

Lenox Community Preservation Committee

June 20, 2016

Minutes

Members in Attendance

Tom Delasco (PB, Vice Chair); Channing Gibson (BoS); Frederick Keator (At Large); Joe Strauch (Cons Comm); Olga Weiss (Historical Commission); Gene Chague (At Large)

Members Absent with Notification

Tony Patella (Community Center, Chair)
Al Harper (At Large)
Cathie May (Lenox Housing Authority)

Staff in Attendance

Gwen Miller (Land Use Director/Town Planner)

TD called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. GM noted that TP, AH and CM were unable to attend the meeting for various reasons.

I. Approval of Minutes

CG made a motion to approve the minutes of April 11. OW seconded. All approved.

CG made a motion to approve the minutes of May 16 as amended. FK abstained. All except FK approved.

II. Debrief of May 16 Public Hearing

TD introduce the topic of the May 16 Public Hearing. FK, reviewing the minutes, noted there was good turnout. The Committee discussed issues identified at the public hearing, including:

- Housing Trust funds and programs

FK stated the Housing Trust was not satisfying its mission as the mortgage grant program do not place a permanent affordability restriction on the purchased homes. He stated the Trust was created to acquire properties and place affordability restrictions on them in perpetuity. OW stated the Trust had been working with a challenging market and economy, and the grant program made the most sense.

GM noted she had been to a housing conference and seen a presentation made by the planner in Williamstown, where a variety of projects have been funded through the Williamstown Housing Trust and CPA funds, including housing rehabilitation, housing creation and the mortgage program.

CG suggested it would be beneficial to have CPA sit down with the Housing Trust and talk about programmatic goals, and also to wait and see what could happen with the Sawmill project. The Committee agreed it would be valuable to sit down as a group with the Housing Trust, the Town Manager, the Town Planner and Tim

Gellar of CDC to think about the Trusts role in housing development in Lenox and also about Sawmill.

GM noted the next Housing Trust meeting was at 4 PM on June 28, but would send a Doodle poll out to identify a better time in July for the Trust and CPC to get together.

- Stockbridge Bowl
FK asked how the presentation from Michael Nathan of the Stockbridge Bowl Association was received. He and CG noted the Bowl is a great and beloved resource, though it may be politically complicated to use Lenox CPA funds toward a Stockbridge lake, though CPA legislation does allow the use of local CPA funds in other towns toward regional resources.
- Lenox Land Trust reimbursement question
GC noted he had a follow up question from Ken Kelly of the Lenox Land Trust. KK wanted to know if the CPA legislation required a certain percentage of public benefit to guide the amount of funds awarded toward a project. The members stated they did not use any kind of formula to determine how much money they award to a project; nor does the legislation require benefits to be divided between public or property owner to be granted an award.

GM stated she had also asked the Community Preservation Coalition for guidance regarding KK's question at the hearing: whether or not CPA funds can be used to reimburse already completed projects. GM noted the legislation says that CPA funds should not be used to replace operating funds but to augment them; the Coalition indicated this is the case for municipal projects but not other projects. They advised seeking Counsel's opinion if the Committee chose to go this route, and noted some political issues around granting reimbursements to already completed projects.

FK said one way to do this would be to provide funding to a phase or portion of a project once the first phase or portion has been completed.

- Open space and trail network map
FK noted this was a terrific idea. JS and OW questioned whether or not CPA can fund maps as they can be seen as educational material. CG recommended the group investigating maps of trail systems think about plugging into an app so visitors and residents could locate places in Lenox by their desired activity.

FK asked OW if the Historical Commission had made any comments or presentation. OW stated they were very busy with planning the Lenox 250th program and had made no special presentation or comments to the Committee at the public hearing. She noted the Commission plays an advisory role, reviewing projects in relation to their historic value or features as property owners seek permits or funding, or as the Town reviews projects, the Historical Commission may provide comments.

III. Upcoming Application Process

GM stated she would send out another press release and e-mail blast reminding people of the new application timeline and phasing.

Upcoming Meetings

The Committee agreed they would not need to meet until the first round of applications were submitted in September 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.