COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Minutes of Meeting
March 26, 2008

Present:	Paul Siegenthaler –Chairman, Jane Howard – Vice-Chairman, Janet Bernardo, John Comando, Bruce Eisenhut, Brian Nadler, Sheila Pransky
Absent:	Sandy Tobin
Town Staff:	Patricia Carey, Staff Liaison Nikki Witham, Recording Secretary
Guest:	Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager Lisa Standley, Chair, Conservation Commission Moe Handel, Resident

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

Minutes of March 12, 2008: **Ms. Bernardo made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2008 meeting. Ms. Pransky seconded the motion and it was passed. Five voted in favor and two abstained.**

Chairman's Comments: Mr. Siegenthaler discussed the notice from the Community Preservation Coalition reporting that the state has indicated 65% state "matching" funds for next year. He would like to ask Assistant Town Manager/Director of Finance Dave Davison to redo the financial plan based on the state match of 65%.

Mr. Siegenthaler went over the role of the liaisons at the Public Hearing. He reminded the Committee that their jobs at the Public Hearing are to just introduce the proponents. The proponents will then have a chance to give a five to ten minute presentation. Mr. Siegenthaler will then open the floor for questions and refer to the proponents for answers. It is helpful for each proponent to bring a handout. Mr. Siegenthaler also told the Committee that the hope is to be able to take a vote on whether or not to approve the proposals at the next meeting on April 16, 2008. Mr. Siegenthaler will also be attending the Finance Committee meeting on April 2nd, and will report back to the Committee.

Review of Proposals:

FY2008-2 Preservation of Historic Hearthstone Farm- Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick provided an update on the proposal. Negotiations are still underway with the owners, and if an agreement can be reached by the beginning of April, all of the work needed to bring it to Town Meeting could be accomplished. But, if negotiations aren't complete, it is likely that the proponents will request to withdraw from May's Town

Meeting and seek to submit a renewed proposal to the CPC for the November Special Town Meeting. Ms. Fitzpatrick shared a schematic for creating access from Nehoiden Street onto the property that would provide enough parking spaces for ten vehicles. The access is below the location of the barn and outside the wetlands boundaries. The Town would seek to purchase about 2 acres of land. The Trust for Public Land hopes to have a private buyer purchased the other section of parcel, and has some possible buyers. The Town would not hold any risk related to the sale of the parcel with the buildings. Mr. Comando asked if additional CPA funds would be requested to build the access road and parking area, but Ms. Fitzpatrick said that she'd work with DPW to see what they could do, and she did not anticipate coming back to CPC with a request. Mr. Siegenthaler asked how the historic and conservation restrictions would be created. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that it was part of the service provide by Trust for Public Land. If the project is not ready for May's Town Meeting, Mr. Siegenthaler suggested having a public hearing in the fall on the project, but Ms. Pransky suggested that it be discussed at the April public hearing with an indication that it will likely be a request in the fall. **Ms. Pransky made a motion to provide information on the proposal at the public hearing, and in the event it is being withdrawn from the May Town Meeting to indicate that the proposal would return in the fall for a Special Town Meeting. Mr. Eisenhut seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.**

FY2008-1 Town Hall Renovation- Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that the Town's financial plan for capital projects was being revised. She asked if the CPC had an opinion on how much cash they would want considered for the Town Hall project as opposed to bonding. A tour of Town Hall has been scheduled for April 9th from 5-7 PM followed by a 7 PM public hearing. Last week, Ms. Fitzpatrick held a meeting with representatives of the PPBC, Finance Committee, CPC, Board of Selectmen, senior staff, and the Preservation of Town Hall group. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the Preservation group with background information and questions as they prepare to present their Citizen's Petition at Town Meeting. Mr. Siegenthaler noted that the Board of Selectmen had reduced their CPC request from $1.5 million to $1 million. He asked for confirmation that full design would be completed before requesting construction funds, and that all major decisions will have been made. Ms. Fitzpatrick assured the CPC that the $1 million was sufficient, and if approved, that additional design funds for construction oversight would be included in the construction funding request. Ms. Howard asked if there had been further discussion on whether to preserve the stage or not. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the final report from McGinley, Kaslow and Assoc. would include information to help decide on the benefits of preserving the stage or removing it. Ms. Fitzpatrick discussed the related project at the DPW site, creating a public services administration building on the DPW site that would be built in time to be used as temporary office space for Town Hall during renovations, saving $1 million on rental costs. If the CPC recommended the Town Hall design funds, Town Meeting would vote on that proposal and a $6 million request for the administration building. She has been working with the Conservation Commission to make sure there is enough land outside of wetland restrictions available for the administration building, and the PPBC has begun the process of hiring a designer, pending approval of funds, so that design work for the new building could begin right after Town Meeting. Mr. Siegenthaler noted that the CPC was considering possible historic preservation restrictions on Town Hall. Ms. Fitzpatrick asked to have further discussions with the CPC on possible restrictions, and that she would also seek guidance from Town Counsel.

FY2008-3 Transfer of Funds to Conservation Fund- Mr. Siegenthaler noted that, during their review, the Selectmen asked about the purpose of the Conservation Fund and the need for the requested amount. Conservation Commission Chairman Lisa Standley was available at the CPC meeting to help answer questions. Mr. Nadler, the liaison to the project, noted that he had a list of questions for Dr. Standley from the CPC but that he had not been able to meet with her to review them. He suggested that he meet with Dr. Standley to work on the questions. Ms. Howard expressed concern that there is funding available through the reserve fund so that the Conservation Fund would not be necessary. Mr. Nadler reiterated that the purpose of the fund is to act promptly, with due diligence, to avoid the waiting periods related to Town decisions. The CPC would like to see some examples from other towns with a similar fund, and the restrictions on use of the CPA funds.

FY2008-4 Preservation of Trails/Access to Municipal Land- Dr. Standley informed the Committee that the draft trails master plan is under review by the Town Manager. Mr. Comando asked for an explanation of the $5,500 estimate. Dr. Standley said that it was based on estimates received, and on the amount of work that could be expected to be completed in one year. Mr. Comando will provide additional questions to Dr. Standley prior to the public hearing.

FY2008-5 High Rock Trails- Ms. Pransky said that the Housing Authority was reviewing their project to find reductions and therefore reduce the amount of funds sought. Dr. Standley noted that the Trails Committee included the proposed trails into the master plan, but that it wasn’t as high a priority as other projects in the plan at this time. Mr. Eisenhut will follow-up with the proponents and also suggest that they attend the April 16th CPC meeting.

Other Business: Mr. Comando asked if the Moderator was prepared to appoint the final member to the CPC. Mr. Siegenthaler said that the Moderator continued to seek appropriate applicants.

Mr. Nadler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Ms. Howard seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikki Witham
Recording Secretary