

Community Preservation Committee
Public Hearing Minutes
May 10, 2016

Members Present: William Dugan, Co-Chair, Catherine Schlichte, Co-Chair, Scott Smith, John Feener, David Rhineland, Hank McCarl, Barbara Silberman, and Heidi Wakeman

Members Absent: Ellen Preston
Staff Present: Deb Laurie

The Public Hearing was opened by Bill Dugan at 5:32 PM.

Bill introduced the members of the CPA Committee. He then proceeded to discuss the handout that was passed out indicating the history of categories of CPA funding. Pretty impressive that the CPA has funded over \$5M in projects; half going to the City Hall Restoration project which is still being paid off in a bond. Should be paid off soon, which will free up approximately \$215K which is paid towards this bond. We have about \$400K to allocate this year towards projects; and try to achieve parity amongst the categories. We are very pleased with the applications we have and so many great organizations in the community and so many resources that you are working on; very appreciative of all your efforts. Last year we were concerned that we only had seven or eight applicants, this year we don't have that concern with receiving 20 applications. Many of them new, which we were pleased to see. We have 17 eligible projects, representing about a \$1M in requests and about eight of the applicants are new to CPA, which is about half of the applications received. Don't take Gloucester's CPA for granted, as none of us should. The passing of the CPA was hard work and was very public and inclusive process. It took three attempts to get it on the ballot. In order to keep CPA in the community's minds the CPA members have written articles for the papers and some of the recipients have written them as well. The community deserves to know where their CPA surcharge goes and by getting the word out about all the great projects that create, preserve or restore Gloucester's housing, historical, open space and recreational resources we all so generate more interest. We see you as our partners in the CPA in doing the good work. We are extremely limited in funds for promotion of CPA; only 5% of our allocation goes to administrative costs which pay for part of Deb's salary. So the promotional budget is about zero. That's ok because the money should go into projects and we don't have a problem with that. So we will be asking you if you're funded to help promote your projects and get the word out about what you're doing, and also about how CPA has helped you and how it was important to your efforts. Bill asked the audience if they have any questions regarding CPA or comments. No one had any questions or comments.

As far as the presentations go, we want you to be brief; there are eight organizations to present tonight. We will ask questions for clarification and anyone is welcome to

ask questions at any time. We know and love your organizations, so you don't have to sell your organization to us. Just talk about your project and how valuable it is and what you're going to do to create it, preserve it or rehabilitate it.

The first presenter is the North Shore Community Development Corporation (NSCDC), Ilene Vogel. Ilene described Harbor Village as a 30 units, four story, and affordable housing project on the former Cameron Restaurant site. They along with Action, Inc. have purchased the site and have a lot of experience in developing affordable housing. Thirty units which will be 100% affordable; 1, 2 and 3 bedroom units. Quick over view of the project includes a four story building, first floor retail space, fitting in with the rest of Main Street with the second, third and fourth floors being residential units. Provides off-street parking, one for one, and an outside deck for tenants and They have been working with the city and the ZBA for quite a while now, to provide the most opportunities to Gloucester residents and have an affordable place to live downtown and also to make it fit into the rest of the streetscape of Main Street. The important thing is that we are creating 30 units of affordable housing and this is more consistent with Gloucester's desires. The city has put together a 2015 power base plan and a 2013 downtown work plan which stresses the need for affordable housing and mixed use in the downtown area. It contributes to Gloucester's affordability goal of 10%; the City is currently at 7.2%. There are 44% Gloucester residents who are classified as low income; Gloucester Housing Authority has over 800 families on their waiting list for housing.

Bill stated that this is a 412.6M project and they are asking for \$125K to be utilized for the brick exterior. Yes, the State needs to see that the City is showing support for the project. As you may know brick is expensive; the CDC had a different material, but the city came back and really wanted the brick façade so it would fit in with the rest of Main Street.

Hank made a comment that they are asking for less than 1% of the total cost of the project and wanted to know where the rest of the funds were coming from. Mostly tax credits through the State. They have applied for funding with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for over \$7M in housing tax credits and subsidies. They will provide the overall bulk of the funding. They are also waiting for City Council to vote on a recommendation from the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) for \$10,000.

David asked if Gloucester Residents have an increased chance of getting this housing. Yes, they are applying to DHCD for local preference; up to 70% will be set aside for Gloucester residents. The selection is done by a lottery. High percentages that will apply are usually local residents anyway.

