

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
December 12, 2007**

Present: Paul Siegenthaler –Chairman, Jane Howard – Vice-Chairman,
Janet Bernardo, John Comando, Bruce Eisenhut, Brian Nadler,
Sheila Pransky, Sandy Tobin

Town Staff: Patricia Carey, Staff Liaison
Nikki Witham, Recording Secretary

Guests: Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager; Christopher Coleman, Assistant
Town Manager/Director of Personnel; Jim Healy, Selectman; Dan
Matthews, Selectman; Lisa Zappala, Finance Committee; Denise
Garlick, Board of Health Chair, Stuart Saginor, Community
Preservation Coalition Executive Director

The meeting convened at 7:30 PM in the Newman School Conference Room.

Presentation by Community Preservation Coalition: Ms. Howard introduced Stuart Saginor from the Community Preservation Coalition. Mr. Saginor was there to give a presentation to the Committee about CPA, and to clarify some questions from the Committee. The Coalition supports all of the CPA communities and assists those looking to adopt it.

Mr. Saginor utilized information from a Power Point presentation, and that is attached as Appendix A to these minutes. Mr. Saginor noted current trends. More communities are adopting CPA, putting a pressure on the state fund that is currently appropriating more than it is collecting. The ability to maintain 100% matches to all communities cannot be upheld, but it was not an original promise of the CPA. As Needham's surcharge is 2%, it will be eligible for a first round of state funding, and likely get 60-70% reimbursement.

Projects are becoming more complicated, and more are tending to be multi-use projects that utilize more than one area of CPA. Communities are also utilizing CPA to help receive matching grants. More projects are also being bonded.

Projects may only be bonded against the local surcharge and not the state match. A 2/3rds vote of Town Meeting is needed to approve the appropriation. There must be an annual vote for the bond payments. Votes cannot be taken prior to the year of spending. A debt payment can be paid from one of the specific buckets and count towards the 10% rule for spending or reserving in those buckets. Mr. Saginor recommended having the Town calculate the bonding capacity from the Needham CPA fund, to insure it can be paid off. If the Town votes to discontinue CPA in Needham, the surcharge would continue until the debt is paid off. The surcharge amount can remain at 2% for an

accelerated repayment, or the surcharge can be lowered to bring in just enough funds for the annual payment.

A challenge for the CPA is the recreation category. A recreation project must protect an asset from injury, harm or destruction. Mr. Saginor provided an eligibility chart that was developed by the Newton CPA to help determine project eligibility. There is a legislative effort underway to revise the wording under Recreation to make it more understandable. It appears that many communities want to renovate existing recreation facilities rather than create new ones, but the current wording does not make that easy to do.

Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that the Town was seeking an opinion from Bond Counsel on the three options for renovating Town Hall and possible level of CPA eligibility of each. Mr. Saginor agreed that was a good plan, and also reminded the CPA of the Standards from the US Secretary of the Interior. He will send a contact name at the MA Historical Commission who might be helpful, too. Mr. Matthews noted that the description in the legislation regarding the Standards was broader than what was written on the chart provided at the meeting. Mr. Saginor stated that the DOR has written opinions, but that there is not an existing body to officially determine CPA eligibility. Each CPC has to make its best determination with assistance from Town Counsel.

Mr. Siegenthaler thanked Mr. Saginor for coming to speak to the Committee.

Update from Town Manager on Study of Town Hall: The architect has carried all three potential projects through the concept stage with hopes of eventually cutting it down to two projects. The architect has agreed to carry all three projects through financing options though, with a February 1st timeframe for completion. Currently there is a power point presentation from the consultant up on the website. They have asked the bond council for opinions on all three options. It will be a written opinion. Town council is also involved. They understand that if bond council doesn't agree, they can't move forward. Mr. Matthews commented that it was nice to see many of the members of the Committee at the Town Hall meeting the other night and that it's nice trying to build consensus and keep in contact with each other about the upcoming project.

Initial Review of Proposals: Mr. Eisenhut made a motion consider all proposals submitted as eligible for CPA funding. Mr. Comando seconded the motion. Ms. Tobin asked that they not vote on all of the projects together, but go through them individually. The motion was withdrawn.

FY2008-1 Town Hall Renovation/Addition: Ms. Bernardo made a motion to accept the project as eligible for CPA funding and to move it forward through the process. Mr. Eisenhut seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

FY2008-2 Preservation of Historic Hearthstone Farm: Ms. Howard made a motion to accept the project as eligible for CPA funding and to move it forward through the process. Ms. Bernardo seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

FY2008-3 Transfer of Funds to Conservation Fund: Ms. Tobin made a motion to accept the project as eligible for CPA funding and to move it forward through the process. Mr. Eisenhut seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

FY2008-4 Preservation of Trails/Access to Municipal Land: Ms. Tobin had a question on the eligibility of this project after the presentation that they had just listened to. Mr. Comando stated that the intent is to keep people on the trails, and off of areas that shouldn't be damaged. **Ms. Howard made a motion to accept the project as eligible for CPA funding and to move it forward through the process. Ms. Bernardo seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.**

FY 2008-5 High Rock Trails: Ms. Bernardo made a motion to accept the project as eligible for CPA funding and to move it forward through the process. Ms. Howard seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Other Business: Ms. Pransky let the Committee know that the groundbreaking for the High Rock Homes project will be January 18th, at 11:00 AM. Mr. Siegenthaler told the Committee that liaisons will be selected at the next meeting.

Ms. Howard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 PM. Ms. Pransky seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Witham
Recording Secretary