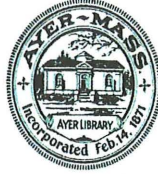


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OCT 23 2020

TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK

M. J. O'Connell



Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432
Minutes for 9/2/2020

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], Colleen Krieser (CK)[At Large], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk
Not present: Jason Mayo (JAM) [Parks & Recreation], Julie Murray (JUM) [Planning Board], APAC Taped and Broadcast

7:04 PM – Open Meeting

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - CK moved to accept the minutes for 8/19/2020 as corrected; BES 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0
- **Correspondence / Bills**
 - Ayer Community Garden (\$41,000, STM 2019)
 - JP was contacted by Sheila Carman and told her that purchase of replacement string for the weed whacker would be considered maintenance and could not be covered under the CPC funding grant.
 - Sandy Pond School Restoration and Preservation Project Phase I (\$108,000, STM 2018)
 - JP approved, and Town Manager Robert Pontbriand signed, payment of a bill to Gerard O'Doherty, for \$11,900, for ongoing Phase I work.
- **PUBLIC HEARING: Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Restoration and Preservation Project PHASE II (asking for \$187,340, Fall Town Meeting 2020)**
 - JP opened the Public Hearing at 7:10 p.m. by reading the legal notice that was published in *The Nashoba Valley Voice* on 8/28 as well as posted on the Town website.
 - Irv Rockwood, President of the Sandy Pond Schoolhouse Association (SPSA), participated on-line via Zoom, along with architect Lynne Spencer, of Spencer, Sullivan & Vogt (SSV), the Boston architecture and preservation firm that produced the 2017 Conditions Assessment of the historic schoolhouse, and oversaw the Phase I work on the 150 yr.+ building.
 - This application seeks Town approval for CPC funding to support Phase II restoration work.
 - Because the 1869 schoolhouse is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, all restoration work must comply with the standards established by the Secretary of the Interior for historical preservation.



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- Mr. Rockwood gave a slide presentation that both documented what has been done (or is in the process of being completed) under the Phase I grant, as well as the work to be included under Phase II if approved.
 - Phase I involved the emergency work necessary for the stabilization and preservation of the building's basic structural integrity.
 - Phase II is intended to complete the restoration work and upgrade the building so that it can, once again, function as a community center for a variety of functions and school education use.
 - It was a community center from 1908 into the 1960s, and SPSA hopes it can become so again.
- Mr. Rockwood showed a series of "before" and "after" slides highlighting Phase I accomplishments:
 - repair and stabilization of the foundation;
 - masonry repair;
 - classroom ceiling structural repair, replacement, and repainting;
 - the original horsehair plaster ceiling had been sagging, but the new ceiling is now level at a uniform height of 10 ft. 5 in.;
 - repainting of the classroom interior;
 - exterior trim painting
 - replacement of the shutters;
 - the existing white shutters were in too poor condition to restore;
 - the new shutters have been painted Essex Green (aka "bottle green") based on SSV's analysis of the color values in old black-and-white photos of the school in its beginning;
 - electrical upgrade work (in process);
 - replacement of classroom ceiling fixture (in process);
 - installation of an access hatch to classroom crawl space;
 - installation of security alarm system.
- Mr. Rockwood then described the Phase II work that this grant, if approved by Fall Town Meeting vote, would include funding for:
 - HVAC and electrical work;
 - Minisplits will likely be installed; the old coal/wood stove will remain in place but is not safe to use;
 - Strip, reglaze, and repaint the original 1869 windows;
 - construction of fully accessible bathroom per Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) Guidelines;
 - installation of accessible entrance ramp and door per MAAB Guidelines;
 - repainting of Ell interior and exterior;
 - replacement of broken flagpole;