Catherine asked if the property will continue to be owned by your agency and Action. Yes, its 30 units of affordable housing that will be in perpetuity; it doesn't run out. Also, she asked what the status was of the comprehensive permit? They

have worked hard with the City's architect and the city and will be going before the ZBA tomorrow night for a decision.

Rebecca Reynolds had a question regarding the retail space; who can go in there? Will it just be retail or can other services utilize the space? They are fairly small units which seem to rent better and they will be used for retail, not services.

Bill reminded everyone that there is no vote tonight; this is presentations only. They will meet to deliberate and make recommendations to the Mayor, who then forwards to the City Council for final vote.

The second presentation was for the Cape Ann Amateur Radio Association for the Wheeler School and GFD Riverdale Hose Company No. 2. Their project total is \$41,500 and they are asking for \$36,000 from CPA.

Dr. Curtis Wright gave a brief history of the project (see attached).

Catherine asked on behalf of Ellen Preston, member of CPA Committee. I know you interact with a lot of the community events like races, and festivals, is that for the purpose if there is a failure in the public communications and public safety for backup or are you communicating with the public safety groups? Both, we are backup to the public safety groups and also support for the groups that are holding the events. We keep things like the horribles parade on target and keep it moving with communicating to the lead car when to go and stop.

Another question is there any other funding sources you can draw on? You have your dues, but is there any national organization that you belong to? We are actually the largest American related league of amateur radio club in this part of the country and we are a member, but ham radio is not rich and has not been able to find a FEMA grant that we could apply for emergency communications that we know of.

John had a question regarding the "as needed" part of the budget regarding rotten wood. He would like to see a hard number, because costs for that can add up. What we are really talking about is trim which they will bear the cost in their contingency. This request is just for the cost of the shingles.

Next up is the Mount Pleasant Cemetery Association for restoration of the Civil War Monument. Mary Kathryn Gray, president of the Association presented this project. In light of new information and at the request of the Committee to seek another estimate, the project has been revised. Their request is to restore the Civil War Monument at the cemetery which is about 25 feet in height and it started out that we were requesting a complete restoration because the foundation was deemed failing and it was in jeopardy tipping over. CPA Committee requested us to seek more estimates and in doing so we discovered that the project will be an in place restoration rather than a complete restoration. They were originally told that the

degree of tipping was between 10 to 15%, but have learned that it is more like 4%. They also discovered that a scope of work study was not necessary; that would have cost about \$2,500. The estimates that they have for the work now are about \$2,000. This would include cleaning, removing failed mortar, and re-point mortar joints with historically correct mortar and replace lead were needed.

Barbara asked if the lead is replaced, this will keep out the water: yes that is correct. Using the lead and re-mortaring the horizontal gaps will ensure that the long metal post in the center of the monument will not be compromised.

David asked if they have changed the amount of money they are asking for; absolutely, we are now requesting about \$2,000. Bill thanked Mary-Kathryn for her efforts in pursuing more estimates. Bill also stated that the Committee will consider the additional stones and will be in touch. David asked how much additional stones would cost? They would like to repair some of the other damaged civil war stones in the cemetery at a cost of about \$250 for small ones and about \$450 for large. She needs to assess how many are truly in danger and will need repair. How many veterans are buried there? A total of 79. Catherine asked if their organization managed the cemetery? Yes, we are a non-profit organization, not affiliated with any religion and we take care of the cemetery. We take care of the landscaping and this is costly; we actually have been running a deficit over the last five years or so.

Fourth on the agenda was Generous Gardeners for the Boulevard project costing \$150,000 and requesting \$22,500 from CPA. Susan Kelly gave a brief background on her organization which takes care of a lot of the public gardens in Gloucester. This project came about when DPW approached them and wanted to continue their improvement efforts after the seawall is completed and asked if we could come up with a plan for planting beds instead of putting weedy grass back between the two sidewalks. They came up with a plan similar to the fishermen's wives area and will have over 13,000 flowers planted along the boulevard. DPW will be doing the granite edging, loam and the irrigation system. Susan grows many of the flowers herself and donates them to the city and the volunteer's plant and care for them. They raise a lot of money for the flowers by having the garden tour, plant sale and have a \$12K donation from the Dunskey foundation. They are raising more funds by selling decorative plant tags which identifies the plant, donor and a code that can be scanned to find out information about the plant, like care and maintenance. They get a lot of questions regarding their flowers and plants from the public. Catherine asked when the plants will be planted. They have been working closely with contractor and the beds should be ready by fall and they will be planting 5000 tulip bulbs that will bloom in the spring. All the rest of the plantings will be done in the spring which will be a combination of perennials and annuals. John asked since its located near the ocean, have you considered any shrubs or small trees. No, there is no plan for that, just flowers. They don't want to obstruct any views, and it will be a more formal, structured garden and a lot better than what is there now. We are asking for just \$22,500 to purchase flowers; we have raised already \$29K. John wanted to be clear that you have in the budget \$91K for plants. Susan said that is an

