

Community Preservation Committee

March 24, 2015

Police Station Conference Room

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Jane Healey called a regular meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Mike Dissette, Don Little, Judith Grohe, Paul Healy, Bob Uhlig, Jane Healey, Leah McGavern and Linda Smiley.

3. FY 2016 Application Presentations for Community Preservation Funds

Jane Healy said applications have been received for 22 projects and the requests total \$2 million. The Committee has approximately \$600,000 to allocate.

Clipper City Rail Trail and Harborwalk Phase II

Office of Planning & Development, City of Newburyport

\$100,000

Geordie Vining said the schedule calls for the second phase of the Rail Trail to be advertised for construction in August. State and Federal transportation funds have been secured for this \$4 million project, which should be completed in 2017. Funding has been received from the CPC and the City Council for the final design of the project and the permitting phase. Funds have not yet been received for the construction management portion of the project. Mr. Vining is seeking \$70,000 in CPA funds for the administration of the project. He is also requesting funds for enhancements, although this is less of an immediate need and some grant money has already been received for this purpose. He spoke of the process for selecting artwork and potential sources for additional funding. He said the enhancements on the first segment of the Rail Trail were recognized in the magazine of the National Rails to Trails Conservancy.

Replacement of Firehouse Center Trees

Newburyport Parks Commission

\$25,600

Lisë Reid said the Parks Commission would like to replace five of the eight Bradford pear trees that are located by the Firehouse. She said the species is inappropriate as a street tree due to its weak wood, which makes it susceptible to wind and ice damage. The roots are shallow and lift the bricks in the sidewalks, creating a tripping hazard. She said the trees by the Firehouse have not been well maintained and their condition is declining. The species that has been selected to replace the trees is Ginkgo biloba. A ten-year management plan has been developed for the care of these trees, some of which are on Waterfront Trust property. The management of the trees would be shared between that group and the City.

Historic Tree Restoration Project, Phase II

Newburyport Tree Commission

\$13,532

Dave Dylewski said since 2006 the Tree Commission has been responsible for the planting of over 600 trees. He said 25 to 50 trees are removed from sites throughout the city over the course of a year. The Commission plants 15 to 20 trees each fall and spring. It is requesting funds to plant 17 trees in the fall of 2015. The cost to purchase, plant and maintain a tree for two years is \$796. The DPS would prepare the pits for the new trees.

Historic Landscape Preservation, Phase III

Belleville Improvement Society

\$55,000

Beverly MacBurnie said the value of the trees at Atkinson Common is estimated as being between \$1 million to \$3 million. She said the second phase of the work, which includes the inventorying and labeling of the trees, has been delayed due to the weather. After the snow has melted, the tree inventory would be completed and a management plan would be developed. The plan would identify the work to be done in the third phase of the project. This work would include the removal, pruning, cabling and fertilizing of the trees. The plan would determine specifically the way in which the \$55,000 that is being requested would be used. The management plan will be forwarded to the Committee members when it has been completed, which will be before deliberations have begun.

Congregation Ahavas Achim – Another 150 Years

Congregation Ahavas Achim

\$47,500

Paula Pressler said the building was constructed in 1865 and provides a location for a variety of services that draw people from a wide area. The congregation is an active and growing one. Funds are being sought to preserve the beauty of the building and provide for the safety of the congregation and members of the community. The top priority would be the provision of a secondary means of egress from the synagogue. The second item to be completed would be the hiring of a certified engineer to evaluate the load on the structure. The congregation would also like to paint ten exposed columns in the interior of the structure and install new clapboards on the exterior. The capital campaign that provided funds for a new roof has ended but it is expected a new campaign would be initiated in the upcoming year.

Yankee Homecoming

Yankee Homecoming, Inc.

\$22,500

Jason Lacroix said Yankee Homecoming has been taking place for 57 years. Its original founders dictated that the birthday of the Coast Guard be a part of the event each year. This year will be unique because it will be the 225th birthday of the Revenue Cutter Service and the 100th anniversary of the renaming of this service as the Coast Guard. Newburyport is both a Coast Guard City and the birthplace of the Coast Guard.

While private sponsors and businesses provide the funding for Yankee Homecoming, this

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year the group is seeking CPC funding. This funding would be used solely for the portion of Yankee Homecoming that would celebrate the Coast Guard. A separate committee would handle the general funding of the event. Special events might include a cookout for enlisted personnel, a display at the Custom House with a day of free admission to the museum and an increased presence of the Coast Guard in the parade. One element of the celebration that might be eligible for CPC funding would be the installation of a commemorative plaque on the waterfront.

5. Minutes

Judith Grohe moved to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2015 meeting as submitted. Paul Healy seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

6. General Business

Geordie Vining provided an update on the Curzon Mill project. The closing on the properties took place in June. The property owners are expected to receive a conservation land tax credit. At that time the \$100,000 that is being held in escrow would be converted to the open space reserve.

Details on amenities such as parking, benches and signage remain to be resolved. The sum of \$10,000 has been reserved for the provision these amenities, which would enhance the use of the properties by the public. A conservation restriction does not allow parking on the property with the field. A small area might be used on the second property if off-road parking proves to be necessary. Mr. Vining said he thinks the best solution would not be to create a new parking area, but instead allow for on street parking at the wide part of the road near the carriage house. This would require a change in the ordinance by the City Council, as this is currently a no-parking area.

Mike Dissette said he and Kate Newhall-Smith had a productive meeting with the board of directors of the Masonic Lodge. He said the board misunderstood the requirements of the Massachusetts Historical Commission. After this issue was resolved it was found the two groups are not as far apart as had been thought. He will continue to refine the draft preservation restriction.

Mike Dissette announced Linda Smiley has asked not to be reappointed to the Historical Commission when her term expires in May. She will be able to serve on the CPC until her replacement is found.

7. Adjournment

Mike Dissette moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m. Paul Healy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.