

Gloucester Community Preservation Committee

Meeting Report for October 13, 2009

Members attending: Ian Lane, J.J. Bell, Stacy Randell, Sandy Dahl Ronan, John Feener,
Dan Morris
Members absent: Karen Gallagher, Scott Smith
Staff: Sarah Garcia, Community Development Director
Others attending: None

1. The meeting of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) commenced at 7:00 p.m. in the 3rd floor meeting room in City Hall. A quorum was present.
2. Minutes from the special meeting held on September 21 were accepted unanimously and without amendment.
3. CPC officers were elected unanimously as follows:
Co-chairs: Mr. Bell and Ms. Dahl-Ronan
Treasurer: Ms. Gallagher
Clerk: Mr. Morris

The CPC discussed whether to have co-chairs, rather than a chair and vice chair. The committee determined that the dual leadership of Ms. Dahl-Ronan and Mr. Bell would be best.

The CPC discussed the possibility of using some of the administrative fund to bolster staffing support for the committee, including someone who would take on the responsibility of preparing meeting reports. Mr. Morris accepted the office the clerk, noting that possibility.

4. Mr. Bell distributed the table of contents from the CP plan from the Town of Sharon. He noted the breadth of subject matter and the professional appearance of the document. He noted that Sharon employed a consultant to prepare the report and suggested that the CPC consider using administrative funds for that same purpose. The CPC discussed this point at some length.

One point to consider is how well prepared and current the supporting plans are. Gloucester's supporting plans are all a bit dated: Open Space, 2001; Housing, 2004; Historic Inventory, 1990; Community Development, 2001. While these plans are somewhat out of date, they constitute the latest and best information we have available regarding needs and priorities for CP funds throughout the city. Also, the Community Development Plan undergoes an annual review and is supplemented by progress reports.

Other points that weigh on whether a consultant is needed are:

- The availability and ability of CPC members to do the detailed investigation and to craft the report.

- The degree to which the CPC needs an experienced advisor to overcome the common start-up inefficiencies.
- The importance of having consistency of administrative support.
- The benefit of working with someone who has been through the process of gaining local acceptance and state approval of the CP plan.
- The costs of hiring a consultant for this purpose (thought to range from \$10-20k).

Ms. Garcia noted a couple other possibilities for supplementing the CPC's work with outside support and/or expertise. She noted that a small contract could be let to someone for compiling the essential parts of the supporting plans into a single document. Another possibility would be to use CP administrative funds to hire a junior planner who could handle much of the CPC's footwork and administrative preparation.

The CPC supported Ms. Garcia's suggestion and asked her to announce a small contract for the document compilation effort within two weeks and to investigate the possibility of hiring a junior planner by January 1, 2010.

5. The CP Plan describes community preservation needs and priorities. A second document is needed to describe the process by which the CPC will solicit, review, and select CP proposals for funding. Mr. Bell suggested that the CPC take a "cafeteria" approach to forming the CP process plan; that is, members should review examples of existing process plans from other communities to identify parts to be adopted for Gloucester.
6. Ms. Garcia responded to a question about the CPC's obligations to consult with other committees/commissions, the city council, and the mayor in accordance with the CPC charter. She stated that her office would facilitate those communications.
7. The next two meetings of the CPC will be on November 16 and December 7, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., in the 3rd floor meeting room in City Hall.
8. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.