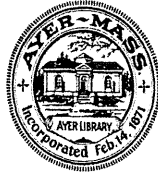


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- lawn and grounds repair;
- roof *or* insulation work;
 - this will be a big decision as the roof has degraded since the 2017 Conditions Assessment and its replacement may become prioritized over installing insulation;
- unforeseen surprises.
- Mr. Rockwood closed by thanking CPC and the Town of Ayer for its support.
 - This sentiment was echoed by Ms. Spencer who also asked that Mr. Rockwood himself be recognized for the leadership and inspiration he has provided in pursuing the schoolhouse restoration.
- BES said the Ayer Historical Commission has been discussing this project, and has underscored that a Preservation Restriction (PR) still needs to be set in place, as was requested for Phase I.
 - The Historical Commission advises that this be done as soon as possible, prior to completion of the project, so that it doesn't have to be 'chased down' afterwards, as happened with the Pleasant Street School project.
 - Mr. Rockwood said SPSA fully supports a PR as it is their long-term goal to preserve this building for historic purposes.
- BAS thanked Mr. Rockwood for the thoroughness of his presentation as well as the goal of turning the schoolhouse into a community center.
 - She also said she would like to see fundraising continue, including pursuing future grant opportunities if they become available, to contribute to offsetting the costs supported by the CPC grant, if approved.
 - Mr. Rockwood agreed but said that as of the present, no announcements for grant possibilities have been made, probably due to the economic impact of the pandemic.
 - The MPPF (Mass. Preservation Projects Fund) has not even awarded grants for this year much less opened applications for grants next year.
- There were no public questions or comments.
- BES moved to bring this project before Fall Town Meeting (October 26) for vote, with the full support of CPC; CK 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- BAS moved to close the Public Hearing; CK 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0.
- **PUBLIC HEARING: Funding for the Ayer Affordable Housing Trust, Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) and Office of Community & Economic Development (OCED)**



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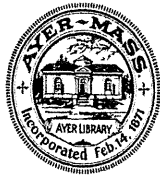
- JP opened the Public Hearing by reading the legal notice that was published in *The Nashoba Valley Voice* on 8/28 as well as posted on the Town website.
- As Chair of the Affordable Housing Committee that is presenting the application, JP then recused herself and BAS took over as Chair.
 - Also present via Zoom was Alicia Hersey, of the Office of Community & Economic Development (OCED), which is the co-applicant.
- A Zoom public information session, held on August 24, provided some great feedback.
 - A second session will be held via Zoom at 7 p.m. on September 21.
- Ms. Providakes (JP) then presented the application with slide support.
 - Two Warrant Articles will be presented at Fall Town Meeting, on October 26, by the applicants.
 - One Article seeks to create a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust.
 - If passed, a second Article will then seek initial “seed money” funding of the Trust through a \$30,000 CPA grant.
- The goal of the Trust is to provide a funding base that can assist in the preservation and expansion of affordable housing in Ayer to:
 - balance the diversity of housing within Ayer;
 - maximize the potential new funding stream with CPA’s surcharge increase;
 - help fulfill the recently adopted inclusionary Housing Zoning Bylaw, including offering the potential for “in lieu of payment” funding;
 - assist residents with emergency/hardship funding support due to the current pandemic as well as during other future states of emergency that may arise;
 - support Ayer residents with additional local housing program resources and access;
 - contribute to the advancement of the Ayer Master Plan initiative which included a mandate to keep housing diversity alive in Ayer.
- Specific actions the Trust could help with include:
 - support rent assistance for low-to-moderate income households in critical need (with direct to landlord payments);
 - provide financial support for construction of affordable housing by both private and public sector entities;
 - identify appropriate properties that could be rehabilitated for conversion into local affordable housing;
 - advocate and support additional affordable housing in new development projects;



