

# COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:00 PM  
Third Floor Meeting Room-City Hall

Members Present: J.J. Bell, Sandy Ronan, Bill Dugan, Rob Gulla, Charles Crowley, Stacy Randell, Karen Gallagher, **Tom O'Keefe**, **Scott Smith**  
Staff Present: Deb Laurie (Senior Project Manager), Kenny Costa (City Auditor)

The meeting was opened by Sandy Ronan, immediately followed by approval of the meeting minutes of 2/21/2012 as well as the approval of the minutes of the public hearings on April 4, 2012 (dealing with open space applications) and April 17, 2012 (dealing with historic applications).

Kenny Costa then handed out a financial summary (Community Preservation Fund/Fund Balances) for FY 2011-2012, which indicated that we have \$316,224.04 available to appropriate in Round 3. In fact, that number may be somewhat higher, but Kenny wants to be conservative until the FY 12 is over and until DOR has certified our financial status. He will give us more guidance on the number available in the near future. Kenny asked for and received (motion by Bill Dugan, seconded by Karen Gallagher) a unanimous vote from the committee confirming that the \$2,000. appropriated but not spent for the North Gloucester Woods Project should be returned to the Open Space Reserve Account, as it originally appropriated from that account. Also, Kenny was waiting to hear from Stuart Saginor to confirm that the annual debt service on the City Hall bond can count against the statutory 10% annual historic minimum required to be either appropriated or reserved.

After Mr. Costa departed, a general discussion was led by Sandy Ronan regarding the 11 applications and site visits (attended by various members of the CPC), with each committee member and Deb Laurie having an opportunity to voice comments, concerns, and questions regarding each application pending before the CPC. Deb Laurie made a list of questions to be sent to the appropriate applicants in order to get written responses to be circulated prior to the next meeting.

A summary of some of the comments for each application follows:

## **Niles Pond**

While it was generally agreed that Niles Pond was a beautiful spot and an important resource, there was significant concern regarding the community benefit, given the impression of the surrounding neighborhood as private. There were also concerns voiced about the whether Audobon was feeling uninformed, even though they agreed to be fiscal agent, and whether the use of hydro-raking was the most cost effective method of keeping phragmites at bay over time. It was also thought that water lilies were indigenous.

## **Good Harbor Gateway**

The CPC generally felt that the proposed acquisition was a worthwhile project, highly visible, a festering multi-year problem for Gloucester, represented a window of opportunity and was thereby time sensitive, and that it had broad based public support, a laudable long term restoration vision and could use CPC funds as a catalyst to leverage the use of state and private money to complete the acquisition. It was of concern that the funds sought were substantial, given **the CPC's limited resources in Round 3**, that much of the non-buildable land was already protected, that the location of the proposed walkway was not on City owned land, and that the ability of the Friends and City to raise the non-CPA funds portion of the total costs and the ability of the City to sign a P and S and close on the land on a timely basis was somewhat speculative. A question was raised regarding whether, in the future, money should be set aside annually as a contingency against costly, but important, open space projects, given the fact that another bond issue was unlikely. It was agreed, given the size and complexity of this project, to invite Suzanne Eagen, the City Solicitor to the next meeting to answer questions.

## **Dogtown/North Woods**

While it was pointed out that no land was being acquired, it was agreed that the appraisals were a condition precedent for the City to enter into serious negotiations with land owners. It was agreed the proposal was time sensitive, given low land values today and a weak market, that the long term acquisition plan was solid and the current requested dollars were small.

## **Rocky Neck Community Center**

While it was agreed that the Rocky Neck Assn was a highly motivated and well organized group of citizens, with wide based support in Rocky Neck and the surrounding area and that the project proposed was well conceived, given the fact that the dollars involved were substantial and that the property would be owned by a private non-profit, CPA funds would be best used, if at all, for restoration work post-acquisition rather than for acquisition. As such, it was generally agreed that this project might be a better candidate for Round 4, after the acquisition has been completed.

## **North Shore Arts Assn.**

While there was a question about the location of the windows in relation to the art and the possibility of UV damage, it was generally agreed that this request well leveraged other money, that the Assn. had wide based community support, that the Assn. has made good efforts to maintain their building and the need was pressing. It was pointed out that the work had to be done in accordance with Dept of Interior Standards and the question of the necessity of a facade preservation easement was discussed.

## **Lanes Cove Fishing Shack**

Note was made of the community enthusiasm for this project as well as the impressive self help efforts being undertaken and the importance of this building as a neighborhood symbol, even though very little of the building can be restored (vs. replaced). Some concern was voiced over whether the building, or at least the area outside the building, would be accessible to the public, what provisions are being made for ongoing maintenance, and whether the private fundraising is sufficiently successful to grant somewhat less funds than requested.

## **Cape Ann Museum Plan Preservation**

J.J. Bell recused himself from any discussion or voting, due to his position on the CAM board. Many thought these old plans were a great historic resource, especially the public buildings, with artistic value, that Stephanie Buck was a very capable archivist, and that CPA could provide some seed money to get things moving. Some wondered about the high amount of total project cost, the broad public benefit, whether this project was time sensitive and how the Museum would prioritize the restoration and digitization.

## **Magnolia Historical Society Archives**

While the CPC is very impressed with the can-do enthusiasm of the Magnolia Historic Association, some questioned the use of this money for a salaried position, that we were not leveraging other money and whether the applicant could hire someone to train them and digitize the archives on their own.

## **Maritime Gloucester Mill Building**

The comments were all very favorable concerning Maritime Gloucester and this project and the importance of this historic building and equipment to the maritime heritage of Gloucester as well as the public access possibilities.

## **Phyllis A. Restoration**

The CPC was generally impressed with this ongoing grass roots project, the importance of this boat to the fishing history of Gloucester, the fact that the work proposed will allow the public on board as well as the time sensitive nature of the work. Some asked how much dollars it would take to complete the whole boat restoration and questioned whether the project was widely known by the public. They were also interested in whether the boat hull was in worse shape than expected, once out of the water.

## **Gloucester Historic Commission**

It was generally agreed that this project was very costly, leveraged no other dollars and was not particularly time sensitive.

The CPC next took a straw vote on whether and how much to support the various application requests (see attached spreadsheet for results). It was anticipated that the CPC would take a final votes at the next meeting. For that reason, we decided to bring draft motions to that meeting.

The CPC then voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting, the next meeting being scheduled for 6:00 on June 19 in the third floor conference room at City Hall.

Respectively submitted,

J.J. Bell