

## **Community Preservation Committee**

March 12, 2012

Police Station Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

### **1. Call to Order**

A special meeting of the Community Preservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Mike Dissette at 7:00 p.m.

### **2. Roll Call**

In attendance were members Mike Dissette, Paul Healy, Jane Healey, Judith Grohe, Don Little, Bob Uhlig, Dan Bowie, Mary Lou Gagnon and Margaret Welch. Emily Wentworth was also in attendance.

### **3. Minutes**

Don Little moved to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2012, meeting as submitted. Paul Healy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **4. Communication**

Mary Harbaugh submitted a letter on the behalf of the Open Space Committee dated March 8. The letter suggested that an explanation of the categories of Open Space, Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation in the context of funding eligibility be added to the application.

### **5. Applications for Communication Funds**

#### **• Newburyport Parks Commission**

Joppa Park Interpretive Panels

Historic Preservation

\$11,632

Lisë Reid said the four interpretive panels for which funding is being sought is a part of a larger project. Additional plans include the enclosing of the park with bollards and roses and the installation of benches and walkways. The interpretive panels would focus on the history of the area and would include the topics of fishing, clamming and the appearance of the neighborhood. The Morrill Foundation has awarded \$65,000 for the installation of the bollards and roses. A State Park grant might be a source of additional funding. Ms. Reed said there are many aspects of the project to be funded and the panels are the best fit for CPA funds. She explained that the cost estimates were revised after the materials were changed to ones that would function better in this climate. The project might only fit into the category historic preservation and not that of open space, as the park was not acquired through CPA funds. Ms. Reed said the Newburyport Historical Commission has not been asked for an opinion on the historical significance of the park.

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• **Newburyport Parks Commission**

Rail Trail Interpretive Panels

Historic Preservation, Recreation

\$9,500

Lisè Reed said funding is being sought for the fabrication and installation of five interpretive panels that would be located along the Rail Trail. The signs would be of the same design as the existing signs along the trail. Ghlee Woodworth described the planned content of the proposed panels. One would be located near the bridge over Low Street and would discuss the neighborhood of West Africans that was located in the area and the graves of some of its residents that have been found in the Highland and Old Hill cemeteries. Other panels would discuss the Russell and Sons iron foundry, which was the first in Essex County, and Pearson's Bakery, which later became Nabisco. The fourth panel would describe the great fire that destroyed dozens of buildings. Ms. Woodworth said the panels would contribute to the education of the community, especially because the students at the Charter School often use the trail. She added the signs would help to expand the sense of public ownership of the trail. Paul Healy commented that he likes the interpretive panels proposed in both applications because they help to bring about an awareness of the city's gems.

• **Parker River Clean Water Association**

Little River Nature Trail Interpretive Panels

Open Space and Recreation

\$8,000

Additional signage is being proposed for the Little River Nature Trail. One sign would be located just inside the gate at the Storey Avenue entrance and a second would be located on Hale Street. The existing signs have been holding up well and have helped attract visitors to the trail. The signs would include a map of the trail and would promote its safe use, especially by providing information about ticks. Bob Uhlig said the longevity of the signs would be increased if their wooden supports do not go directly into the ground.

• **Open Space Committee**

Open Space Reserve Fund

Open Space

\$100,000

Mary Harbaugh said land conservation is a one-time offer: when development threatens, a decision to take action may not be delayed. Once a piece of property has been protected, it remains protected in perpetuity. Unlike historic preservation or affording resources, open space protection does not involve recurring expenditures. She said that because future needs might not be predicted, funds must be placed in reserve in order that the committee might take action when an opportunity arises. She said approximately one-third of the properties on the critical list have been protected. The reserve helps to attract funding from other sources. George Blackster said the committee has been actively evaluating parcels and networking with groups that might provide matching funds. There is currently \$773,000 in the open space reserve fund. A consultant was hired to update the master plan at a cost of \$20,000.

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**6. Other Business**

Five applications will be presented at each of the March 27 and April 9 meetings.

At the February 28 meeting Mike Dissette said that in order for the application for the courtyard at the Art Association to be considered, the association would have to agree to commit the land to open space. Emily Wentworth said she spoke with the director of the Art Association, who would be reluctant to place a restriction on the courtyard.

Margaret Welch said there are many different types of historic preservation applications and the Newburyport Historical Commission would be reluctant to deny eligibility to any projects.

Emily Wentworth said the board of the Masonic Temple is reluctant to place a restriction on the rear portion of the property.

Bob Uhlig asked if applicants might indicate the portion of project that is of the highest priority. Margaret Welch said she would like to know to which portion of the stadium the CPA funds would be applied.

**7. Adjournment**

Paul Healy moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Judith Grohe seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.