

**Community Preservation Committee**

**4/10/14**

**7pm**

**Library Program Room**

Present: Paul Healy, Dan Koen, Don Little, Linda Smiley, Cindy Zabriskie, Mike Dissette, Jane Healey, Bob Uhlig

Absent: Judith Grohe

**Project Presentations:**

**Cherry Hill Parcel B Soccer Field:**

Matt McDermott, Scott Signori, and Kevin Winn presented for the Newburyport Youth Soccer Association. Mr. McDermott said that NYSA was founded in 1980 and is staffed by 100% volunteers. The Cherry Hill fields are owned by the City and leased and maintained by NYS. Their priority is to keep the fields in great condition. A task force was formed by the City to look for field space since playing space is very limited and teams have to travel to other fields. This solution of adding additional field space addresses a City-wide issue and would benefit more than just soccer by freeing up space at Fuller Field. The NYS would contribute 65% of the project costs. A local bank has approved them for a loan contingent upon CPA funding. They need funds to start the project. Three phases were being proposed. The NYSA has invested over \$20K so far in planning. They are working with Chris Huntress who will manage the process making sure it is completed on time, etc. So far, three years in the making. They said they were shovel ready for the project. Mr. McDermott said that they could get through first two phases immediately and have soccer games off Fuller Field within 14 months. Without the CPC grant, the whole project can't be supported. They would have to raise fees and it would result in an incremental project over the course of 7-9 years. Costs would also be driven up doing the project incrementally.

Mr. Healy said that he'd feel more comfortable funding just the field portion of the project, not the parking area improvements. Mr. Dissette asked if the loan could be closed prior to the distribution of funds. Mr. Signori said he was confident they could, based on their meeting with the bank. Mr. Dissette asked where the cost estimate numbers came from. Mr. Winn said that Huntress & Associates gave the estimate; they also had a second contractor give an estimate. Bob Uhlig asked if phase 1 and 3 could be done together. Mr. Winn said that the issue with doing the project in phases adds expense. If they bid as phase 1 and 2, they can add phase 3 if there is extra money available when the bids come in, which would save more money than doing it in phases. Cindy Zabriskie asked about the timing of completion. Mr. Winn said they hope to start in June and be able to plant grass in October.

Lisë Reid, Parks Director and chair of field space task force spoke in favor of the project. She said that the expansion of field space is a high priority for the City. There are costs to rent spaces, bus kids, fees, etc. She said that NYSA is a poster child for a public-private partnership and that they have been great to work with and very accommodating. They've also worked with neighbors to accommodate their needs. She spoke to Kevin Winn's project management skills.

**Atkinson Common Heritage Landscape Preservation Phase II:**

Dave Leonard, Belleville Improvement Society Treasurer, expressed shared gratitude for last grant request (along with Beverly MacBurnie who could not attend). He said it is in the best shape it's been in so far in terms of fallen limbs and trees though there are still safety issues to address. There were still

some trees identified for take-down. The park needs ongoing preventative care to avoid getting to the point where they were before. Jack Ingram, Bartlett Tree spoke to the importance of safety. Don Little noted that the quote was from December that cites project end date of April 30. Mr. Leonard said that those dates were not specific. Mr. Ingram spoke about timing and said it could be revised. Mr. Little asked if the work had to be bid. Mr. Dissette said that work hasn't previously been bid out since the ownership is the Belleville Improvement Society. Jane Healey asked about the four trees being removed and asked if that was their highest priority. Mr. Leonard said that it was. She asked if the pruning costs would be this high every year. Mr. Leonard said that this was higher because years of decay and build up and was not typical of ongoing maintenance. Bob Uhlig asked why the problematic Norway maples were being proposed to be pruned, not removed. Mr. Leonard said that they aren't particularly desirable and they could consider removing them.

### **Belleville Congregational Church Restoration**

Norm Hansen requested \$30K to enhance and restore three sides of the Belleville meeting house. He explained that they did major structural improvements in 2012 and were doing restorations as an incremental project. He said the building was 214 years old and was not only a church, but a community site.

Steve Bradbury voiced support. A member of the audience said the building meets a lot of community needs and is an important part of Newburyport. She said it deserves to remain in good repair as it's an entryway to city, and the first church seen off the highway.

### **Old South Church Trompe L'oeil Ceiling Restoration**

Rob John said an historic restoration project was started 8 years ago for which they received a NPT preservation award. Now they were requesting funds to restore the 1856 painted ceiling trompe l'oeil ceiling which has sustained water damage. It was only one of four in the Commonwealth and the only one in Essex County. The ceiling is 60' x 90' and 24'-28' high. He invited people to visit.

Linda Smiley asked if they've investigated why the cracks occurred. Mr. John said an engineering analysis was done in 2005 and it was determined that the struts were completely sound and it was not due to any structural issues, it was strictly a plaster issue. Mr. Dissette asked if their existing PR covers the interior. Mr. John said it did.