estimate of \$7 per plant, and could potentially spend up to the \$91K on plants, but we are only asking CPA for the \$22,500.

Bill introduces the Stage Fort Park Visitor's Center rehab project. Mr. Fred Giesel, of the Advisory Committee presents the project. They have an \$80K restoration project and are asking for \$55K. Fred gives some additional photos to the committee for reference. The Advisory Committee is working on several projects at the park; the city has spent money for a new roof and complete renovations of the restrooms at the Visitor's Center. They want to make sure that the building stays in good shape and is about 90 years old and hopes it will stay that way for another 90 years. The building is predominantly stone including the chimney, which needs some flashing and make sure that the liner is properly sealed. The areas of restoration are painting and repairing some of the decking and rails. The trim on the windows may contain lead and need to be repaired and repainted. Trim around the building was redone within the last 30 years or so and probably does not contain lead and will need just sanding and repainting. Regarding the stone; the areas under the building which is protected are in pretty good shape, but some of the areas that are exposed like the pillars need cleaning and repointing. There is a lot of moss growing and the stones are discolored and the mortar is not in good shape. Also needs a thorough cleaning by power washing with a basic detergent that is not harsh. They have an estimate from Numerous, which they mix up their own mortar that uses Portland cement, lime and materials like the sand that is from the area. We are looking to preserve and protect the building. The building has been deemed a significant historical asset, and this building is the center piece to the park, which is a very utilized recreational area.

Barbara asked about the concrete bonding material that Numerosi will use in their mortar. Fred explained that a bonding agent is used so that the new cement will bond to the old cement. She also asked do you know how deep they need to go removing the old before the new cement is added? Fred indicated that you clean up everything that is loose and get down deep enough so the new cement stays in place. Barbara asked if they knew if any water was getting into those areas because that's why mortar fails? He would assume there is some water penetration along with the moss that is growing may indicate that it is. Her final question was when the roof was done were their gutters? No, there are no gutters; the water runs off the roof and over hangs the pillars so it doesn't run off onto the building itself. General maintenance will continue and power washing the building as needed will be done.

Steve Winslow of the Community Development Department presented the project for Stage Fort Park Beautification looking for \$250K from CPA for a \$600K project. We have the quad centennial celebration coming up in few years and agree with Fred that this is the center piece of the park and will be a huge part of the celebration. In late December a rare opportunity came up to apply for the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant which comes from the National Park Service. Did some research for what would fit best for this grant application and Stage Fort Park was high on the list. Steve worked with landscape architect that did Burnham's

Field design and the full design for the Oval playground and they came up with a preliminary design for the area around the Visitor's Center, the band stand and part of the parking lot located near the Cupboard end. Steve spoke about the overall design and the terraced area at the parking lot that would be the new location for the Farmer's Market. The grant requires also some trail connections and water related use. They have incorporated a trail to connect to Ravenswood and a plan to store kayaks for water recreation. The good news is that it has been reviewed at the State level and is moving on to the second level which will be the National Park Service. No official word yet, but looks promising.

So the overall project cost is \$600K; \$250K grant from the Park Service, \$100K from CDBG funds for ADA improvements and the balance of \$250K from CPA which provides the City's match requirement. Realizing that this is a large request, the thought is that the Committee could look for a 10 year bond. We are working with the Farmer's Market group and will hold more meetings to develop the final design. Deb asked when would they know if they get the grant. Steve said by end of year and the city has to commit to a match by then.

