

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF WEST NEWBURY
MINUTES OF MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2021 at 7:30 PM**

This meeting was recorded for the purpose of preparing Minutes.

- A meeting of the West Newbury Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held remotely on January 21, 2021. Judith Mizner, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. referencing the Open Meeting Law addendum regarding remote participation in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order due to COVID-19 and as included on the posted meeting agenda.
- Mizner, and members, Gary Bill, Bob Janes, Sherry Pruyn, Rick Parker, Tim Cronin, Angus Jennings, (Ex-Officio) and Barbara Gard, Administrator were present for this remote meeting. Jack Foley was absent. Residents and representatives of project eligibility applications were also present.
- Mizner began the review of Eligibility Forms submitted for CPC Funding, starting with the Historic Site Survey Phase III presented by the Historical Commission; Janes reported that the State has reimbursed the Town's \$12,500 spent on the second phase of the Site Survey, and this is now the proposed third and final phase of the project which includes 75-80 more properties. The Historical Commission is asking for the same \$25,000 requested in the previous phases. The State will reimburse \$12,500 for this phase if the grant application to the Mass Historical Commission is approved. Since this was funded twice before, Mizner asked for a motion to approve eligibility for CPC funds; Parker moved, Janes seconded; motion passed unanimously.
- Restoration and Painting Town Hall – Wayne Amaral, DPW director presented the project, saying that siding of Town Hall was upgraded done in the past (over 10 years ago), and it was painted at that time, but the paint did not hold. Painting is needed to stabilize the exterior. There are also repairs that need to be done before the re-painting commences, and painting is needed to stabilize the exterior. Amaral will meet with Gard (Administrator) Monday, January 25, 2021 to go over the submittal for funding. Mizner asked if Town Hall is on the State Historic Register. Amaral replied that it is and there are no restrictions on what they can do with the project other than not being able to remove a building or add to an existing structure. Mizner asked if there is any documentation establishing it on the State Historic Register. Amaral said he would get it to the Committee based on information he receives from the Historical Commission. Parker asked whether, if and when we need to replace windows in the future, there will be more restrictions. Amaral said there are surprisingly few restrictions. Parker

then asked about lead paint and if remediation is required. Amaral said that the paint on the siding is not lead paint as it was painted with latex some 10-15 years ago. Some trim around the windows is lead paint, and remediation is required, but there will only be slight sanding of the lead paint areas, to minimize exfoliation and that's where remediation will be done. Subject to documentation that Town Hall is significant to the History of West Newbury and on the State Register, Parker moved that this project is eligible for CPC funds; seconded by Janes, unanimous approval. Further discussion ensued with Parker asking about the discrepancy between funding requests to the Board of Selectmen and Capital Improvements \$63,000 vs. \$105,000 now. Amaral explained that the initial \$63,000 figure was discounted based on a request from the Historical Commission to look into eligible State grant funds that could reduce the Town cost, but upon further research the Commission advised that the Mass Historic Preservation Project Fund grant they had in mind was not a good fit for this project. The revised \$105,000 figure includes the full estimated expense without expectation that this would be offset by other grant funds. After a site visit with painting contractor, fire chief and DPW, Amaral said they also found more that needed to be done, so the higher figure is more accurate. Amaral will submit a detailed breakdown of estimated costs in the CPC Funding Application. Mizner asked for more fleshing out of the scope; Amaral said he had it all broken out item by item with a timeframe schedule. Jennings added that the Board of Selectmen in December, 2020 supported this project for CPC funding. Vote was unanimous approval for CPC funding eligibility.

- The Mill Pond All Persons Trail proposal was presented by Brad Buschur, Member Open Space Committee. He stated that as outlined in the current Open Space Plan, the demographics of the Town indicate the population is getting older, and that the Town's parks and recreation areas are not meeting the demands of this population. When considering where to expend funds to address shortcomings, Open Space Committee always came back to Mill Pond, because of the draw of water, amenities such as the lodge, the dock, and a place for dogs to swim. The Mill Pond Committee and the Board of Selectmen voted to advance this to CPC. The funds sought are \$60,000 with Open Space applying for a grant with the Mass Trails Association for half of it, \$30,000. The proposal is to create an existing conditions survey, wetland delineation, a concept plan showing parking, accessibility to amenities, with a public meeting to discuss the plan. The budget allows for the design team to take the project through permitting through the Conservation Commission. Mizner asked if there is a specific location for the trail. Buschur described the trail coming from an entry point (needing signage here), along a path to the amenities (dock, lodge, picnic tables, pond edge, dam for fishing) but that parking is a real issue. One proposal is for 20 cars, but respondents felt it was too many. Buschur said people don't know where to park and often it's too close to the water. Mizner asked for