### **First Religious Society Church Restoration**

William Heenehan of the FRS explained that they have fully assessed the steeple and meeting house and received expert advice on the restoration. Their project consisted of the preservation of windows and doors, preservation of steeple, and maintenance and upgrades. They were asking for funding for the first two historic-related projects. There were 42 12-over-12 windows, all would be preserved in place. Broken panes would be repaired with historic glass. Gaps and loose glazing would be removed and replaced. Work would be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. Mr. Heenehan said that the steeple is structurally sound but in bad condition. The entire front must be scaffolded to access the steeple. They would also need to restore architectural elements (columns, soffits, moldings, etc.) The Society would take on the costs of painting, maintenance, and upgrades (LED relighting of steeple). They were only asking for funding for historic restoration. He said that they need the funding soon to address the extent of deterioration as it was a safety hazard.

Linda Smiley asked where the materials were from that were to be used to replace portions of molding. Mr. Heenehan said the supplier is anonymous since they are not in the business of providing commercial lumber but said it would come from a New England forest. Hemlock and butternut along with slow growth pine would be used. Ms. Smiley said that typical pine had a short lifespan. Mr. Heenehan said

they would choose alternative appropriate materials if it will prolong the life. Ms. Smiley suggested composite materials since it was so high up and not visible. She also asked what the roofing would be made of. Bud Killam from Painter's Pride said they would be EPDM (rubber). She asked if the cost included the caulking. (yes).

Mr. Dissette said that a Preservation Restriction would have to be executed if it were funded. Mr. Heenehan said that the Congregation would need to approve the PR. Have 95K committed already.

#### **Correspondence:**

Steve Bergholm requested the release of grant funds for the NHS exterior restoration project. He said that as a condition of their previous CPC grant, funds wouldn't be released until after the Preservation Restriction is signed. He said the PR process is under way and he hoped to have it to MHC for approval within 45-60 days. He explained that MHC often takes a long time to approve PRs so they were concerned about paying contractors and timely completion of the project. Mr. Bergholm said invoices are already being paid for design work using other funds. He expected the need for grant funds to arise about mid-summer. Mr. Healy moved to approve the distribution of grant funds prior to the execution of the PR, Mike Dissette seconded. All members voted in favor.

#### **Minutes:**

Paul Healy motioned to approve the minutes of the 3/25/14 meeting. Mike Dissette seconded and all members voted in favor. Bob Uhlig and Cindy Zabriskie abstained.

#### **Stadium Bonding:**

The CPC discussed bonding \$1.5m for the WW Memorial Stadium field project. Bonding scenarios were sent to members prior to the meeting, including the potential merging of soccer field into the bond as the projects were somewhat related. Mike Dissette move to approve the stadium project, Paul Healy seconded. Paul Healy said he felt this project was a good example of community preservation. Don Little noted that the feedback has not been unanimous on the proposal and thought that some of it was sentimental. His concern was that bonding affects funding future applicants. He said there were plenty of reasons to vote in favor but he was swayed most with the additional private investment being put forward by the City.

Mary Anne Clancy of Restore explained that this would be a multiple phase project and the Restore Group also recognizes the need for ongoing maintenance. She said they would be looking to undertake annual fundraising to establish a maintenance fund, like Landry Stadium does in Amesbury. Mayor Holaday spoke about the need to continue raising funds to prevent any possible funding gaps. Bob Uhlig felt there would be a big bang for the buck related to the expanded use of the fields. Mr. Dissette appreciated sentiments against the project though knowing what has happened in the past (trying to preserve not demolish) and the need to widen of the field. Mr. Dissette said that he has no regrets on approving previous bonds although it's hard to look at the bottom line when you are committing funds for 15 years. He also mentioned the very good rate that the City is able to get if they agreed to bond. Paul Healy wanted it clearly specified that the project falls into the Recreation category, not Historic Resources. All members voted in favor of bonding the stadium project.

Paul Healy motioned to approve both the Cherry Hill soccer fields and the stadium projects in two separate bonds. Bob Uhlig seconded. Mr. Little was concerned with setting precedent of bonding high price projects. Bob Uhlig said he thought it was a well thought out master plan for fields especially since they haven't been able to fund them in the past. He wanted to fund entire Cherry Hill project so that both projects would be complete. Mr. Dissette asked if the bonding package had to be voted together.

Ethan Manning said once the Council gives the authorization to borrow, they could bond both projects in one bond offering.

Mr. Healy asking that CPA funding contribution doesn't start until FY 2016 and that the first interest payments came from funds other than the CPA. Bob Uhlig seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Uhlig motioned to recommend bonding phase 3 of the Cherry Hill project (\$129K) to complete that project as well. The motion was not seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.