Bill asked if there were any comments from anyone; Nikki, Director of the Cape Ann Farmer's Market stated that they love Stage Fort Park and appreciate it's beauty and history and believe it's one of the most valuable open spaces that the city has. It is well worth the investment to restore this gem and make sure that it remains beautiful and protected while still providing the space for community events, concerts and gatherings as intended. They do stand behind this project; she thinks there is still some work to do on the plan, but overall the park deserves to be improved. Bill asked Nikki if they have been working with Steve on this; yes, it's been a process, but we have a lot more to discuss. John asked if part of the request was for the design? Yes, but the city regardless has to come up with the matching funds or they don't get the grant. So the design cost is part of the overall package, but looking for \$250K from CPA to be used as match. Catherine clarifies that they are asking \$50K for this round and the balance through a bond. Yes, that is the idea, but you can structure anyway you see fit. You may want to bond all of the Stage Fort improvements, so there would be more funds to allocate to other projects. Construction would start in fall of 2017 and completing project by June 2018.

Hank made a comment about the bonding issue; one of the things that the Committee needs to be conscious of, is that Boston is in the process of adopting CPA. If that happens, Gloucester's share will be drastically reduced to 5% or even as much as 2%. It started out as a 100% match, we are down now to 19%.

The Manship Artist Residence and Studios (MARS) project was next to present requesting \$50K for a \$270K preservation and restoration. Rebecca Reynolds stated that most people are familiar with the sculptor Paul Manship, but are not aware that he had a studio in Gloucester. She continued to give a brief history of his life and accomplishments. Then she shows a map delineating the property and the two quarries that are on the property and the existing buildings. The property is 15

acres. Both the barn and house were moved onto the property from Bayview and Pigeon Cove. Both buildings are unique and historical in their own right, but the CPA request is for the landscaping and open space area that surrounds the home and barn. By acquiring the property they are protecting it and creating open space for the public. The core of the property which the home and barn are on will be somewhat limited to the public and reserved for the artists residence and studio space, but the landscape surrounding this will be open to the public at all times. Originally we were asking funds for capital improvements, but after a suggestion by committee members, we would like to ask for money towards the feasibility study and design. The first step in the process is to research and document how the landscape was and then develop a plan to recreate and/or enhance what remains. David asked how has the budget request changed? The amount is somewhat the same, maybe \$500 less, but instead of using it for capital improvements, it will be used for the study, research and a landscape plan.

Scott asked at the present time you don't own the land. No, we don't. We hope to obtain a P & S by June, and close on the property in the fall. They have the downpayment for the P & S, and a commitment from an ominous donor for most of the purchase price. They are raising money and it is selling for almost half of the assessed value.

John asked for clarification regarding the \$18,000 line item for documentation and phased planning. Is that more for the house or the landscaping? It is all for the landscaping. It's to research any documents that might show what was originally there and recreate. Deb asked if she had estimates for the contracted services listed on her new budget. Yes, some were submitted with the application.

Barbara stated that this is a large undertaking and she would like to know what made you select this as a project for the CPA request? This is a great opportunity to preserve a piece of property like this; one that was owned by a famous artist who lived on Cape Ann and for Gloucester's residence to enjoy and artists take advantage of the residency part. They want to preserve this property because it is one of the last remaining one of its kind.

Last on the docket is the Friends of Burnham's Field for the completion of their renovation project. John McElhenny presented the project. John is very proud of the renovations that have transpired over the last two years along with the neighborhood who played a major role in the renovations. It's been a huge transformation and a great success for the neighborhood. As he drove to the meeting tonight he noticed how many people were utilizing the field; playing basketball and soccer, children on the playground etc. He gave an overview of how the field was improved and how before this happened people did not want to come to the field because they were afraid. The neighbors are still invested in the field; this Sunday is Burnham's clean-up day. The community gardens are a huge success and they have a waiting list for people who want to use them. They will be also

taking over the gardens that were used by West Parish schools when they return to their new school in the fall.

The goal of the project is clearly defined to complete some of the things that they couldn't accomplish in the first phase. Completing the loop is one of the objectives. The walking path needs to be completed on the Burnham Street side around the ballfield. Walkers and bikers have to go onto the sidewalk to continue around and this is a danger to small children and pedestrians using the path. Also adding lighting in dark areas of the field which will make it even more safer and inviting.

Deb asked regarding the continued paved pathway, is there enough room to put it without interfering with the ballfield? Yes, we feel that there is enough room to put the pathway there. The outfield is now fenced off from the path and they can now hit home runs on the field. So the players are happy about that.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Respectfully submitted

Deborah Laurie

List of Documents submitted at meeting:

1. Ellen Preston Questions;
2. The Wheeler School Restoration presentation;
3. Photos of Stage Fort Park from Fred Giesel;
4. New information from Mt Pleasant Cemetery Association;
5. New budget for MARS application