documentation from the Mill Pond Committee and the Selectmen showing support for this project. Jennings said the Selectmen took a vote to authorize the application for the other grant to support this project and there is an email from Essex County Greenbelt, Dave Rimmer supporting the project. Buschur said he would submit minutes from both groups' recent meetings. Cronin asked about the restriction on paving including roads in the Conservation Restriction, whether this was just for the trail or for the roadway as well, Buschur stated it includes all roadways and trails. When asked about acreage, Jennings replied that the overall Mill Pond and Pipestave area is about 310 acres. Parker asked whether stone dust would be an adequate surface for the trail with a lot of tree roots. Buschur said to look at the path that leads to the hayfields as the best representation of what the stone dust path might look like over time. Parker moved to find that the project meets eligibility requirements for CPC funding. Janes seconded. Vote was unanimous.

- Buschur, Open Space Committee, also presented the Whetstone Greenway. Buschur said the proposed trail is approximately 600 feet long. Mizner asked if it is 600 or 450 as the application states. Buschur responded that with meanders it may be a full 600'. This existing greenway serves as transportation between two developments, Sullivan's' Court and River Meadows. Since it serves a transportation purpose, it needs to meet requirements of the Architectural Access Board of Massachusetts. Once they have the CAD they can see how long it will eventually be. Mizner asked if whether it should have been funded by the developer of the adjacent property. Cronin said that was the Planning Board's intent, but the developer only committed \$10,000 because he was only asked to fund the wetland crossing structures, and at the time it was not understood that the entire trail would need to meet accessibility requirements. Based on the changes to the understanding of what would be required the Planning Board modified its approval in the fall of 2020 to provide for the developer to set aside \$10,000 for this purpose. Mizner asked Buschur why he is calling this transportation. Buschur responded that it links mostly kids who live in River Meadows to Whetstone Street and then to Main Street, the library and to friends' houses. Mizner says the CPC can only fund Recreation and Open Space. Buschur said the residents of the new development Cottages at River Hill also use this trail to get from one place to another but people also use it for recreation, and for getting in their steps every day. Cronin said it needs to meet accessibility standards because it is a route between two neighborhoods. Mizner asked if it will allow access for vehicles. Buschur said not primarily but Town vehicles will need to access the area from time to time because the trail is located over a water line. The Water Department might need to use this trail for maintenance access. Cronin said that this would be considered recreation and open space as it connects to other open space areas and the Riverfront area. Gard asked if there was a Conservation Commission Order of Conditions. Mizner said the trail

was not part of the order, nor were the wetland crossings. Janes, a member of the Water Commission, said that no wooden structures should be placed over the water main, because they will be destroyed during maintenance. Cronin said that the new trail path would veer away from the water main, which currently runs under the wetlands near Sullivan's Court. Jennings said the Board of Selectmen have previously authorized the construction of a trail on this portion of Town-owned land on the condition that it meet the Building Inspector's approval for accessibility. Gard asked about the surface. Buschur said 8" thick paving detail-- 3/8 inch packed stone, not uniform, not like stone dust, which would lock in the pavers. There would be a bed of stone, with an aggregate and two wooden structures crossing wetland streams. The trail would be 6 feet wide narrowing to and 4 foot wide at the wetland crossings. Parker moved to find the project eligible for CPC funds; seconded by Mizner; unanimously approved.

- Vanessa Johnson-Hall, Essex County Greenbelt. Presented the Coffin Street Conservation Area, proposed project. She stated it is an opportunity to preserve 51 acres of land, which would protect trails, trail easements and open space with connections to the Riverbend Conservation area, would connect to an ECTA trail. The owner of River Run Farm is also going to be granting a conservation easement over River Run Farm so the Coffin Street area and Riverbend Conservation area would be joined as would the River Run Farm connection to the Long Hill Farm (APR), so it's a grand swath of open space. There are 6 Assessors' parcels that comprise this property. A map was shared by Greenbelt with Jennings showing it to the members. It would be a fee acquisition of 30 acres (shaded in blue) and a conservation restriction on 21 acres. The project is evolving and Johnson-Hall expects it to come together within the next week. There will be public trail easements through the conservation restricted areas and that would be the connection to the Riverbend Conservation area to Coffin Street and connecting to the trail easements on River Run Farm. John Dodge of Open Space Committee said that his committee is co-sponsoring this request as it has been a dream for a long time to connect Riverbend to Long Hill Farm and Dodge appreciated all the work that Johnson-Hall has put into it; Mizner seconded the appreciation. Mizner moved to find this project eligible for CPC funding and Cronin seconded. In further discussion, Parker thought this was a fabulous idea, but wanted to point out that there is a plan to retain a couple of parcels as future building lots. Mizner asked who is retaining the lots. Johnson-Hall responded that the seller was retaining three parcels that are not available for conservation. Similarly the land with conservation restrictions will be privately owned but there will be no permanent structures allowed on those parcels. The three parcels comprise about 23 acres. Parker and Cronin suggested the next phase of application to be very clear about which parcels are being preserved. The vote finding the project eligible for CPC funds was unanimous.

