into any historic facilities grants. Bruce Easom brought up that the CPC had authorized a project for an elevator in Prescott previously, but that the project ended up costing more than the funds available, and the electrical upgrades needed were one of the reasons the cost was so high. He brought up that if this system could support an elevator, there could be the possibility of another ADA grant for an elevator in the future.

2027-02 Accessibility, Renovation and Restoration Improvements at Cow Pond Brook Fields- The committee unanimously agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. The committee discussed that if this project were to be funded, it would need to be bonded. Richard Hewitt brought up that he believes this project might be hard to pass and that he would like to see if Dunstable would help with funding. The

differences between various funding options were discussed. Rob Foley stated that the plans should be completed in January, which is before the final application is due. The committee discussed that the funding already provided should be enough for the plans to be finished. Mr. Hewitt expressed a concern about traffic at this site.

2027-03 Conservation Fund 2027- The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Bruce Easom stated that in previous years the starting asking amount was usually \$400,000, but this year the starting ask is \$300,000. Rob Foley asked what the end goal is for conservation. Mr. Easom's interpretation of the goal is to keep conserving land until the last parcel in town is either developed or protected. The committee discussed the goals of the Conservation Committee.

2027-04 Housing Coordinator FY27- The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Richard Hewitt stated that he would like the annual report.

2027-05 Pollinator Pathway Garden- Alison Peterson explained the project and the reasoning for it to the committee. The project will consist of allowing for further irrigation and creating a stone dust pathway that will provide a harder surface to better accommodate a cane. There is also a tripping hazard that a walking path would help eliminate. Committee members asked about the maintenance and what is included in the proposal. There was discussion about the site. The committee recommended obtaining letters of support and permission from the COA and including plot plans and photos. The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding.

2027-07 FY26 Housing Funds Request- Fran Stanley explained that the goal, like conservation, is to have a collection of funds available so that when an opportunity arises, the resources are ready. So far, the fund is at \$800,000. Ms. Stanley informed the committee of how the funds could be used. Bruce Easom requested that the title of the project be updated to 2027, and Ms. Stanley agreed to update the fiscal year date. The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding.

2027-08 Cutler Softball Field Establishment- The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Carolyn Perkins stated that she was uncomfortable with a project like this without a sign-off from someone in the town who is designated to oversee the site and project; a co-applicant from the town was requested. Rob Foley explained that this project has been discussed with Parks and that he suspects Parks will support the project. Richard Hewitt brought up his concerns regarding site control.

The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Don Barry presented the issues that the softball organization has been facing. Mr. Barry explained that although there has been a CPC project for the field, it is still not usable due to a lack of protective fencing. Mr. Barry stated that the organization wants the field to be up to an acceptable standard and to obtain a groomer. Carolyn Perkins asked about storage for the groomer, and Mr. Barry stated that a shed is being built. The committee suggested that the organization include its contributions in the application and include letters of support. The committee explained the importance of the scoring system in receiving funding. There was also discussion about insurance.

2027-09 Boutwell Playground Renovation- The committee agreed that the project is eligible for CPC funding. Richard Hewitt stated that he would like more specificity, noting that it is a broad financial request. Bruce Easom expressed concern with school projects like this, where the public is not allowed access five days a week, suggesting that the CPC should only fund 2/7ths of the project cost. The committee provided other examples of school projects that the CPC has funded.

Mr. Easom expressed that schools could quickly use a large portion of CPC funding, potentially precluding the public from benefiting. Mr. Hewitt noted that the schools have been very prudent in what has been brought to the CPC to avoid taking advantage. Rob Foley pointed out that those who use the facility during

the days it is not open to the public are still members of the public, namely the children. The committee considered these thoughts.

Carolyn Perkins stated that the school will need to be reminded to stay in contact with the CPC. Fran Stanley raised the issue of how the playground would be maintained if the Boutwell School were to stop being used as a school and also questioned why so much funding is needed. The committee discussed the possibility of touring the site. Aubrey Theall stated that he would like to know the urgency of the project.

Discussion of Tours- The committee discussed going on tours of the sites requesting funding. Micaela Moore asked the boards when the committee would like to go on the tours. The board asked Ms. Moore to send out a survey to find a Saturday that members could attend. The committee agreed that they would visit all sites to avoid creating bias.

CONTINUED PROJECT UPDATES

2023-04 Nashua Riverwalk (CAROLYN PERKINS)- Paul Funch is just waiting on signs. The committee discussed how Mr. Funch is very effective.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

- **Budget Discussion-** Bruce Easom discussed the Registry of Deeds funding that is expected and the trends. The committee reviewed the FY25 numbers along with other years. On the 15th of November, the state funding will be reported. Mr. Easom stated that the CPC website now has a budget folder where this budget information will be posted. The budget has been updated since the October Town Meeting, where both CPC articles were approved.

The committee discussed the FY27 funding, including the increases to the administration budget and CPC operating expenses. The committee discussed what they would potentially like to spend on the debt service for the middle school track; the amount is still undecided, and there was discussion of bonds and fixed notes. Rob Foley asked if there was a goal for paying off the debt. Aubrey Theall noted that there was a discussion of not taking on more debt until the current debt was paid off. Mr. Easom stated that there is a minimum, but the amounts paid toward debt are not fixed.

The committee noted that the coalition dues have increased and that the operating expenses should be raised. Mr. Easom stated he would have a discussion with the Town Treasurer regarding payment on the debt service. The committee discussed potential funding and debt repayment options. Carolyn Perkins made a motion to approve the proposed FY2027 budget. Aubrey Theall seconded the motion, and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

- **Sign Invoices/ Project letters-** No project letters were signed. Invoices were signed.
- **Next public meeting** will be November 11th 2025, in the 1st Floor Meeting Room of Town Hall.
- **Upcoming Meeting Decision-** The next meeting will be November 10th.

MEETING MINUTES

Aubrey Theall motioned to approve the minutes from September 8th as amended, and Rob Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. Aubrey Theall motioned to approve the minutes from September 29th as amended, and Rob Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed with five votes, with Richard Hewitt abstaining.

Aubrey Theall moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. Dan Emerson seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted by Micaela Moore, Inter-Departmental Assistant

Approved: ____ 11/10/2025 _____