

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 2, 2009**

LOCATION: Newman Elementary School

ATTENDING: Lisa Standley, Marsha Salett, Sharon Soltzberg, Paul Alpert, Janet Bernardo, Dawn Stolfi Stalenhoef, Kristen Phelps (Agent)

GUESTS: Jerry Wasserman

L. Standley opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

COMMISSION ACTIONS

CPA LAND ACQUISITION – CAROL ROAD/BREWSTER DRIVE

L. Standley explained that the Commission's input was being sought following the October 28th meeting of the Finance Committee at which that Board voted to support the proposed acquisition of 5+ acres of land on Carol Road and Brewster Drive if the purchase were made in cash (rather than bonding). L. Standley summarized the Finance Committee's rationale for this approach. She noted that the Commission's prior discussions of this matter expressed support of the acquisition so long as the purchase was bonded (such that the CPA open space reserve would not be depleted). In response to the action taken by the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen requested that the Commission vote as to whether they would support the acquisition if the land were paid for in cash.

J. Bernardo expressed her support of the acquisition and inquired as to whether the Finance Committee would support bonding of future land acquisition. L. Standley replied that the Finance Committee had not answered this question directly; however, it was her impression that they would consider bonding the purchase of land in the future if cash were not available. D. Stolfi Stalenhoef stated that she would support the purchase if the Commission takes the position that the care and custody of the two parcels should be placed with the Commission. In support of this position, she noted that the land would be purchased out of the open space reserve and that several conservation-related values (open space, trails, buffering) were being attributed to the parcels as the rationale for moving forward with the acquisition. The Commission agreed that this request should be relayed to the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion about bonding versus paying cash for the parcels followed. L. Standley read a statement she prepared for presentation to Town Meeting outlining the merits of acquiring these two lots. P. Alpert agreed to read the statement on the floor of Town Meeting and suggested that he also provide Town Meeting with a brief history of the Commission's actions relative to this purchase. P. Alpert subsequently presented a proposed vote relative to the purchase and funding of the subject parcels which read:

“Voted: That the Conservation Commission supports and recommends the purchases by the Town of Needham of the parcels of land described in Articles 10 and 11 of the November 2, 2009 Special Town Meeting Warrant for open space purposes under the Community Preservation Act, whether such purchases are funded by the borrowing under the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B, by direct purchase utilizing the funds of the Community preservation Fund set aside for open space, by direct purchase utilizing the funds of the Community

Preservation Fund not set aside for a particular purpose, or some combination of the foregoing; and it is further **voted** that the Conservation Commission strongly prefers that said purchases be funded by borrowing under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B.”

Motion to adopt the proposed vote as presented by P. Alpert, seconded by Janet Bernardo, approved 5-0-1 (M. Salett opposed).

Meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 12, 2009 at the Needham Public Library Community Room

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Phelps