- Mizner brought up the CPC section of the Town Report; and reported 3 typos. There were no other proposed changes. Gard said she will make those changes and will submit it to Town Manager. A motion was made and seconded, and there was unanimous approval. Mizner thanked Jennings and Gard for preparing it.
- Updates of ongoing projects – Jennings reported the design phase contract for the Soldiers & Sailors Building has been signed and there is an upcoming meeting with the Town Planner, Building Inspector, Jennings, and McCarron. To discuss potential permitting issues so they may be addressed in the design process. Conservation Agent is not available, but will meet with the architects and engineers at Cammett at a later date. Another meeting the same day is scheduled with National Grid to see if there are any incentives for Energy Efficiency in the restoration of historic buildings. Cronin asked if the building uses gas; Parker said it will be a potential for an air source heat pump. Mizner asked whether there had been further discussion of the uses of the building as it would be useful information for the architect. Gard asked Jennings if the design team had any suggested uses. He replied that there had been earlier brainstorming, but nothing specific has been decided. Parker asked the status of bonding. Jennings said the Town will not issue debt until the design is done, the bid package is out and bids come in within the available budget; only then would it be timely to issue the debt. The Town wants to combine the debt with debt for the water tank and the chemical treatment building because it will get better financing terms. If bids come in over budget for Soldiers & Sailors then a decision will have to be made about funding of the project. Jennings added that the architects are working to have design finished by spring but design questions regarding use will need to be addressed as well as any permitting requirements. Responding again to Mizner's question about use, Jennings said, first floor assembly second floor office in terms of load bearing, but for details like finishes uses must be determined. The property has to remain in public use for the duration of the holding of the debt. The Town couldn't issue the debt and then after six months, decide to rent the space for private offices. Mizner suggested that if you are planning for construction in the summer, you would need to know how you are going to use the space at that time.
- Playground Page School – Jennings said the project is at the procurement stage, going forward with an RFQ, (Request for Qualifications) sometime around March 1st, which would then give designers about 3 weeks to send proposals to the Town. At the end of March there will be a designer interview process which would include interested parties (Town, school, parents). The designer will be finalized in mid-April. In May or June. Gard asked if there is a landscape design included for the land around the playground as the site is in the summer. Amaral (DPW) said there will be no additional landscape design, but that trees and

shrubs can be handled internally by the Town. Jennings said there is also a parents group which has committed to do some fundraising. Amaral agreed that the site is either too hot or too cold, so in his RFQ he is asking for the construction of one or two shade structures, something like what is in Amesbury's town park, because even if trees are planted, it's going to be some time (maybe 10 years) before they will provide shade.

- Mizner asked if any updates have come in for the CPC Plan for 2020. Gard said no, that she did fix the first two or three pages, and has reached out to folks to contribute. Mizner said that she offered to help on the housing section. Gard restated the point that this CPC plan could reflect the Town's view on housing and that perhaps some other creative ideas should be proposed (for instance, Habitat for Humanity houses) in order to bring more affordable housing units to the town.

Correspondence

The submittals of 5 Eligibility Forms

Phone call from Ross Haghighat Save Our Wetlands, LLC, but project was taken over by Essex County Greenbelt.

Administrative Details

Previous Meeting minutes were tabled because Chairman Mizner noted that she had received several different versions and had made edits based on a prior version not the draft included in the meeting packet. So going forward, minutes will be circulated with a request for comments/changes to come back to her within a week. Annual Town Meeting was set by the Selectmen to a Saturday, May 22, 2021. Warrant articles are due February 12, 2021 and the Board of Selectmen expect to close the warrant on Monday, February 22, 2021.

Having completed the business before it, the Committee adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent. Next meeting is February 18, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. Applications for CPC Funding are due on February 2, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Gard, CPC Administrator

Documents reviewed at the meeting:

5 CPC Eligibility Forms as outlined above.