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- advance surplus municipal land/building development opportunities for local affordable housing;
- work to preserve properties faced with expiring affordability restrictions.
- Potential funding sources for the Trust, if approved by FTM:
 - CPA funds (the \$30,000 seed grant to hopefully be regularized as annual Town Meeting approved CPA disbursements);
 - 'in lieu of fees' from new inclusionary Zoning Bylaw, if applicable;
 - Town of Ayer funding;
 - potential grant opportunities;
 - private gifts and contributions.
- The next steps if FTM votes to create the Trust, and then approves the Article for \$30,000 in CPA seed money:
 - finalization and approval of Affordable Housing Trust Bylaws;
 - seeking public feedback and engagement on local housing needs;
 - creation of a 7-member Board of Trustees, all residents, to be appointed by the Select Board;
 - terms will not exceed 2 years;
 - to stagger these terms, 3 of the initial 7 appointees will just be appointed for 1 year terms;
 - individuals to be recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee;
 - (backing in banking, real estate, real estate law, and residential development preferred);
 - may be re-appointed at discretion of Select Board;
 - should include at least one member of the Select Board, and recommended to include representatives from the Affordable Housing Committee, CPC, and Planning Board;
 - new Board of Trustees will then develop Guidelines and an Application.
- Ms. Providakes said they are only seeking \$30,000 in initial funding in order to start off cautiously while they get all the initial details sorted out.
- Ken Disken, a resident and member of the Planning Board, said the Town's Master Plan sought to create something like this and he is pleased to see these committees looking to Ayer's future.
- Ms. Hersey said she will be looking into additional grant opportunities as they become available, especially given how many people are hurting from the effects of the pandemic.
 - She also said the Trust will be made as transparent as possible, and is to be driven by the community and what is good for Ayer.
- CPC members were in support of this great project.



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- BAS asked if the Trust is created, with its Board of Trustees, would the Affordable Housing Committee continue to exist?
 - Ms. Providakes said it would continue to serve as a guidance committee, seeking continued public input, researching, and providing feedback to the Select Board as well.
 - The OCED will provide administrative support to the Trust via Ms. Hersey.
 - Ms. Hersey said she thought potential applicants to the Trust would come first to the Affordable Housing Committee, and then to the Trust.
- Resident Bob Gardner was unable to get his audio input working but provided two enthusiastic thumbs up in support of the application.
- Resident Pauline Conley had a few comments:
 - She supports a project like this going forward.
 - One question was whether there was a mechanism to deal with situations where rental or mortgage assistance is provided to a resident, even if paid directly to a landlord, but that resident then moves out of Ayer?
 - She said allowing the Select Board to appoint Trustees would “politicize” appointments and suggested Trustees be elected rather than appointed.
 - (This was followed by her statement that she won’t be appointed to committees herself by the current Town government.)
 - She said the public should be allowed to review the Bylaws and provide input prior to their coming before a Town Meeting vote.
 - She asked that this CPC Public Hearing be continued and kept open until after the next public information session on Sept. 21.
- BAS thanked Ms. Conley for her comments and added that she thought CPC had enough information already and did not need to keep this Public Hearing open further.
 - One of the main purposes of CPC is to decide if an application is sufficient and desirable for the Committee to recommend its moving forward to Town Meeting for a final decision.
- Ms. Providakes, responding to Ms. Conley’s comments, said details for payments made directly to landlords are still to be worked out;
 - She will also check to confirm that the Housing Trust guidelines under Mass. General Laws specifies that Trustees be appointed rather than elected.
- Resident Sara Withee thanked CPC for providing a very helpful meeting.
- There being no further public comments, CK moved to bring this project before Fall Town Meeting (October 26) for vote, with the full support of CPC; BES 2nd.



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- Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 4-0, with JP recused from voting.
- BAS moved to close the Public Hearing; CK 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 4-0, with JP recused from voting.
- **Committee Reports**
 - Due to time having run out under the limitations of a Zoom meeting, committee reports were deferred to the next meeting.
- **8:15 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - CPC's Next Meeting: October 7, 7 p.m.
 - BES moved to adjourn; BAS 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved by CPC:

10/7/2020

Signature Indicating Approval:

Jessica G. Gugino