

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF WEST NEWBURY
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 15, 2018**

A meeting of the West Newbury Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was held on February 15, 2018, in the First Floor Hearing Room. Members Joseph Anderson, Chair, Bill Bachrach, Ann Bardeen, Mary Harada, Bob Janes, and Sherry Pruyn were present. Judy Mizner took part under the Remote Participation procedure. Administrator Jean Nelson was also present, as were interested residents.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 by Anderson. He announced that Judy Mizner would be participating remotely due to geographic distance, and that would require naming those present. He listed those present: The CPC members, and Vanessa Johnson-Hall, Patricia Reeser, Jean Lambert, Steve Greason, Marlene Switzer, John Dodge, Annie Madden, Lark Madden, and Lennie Mirra.

Applications for Eligibility and Funding, Purchase of a Conservation Restriction at Brown Spring Farm, 866 Main Street, Applications filed by Vanessa Johnson-Hall, Assistant Director of Land Conservation, Essex County Greenbelt Association; and Patricia Reeser, Chair, West Newbury Open Space Committee

Anderson asked the Applicants to speak. Patricia Reeser of the Open Space Committee said that the parcel is on the Priority Parcel List. The Committee supports preserving the parcel as a farm. The Committee has discussed the parcel with Greenbelt in the past, and the Applications have been filed now because the price has been lowered.

Vanessa Johnson-Hall of Greenbelt noted that Essex County Greenbelt has over 50 years of conservation experience in Essex County. Brown Spring Farm has been for sale for at least three years, and Greenbelt has worked with a potential buyer to purchase an agricultural Conservation Restriction on the property. Greenbelt is proposing a partnership with a private party to run the property as a farm. The owners will restore the house if they can, or rebuild if necessary, and restore the other structures.

In response to a question from Mizner, Johnson-Hall said the asking price is \$800,000. The Conservation Restriction will be \$350,000, with the Town providing \$200,000, and Greenbelt raising \$150,000 as the balance. She said she expects the Appraisal by mid-March.

Bachrach asked what the process is, such as who reviews the Conservation Restriction. Johnson-Hall replied that the owners (the Cooney family), Greenbelt, the Board of Selectmen and the Conservation Commission must sign the CR. This CR could be assigned to the care and custody of the Conservation Commission.

Johnson-Hall said that as a working farm, the owners will have to file a Farm Plan, which will indicate wetlands, buffers, the upper limit on animals, etc. It will require that farming is “sustainably done”. In Community Preservation Committee, Town of West Newbury, Minutes of Meeting, February 15, 2018

response to a question by Bachrach, she said that if there are violations, Greenbelt will deal with the Conservation Agent and send notice of violations to that Agent.

Bachrach also asked what if the owners move? Johnson-Hall replied that 1. The owners can lease the land to another farmer, 2. Greenbelt can work with them to find a new buyer, and 3. They can sell the parcel as restricted. He asked if there will be a trail, and the response was no, but there may be a clause in the event that the abutting property is preserved by Greenbelt.

Anderson said the potential buyers have adult children, and may expand the house to accommodate their family. Johnson-Hall said they will be asked to keep the house consistent with farmhouses of the period. Anderson asked if there is a way to restrict this, and Johnson-Hall replied that the CR can restrict the maximum footprint, limit the number of stories, and write guidelines in the Conservation Restriction.

Johnson-Hall outlined a timeline:

- ..The Appraisal is due mid-March
- ..A Title Exam has been completed
- ..An Environmental Assessment will be performed
- ..The Buyers will have a Home Inspection done (the house has not been occupied since 1995)
- ..The potential buyers must sell their home

The procedure will take until approximately early Fall to finalize, according to Johnson-Hall. She said there is no risk on the part of the Town to vote to approve the Article. The Town Meeting vote is giving authorization to proceed. She said the buyers have seen a copy of the model Conservation Restriction. She said drafting of the CR is a collaborative and iterative process.

Pruyn asked if the buyers have been vetted. She said that the Conservation Restriction will have an impact on a mortgage.

Reeser said that this is the first time that such an opportunity has come up to use CPA funds in this way.

Lark Madden, Jean Lambert, and Annie Madden spoke in favor of the article and the preservation of the farm.

Motion made by Mizner, seconded by Bardeen, to approve the Application for Eligibility.

Anderson called for the vote: Bill Bachrach, Aye, Ann Bardeen, Aye, Mary Harada, Aye, Bob Janes, Aye, Sherry Pruyne, Aye, Judy Mizner, Aye, and Joseph Anderson, Aye.

Motion made by Bardeen, seconded by Janes, to approve the Application for Funding for Brown Spring Farm Conservation Restriction. Anderson called for the vote: Bill Bachrach, Aye, Ann Bardeen, Aye, Mary Harada, Aye, Bob Janes, Aye, Sherry Pruyne, Aye, Judy Mizner, Aye, and Joseph Anderson, Aye.

Review of draft Funding Article for 2019 CPA Fund Estimates, submitted for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on January 30, 2018

Nelson related that the standard article has been submitted to meet the deadline for Articles with the dollar amounts left blank, until the amounts have been calculated by the Accountant.

Minutes, November 30, 2017

The Minutes were approved and edited. Motion made by Harada, seconded by Janes, to approve the Minutes as edited. The vote in favor was 6-0.

Review of Table of Proposed Projects Not Approved

In response to a question posed at the Public Hearing, Nelson had researched and created a table of projects which had been proposed but not approved. The Committee reviewed the table and found it to be in order.

Report of Vouchers Signed under Municipal Modernization Bill, 57-58

Community Preservation Coalition Dues \$1750.00

Administrative Details

The Committee will meet on March 22 instead of March 15, 2018.

Motion to adjourn, 8:25 PM.

Submitted by,

Jean Nelson
CPC Administrator

List of Documents Reviewed at Meeting:

..Applications for Eligibility and Funding, Purchase of a Conservation Restriction at Brown Spring Farm, 866 Main Street, Applications filed by Vanessa Johnson-Hall, Assistant Director of Land Conservation, Essex County Greenbelt Association; and Patricia Reeser, Chair, West Newbury Open Space Committee

..Draft Funding Article for 2019 CPA Fund Estimates, submitted for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on January 30, 2018

..Draft Minutes, November 30, 2017

..Table of Proposed Projects Not Approved

These Minutes were approved by the CPC on March 22, 2018.

Community Preservation Committee, Town of West Newbury, Minutes of Meeting, February 15, 2018

