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TOWN OF AYER
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Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432
Minutes for 8/19/2020

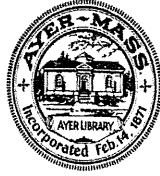
Location: Remote Meeting via Zoom, accessible to public, due to Pandemic State of Emergency
Members present on-line: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Jason Mayo (JAM) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk, Julie Murray (JUM) [Planning Board], Colleen Krieser (CK)[At Large]
APAC Taped and Broadcast

7:15 PM – Open Meeting

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - BES moved to accept the minutes for 7/1/2020 as corrected; CK 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 6-0 (JUM abstained)
- **Correspondence / Bills**
 - Ayer Community Garden (\$41,000, STM 2019)
 - JP has approved two invoices related to the Community Garden:
 - \$33.00 to J & S Business Products for production of a “Community Garden Parking Only” sign.
 - \$273.10 reimbursement to Sheila Carman for garden-related expenses at Ace Hardware and at Great Road Farm & Garden (for trimmer hose, file box, no smoking sign, hay for new areas).

CURRENT BUSINESS

- **Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Restoration and Preservation Project PHASE II (asking for \$187,340, Fall Town Meeting 2020)**
 - Irv Rockwood, President of the Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Association (SPSA), participated on-line via Zoom.
 - Mr. Rockwood presented a more detailed and revised application, now asking for \$187,340 out of a total Phase II project estimate of \$191,910.
 - (This is down from \$208,870 when the application was first submitted and last discussed at CPC’s 6/3/2020 meeting.)
 - The project will accomplish Phase II of the work identified in the 2017 Conditions Assessment performed by Spencer & Vogt.
 - Phase I preserved the structural integrity of the schoolhouse; Phase II is designed to make it usable by the community, including schools, on a year-round basis
 - JP and Mr. Rockwood provided updates.
 - JP said the Select Board (SB) expressed their support of the project at its meeting the night before (8/18).



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- Mr. Rockwood said the revised application contains a letter of support from the Friends of the Ayer Library.
 - The Ayer Historical Commission voted earlier in the day (8/19) to send its own letter of support, and the Select Board and the Ayer Cultural Council will also be providing letters shortly.
- Highlights of the application were reviewed, including the Project Scope:
 - construction of fully accessible rest room
 - installation of ADA accessible entrance and door;
 - repair, re-glazing and repainting of the exterior trim and the original 1869 windows;
 - interior improvements;
 - HVAC and electrical work;
 - exterior maintenance and repair (still up in the air is whether the roof will be repaired or replaced).
- JP confirmed that all work will be done in accordance with the standards established by the Secretary of the Interior for historical preservation.
- Regarding the Budget:
 - Cost of the project is based on estimates adjusted for 2021 from the 2017 Assessment.
 - The application details an amount of \$4570 remaining available from the Phase I work , to be rolled over into the Phase II application.
 - This accounts for the difference between the CPC grant request and the estimated total project cost.
 - Because Phase I was completed under budget, some other additional tasks (electrical work and new shutters) were then added to and covered under Phase I via change orders.
 - Mr. Rockwood said that as Phase I unfolded, it was more efficient and cost effective to do these add-ons while portions of the building were opened up.
 - BAS said this was a great project for the school house, a “gem of the community,” but questioned whether Phase I funds could be used for tasks identified for Phase II, suggesting the two phases be kept separate.
 - JP will talk to Town Accountant Lisa Gabree to see if this is a problem, per wording of the previous Warrant Article.
- As CPC already voted on 6/3 to advance this application, JP reminded members that the Public Hearing is scheduled for 7:15 on Wednesday, September 2.
 - Mr. Rockwood said Lynn Spencer, the architect from Spencer, Sullivan & Vogt, will participate as well.



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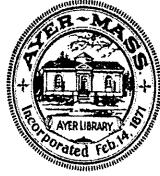
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- BAS advised Mr. Rockwood that a power point presentation, including budget details and photos of the schoolhouse, would be highly beneficial for use at the public hearing as well as Fall Town Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Funding for the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) and Office of Community & Economic Development (OCED)**
 - JP, who is also Chair of the AHC, recused herself as CPC Chair in order to present the application; BAS took over as Chair for this portion of the meeting.
 - Alicia Hersey, of OCED, also participated via Zoom.
 - The application from AHC and OCED asks for \$30,000 in CPC seed money to begin funding a Housing Trust.
 - Fall Town Meeting 2020 (October 26) will consider two Warrant Articles involving the Trust, one to actually create the Trust, and, if that passes, a second to approve the CPC seed funding request.
 - AHC and OCED will be holding two informational sessions on the Housing Trust itself, via Zoom, at 7 p.m. on August 24 and on September 21.
 - The CPC application was reviewed with the following highlights:
 - Use of money in the Trust (if approved) will be under the guidance of a 7-member Board of Trustees comprised of residents and members of several Town boards (Housing, Planning, Select Board), each serving for 2-year terms.
 - The goal of the Trust Fund is to help local residents in need with emergency rental assistance, as well as to help preserve housing diversity and affordability in Ayer.
 - Given the uncertainties caused by the ongoing pandemic, this Fund could be especially helpful to those residents who would otherwise fall through the cracks for state or federal assistance.
 - In such cases, emergency assistance funds would be paid direct to landlords.
 - In addition, a Trust Fund allows for more flexibility and a faster response than going through twice-a-year Town Meetings.
 - If creation of the Housing Trust Fund is approved by FTM, Ms. Providakes said it will then be looking for additional CPA funds via an annual disbursement.
 - The Trust Fund can also receive contributions via “in lieu of fees” money*, where applicable, per requirements of the new inclusionary



