



TOWN OF WHATELY

Whately, Massachusetts

Community Preservation Committee

whately.org/community-preservation-committee

mailing address:

4 Sandy Lane, South Deerfield, MA 01373

email: CPC@whately.org

Minutes of the Community Preservation Committee Meeting, Nov. 8, 2023 via Zoom

Present: Alan Sanderson, Chair, Doug Coldwell, Judy Markland, Andrew Ostrowski, Chris Williams and Catherine Wolkowicz.

Absent: Donna Wiley

Alan opened the meeting at 5:00 pm.

The minutes of the October 11 meeting were unanimously approved.

Discussion of the CPC Plan

Chris indicated that the Recreation Commission will need to wait until the next CPC meeting to submit any changes.

Catherine reviewed changes to the Housing Goals and Priorities that were the product of an extensive Housing Committee discussion. (See attachment.) Most were relatively minor changes that either refine the focus of the statements, for instance substituting “municipal employees” for “town employees” or that reflect practical and legal constraints on the objectives, such as the one prioritizing town residents and employees. Catherine will update the housing data in the plan from the data in the recent Housing Production Plan.

Other items

Chris reported that the ice rink project is complete and the remaining funds may be returned to their original sources.

Catherine reported on the tour of the Sanderson Place affordable housing facility in Sunderland. It is a well-designed, 33-unit facility located in the center of town. The project was initiated by the owners of the parcel, who approached town officials with the goal of having it used for affordable housing. The original design was for 18 units, but the project had to be expanded to 33 units to break even financially. The state funding packages are for large-scale projects and effectively exclude small, rural towns. Linda Dunlevey, Executive Director of FRCOG and Chair of the Rural Policy Advisory

Commission, has written a letter to Secretary Edward Augustus of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, to request that some funding sources offered by that agency be either set aside for rural communities or modified so that rural communities may access them for affordable housing projects.

Alan reported that the work on the Quonquont silos has been completed and that they had sent photos and copies of the checks paid to the mason. However, the grant agreement stipulates a completion report, without defining what that is. It was agreed that the farm should send a memo on Quonquont stationery describing the work done and including an invoice for amount of the reimbursement, with the photos and check copies as attachments. Alan will convey this to them.

Judy noted that because of the increasing risks to farmland from climate change, she had asked Stuart Saginor at the Community Preservation Coalition if CPA funds could be used for preserving farmland in ways other than via an APR, such as planting riverbanks or terracing to prevent erosion. Similarly, could CPA funds be used to rehabilitate land already under APR, such as with tiling or ditching. The answer was negative in both cases. CPA funds can be used to improve farmland only when the land (not the APR) was purchased with CPA money. Judy will meet with Margaret Christie and CISA's climate person to discuss amending the CPA legislation to broaden the farmland preservation and improvement options.

Alan commented that the library trustees had asked him if replacing the sealant on the bricks at the library would be eligible for funding, since the sealant would preserve the bricks. The group agreed it made sense to ask Stuart Saginor whether this would qualify or be considered maintenance.

Alan will ask Jessica to send out a broadside email to town boards and committees about the upcoming CPA application deadline. Judy will prepare a press release after the state match is announced on the 15th.

The next meeting will be on December 13 at 5pm via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Markland

Attachment

Housing Goals

To provide housing opportunities that are financially ~~attainable~~ reasonable and meet the needs of all Whately citizens, with emphasis on seniors, current residents, and ~~people who work within town-municipal employees.~~

To ~~encourage the innovative use or reuse of existing structures to~~ create diverse housing opportunities ~~while preserving that~~ preserve the rural, agricultural character of Whately, ~~if possible by rehabilitating existing structures, alternatively by creating new units.~~

Community Housing CPA Project Priorities

- Increase the affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income individuals, seniors and families, ~~including low and moderate income senior housing.~~
 - Assist in the development, promotion, and placement of low and moderate income and senior housing
 - Contribute to the goal of 10% affordable housing stock in Whately.
 - Provide housing that is harmonious in design, scale, setting and materials with the surrounding community neighborhood.
 - ~~Promote long-term sustainability of affordable housing.~~
 - Investigate housing opportunities in existing buildings or construction on previously developed or town-owned sites.
 - Use CPA funds to leverage other funding for the development or rehabilitation of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing for local residents.
 - Give priority consideration, as allowable, to Whately residents and town employees for newly available affordable housing.
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