

Community Preservation Committee
Minutes
9/5/23, 7:00 PM
Remote Teams Meeting/Town Hall

Members Present: Dan Byer, Michael Goddard, Barry Iadarola, Anne Mazar and Kathy Schofield.

Others Present: Ellen Agro, Jack Hunter, Bill McHenry and Lisa Mosczynski.

The meeting started at 7:00 PM with committee member introductions.

Mike made a motion to accept the minutes of the 4/4/23, 4/24/23, 5/2/23 & 5/30/23 meetings, Barry seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Anne reviewed the totals in the CPA accounts. She mentioned that in total, there is a little over \$2.5 million in the CPA accounts. She explained that every project that has been brought to the CPC has been approved from the police station renovation, to town hall restoration, to sports fields to preserving open space since 2005 and there has always been a healthy CPA balance. This is because the CPC has leveraged the CPA funds through using matching grants, partnering with other groups on projects, using volunteers, having taken advantage of bargain sales and coordinated land and monetary donations.

Ellen Agro made a presentation for building a disc golf course on the Paddock property at 73 & 75 Providence Street or the Inman Hill Wildlife Conservation Area. The equipment cost for an 18-hole course would be approximately \$60,000 for installing the course and Ellen will be getting an estimate for the site preparation work. She said the advantages include that Milford is the only course in our area, it is a great way to get people into the open space, it could attract some tourism and the equipment and prep for the site is very minimal, so it would not harm the open space areas. Barry's concern was that it would disrupt hunting. Ellen said that usually there are not many people playing at one time and it would not be much more intrusive than hiking and that people would wear orange during hunting season. Anne suggested that Inman Hill would be a better site because of the open fields and the existing trails. Ellen was concerned about the disruption to the horses. Anne said that there are not that many horseback riders at one time. Ellen will come back to the next meeting with a quote for the whole project after she has visited each site to determine the best location.

Jack Hunter explained the RFP went out for 52 Providence Street for affordable housing and there were no bids. Jack, Bill McHenry, Dylan Lindholm and Anne Mazar debriefed with the interested parties to find out why they did not bid. They said they needed more information on the property in order to feel confident to bid, which is typical with affordable housing projects, because they are not profitable projects unless there is support and ground work done on a site. After a discussion, **Dan made a motion to transfer \$27,000 from the CPA Administrative Account to fund the wetlands crossing design and permitting, the wetlands evaluation and to test the soil for the directional drilling and provide a report for the affordable housing project at 52 Providence Street property, Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.**

Dan made a motion to go into executive session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, Kathy seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. After the discussion in executive session, Mike made a motion to leave the executive session, Barry seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Dan made a motion to put a placeholder on the November Special Town Meeting Warrant to spend approximately \$225,000 of CPC funds as matching funds for a MA Partnership Grant jointly with the Metacomet Land Trust to place a conservation restriction on approximately 116 acres on 101 and 109 North Avenue with the final approval and wording to be finalized at the next CPC meeting, Barry seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Barry made a motion to adjourn at 8:32 PM, Mike seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Executive Session: Lisa Mosczynski, Metacomet Land Trust President, made a presentation to partner with the town to hold a conservation restriction on 116+/- acres of the Vandersluis property at 101 and 109 North Avenue jointly with MLT. MLT wrote a proposal for a MA Conservation Partnership Grant for \$175,000 which requires matching funds that would come from MLT and \$225,000 from the CPA funds. The value of the conservation restriction, which would be for the owner to give up all building rights on the property in perpetuity, is valued at \$1,655,000 and the VanderSluis' are willing to take a fraction of this cost - \$350,000 - to preserve their property. Lisa showed a loop trail that could be accessed from Hopedale open space, but said that future trails could be made in conjunction with the landowners. The Vandersluis' would own the property, but the public would have access for passive recreation, but no hunting, which is currently not allowed on the property. Mike asked if it connected to 131 North Avenue and if trail connections to this property would be possible. Anne said yes and that the property connects to several pieces of open space, which could potentially continue the trail to the Route 16 town property, which has \$40,000 for trail work. Kathy wanted to know if a bike path could go through the property. Anne said that a non-motorized bike could possibly go on the dirt trails and cart paths, but it could not be paved. Barry stated his concern that the deer were being driven out because of all the activity on the various open space properties. Lisa said preserving this property would save wildlife habitat for deer and other animals, whereas houses would not provide this. It would preserve a historic farm and scenic view from North Avenue, protect threatened wildlife habitat, MLT would monitor the property annually with the Mendon Con Com, but the owners would still own the property and maintain the hayfields. Lisa said that the land is beautiful from the open fields to the stream, pond and woodlands. Dan asked if the disc golf course could go onto this property and Lisa said she would ask the Vandersluis'. Dan said that the CPA funds are healthy and would not prevent other projects from moving forward and that the Master Plan Survey clearly showed that people want to protect land and the rural character of the town and wanted trails in town, so he thought it should be brought to the town meeting for voters to decide. Others agreed and at the next CPC meeting specific wording would be voted on and possibly approved.

Submitted by Anne Mazar