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Zoning Bylaw, as well as via private contributions or other funding from the Town.

- (* If a developer does not want to provide required affordable housing for a portion of an applicable project, they could potentially bypass this requirement by paying fees into a local Housing Trust.)
- Ms. Hersey is also working through OCED to find additional grant money as well.
 - Though details are to be worked out, CPA guidelines would not apply to non-CPA funds; management of the Trust Fund account would be under the direction of the Town Accountant.
- To be worked out under review with the Select Board is the annual maintenance budget as administration of the Trust will be handled by Ms. Hersey and OCED.
 - Since CPA funds cannot be used for regular maintenance, the Town of Ayer would have to pay for staff administration by some other means.
- JG and CK commented that \$30,000 was not a large sum and wondered if the funding request should be larger, especially given the pandemic.
 - Ms. Providakes said that if the Housing Trust is approved at FTM, then a lot more work would need to be done to ‘get all the ducks in a row’ and get the Fund up and running (eg. appoint a Board of Trustees, set up the account, budget for various services like staff time, develop assistance criteria, etc.).
 - Spring Town Meeting 2021 would not be that far off for additional funds, and Ms. Providakes reiterated that the Housing Trust would be looking for an annual CPC disbursement to build up the Fund anyway.
- CPC members generally thought this was a great proposal.
- Resident Pauline Conley called in by phone and thanked Ms. Providakes and Ms. Hersey for a thorough presentation.
 - The application, under its project description, alluded to use of the Trust also “to assist Ayer residents with first time home purchases, to work directly with developers to create affordable housing, and to possibly purchase existing structures to develop additional affordable housing within the town of Ayer.”
 - Ms. Conley said the Town cannot act as a landlord and asked how, if the Town were to purchase property, this would be handled.

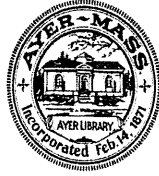


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- Ms. Providakes said details for this scenario were yet to be worked out, but suggested something like a home preservation purchase that could be flipped and resold at an affordable price.
- Ms. Hersey said the mechanism used for the transfer of Town property to Habitat for Humanity was via an RFP (Request for Proposals) to suitable developers, and something similar would therefore be used.
 - OCED would work with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to create appropriate RFPs.
 - However, these details are yet to be worked out by the Select Board, Town Manager, and Town Counsel.
- There being no further questions or discussion, JG moved to support advancing this application to a Public Hearing review; CK 2nd.
 - Motion approved by Roll Call Vote 5-0 (JP was recused; JAM was no longer on-line via Zoom).
 - The Public Hearing will be scheduled for 7:30 or 7:40 PM on Wednesday, September 2.
- **Committee Updates**
 - Historical Commission (BES)
 - A letter of support for the SPSA project is forthcoming.
 - The Historical Commission has also asked that a Preservation Restriction be included, which Mr. Rockwood agreed to.
 - The old David E. Ross Associates property has been sold and BES said he's hoping the new owner will agree to allow the continued maintenance of the 1915 monument located there.
 - Housing Authority (JP)
 - No meetings over the summer.
 - Parks & Recreation (JAM)
 - No report.
 - Conservation Commission (JG)
 - Continuing its regular work, including ongoing peer review of Ayer Solar II, and various enforcement actions.
 - Because of the workload and time limitation of Zoom meetings, ConCom has been unable to work on developing regulations under its new wetland bylaw.
 - Planning Board (JUM)



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- Also working on reviewing Ayer Solar II via Site Plan Review, and working with the DPW to develop new stormwater regulations.
- Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee (BAS)
 - Nothing new to report.
- **8:26 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - CPC's Next Meeting: September 2, 7 p.m.
 - BAS moved to adjourn; BES 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved by CPC: September 2, 2020

Signature Indicating Approval: Jessica G. Gugino