

Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA01432
Minutes for 12/1/10 - Approved 1/5/11

Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor

Members present: Alene Reich (AR) [At Large]- Chair, Gary Luca (GL)[BOS], Scott Houde (SH) [FinCom], Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing], Beth Suedmeyer (BS) [At Large], Sarah Gibbons (SG) [Parks & Rec.], Jess Gugino (JG) [ConsCom]- Clerk

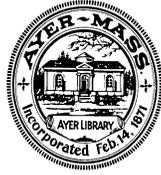
Not present: Mark Fermanian (MF) [Planning Board], Vacancy [Historical]

APAC taped: NO

7:04 PM – Open Meeting

- **Meeting Minutes Approval**
 - SH moved to approve minutes for 11/3/10 as written; JP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

- **Discussion: Pleasant Street School Pocket Park**
 - Doug Jansen and Judy Pinard appeared before the CPC on behalf of Ken Martin, Executive Director of Ayer Housing Authority.
 - They distributed a pre-application handout of the proposal for a one-acre pocket park adjacent to the historic Pleasant Street School Apartments.
 - The purpose of the meeting is to determine the eligibility of the project for \$100,000 of CPA funding.
 - The handout consisted of a general project description, an architectural concept drawing, and a 3-phase funding/timeline implementation plan.
 - Phase 1: Planning and Funding
 - 1/1/09 – 9/1/11; Cost: \$10,000
 - Phase 2: Beginning Construction
 - 9/1/11 – 6/1/12; Cost: \$65,000
 - Phase 3: Final Construction
 - 1/1/12 – 9/1/12; Cost: \$25,000
 - The preliminary design concept is for a passive park with walkways, benches, a rock garden, trees and flower gardens.
 - The park will be low maintenance, to be handled by Ayer Housing as needed.
 - A small parking lot exists on the lot for use by Ayer residents in general.
 - The entrance from Pleasant Street is comprised of a main set of stairs and, north of this, a ramp for handicapped access in compliance with the ADA.
 - The Housing Authority has talked with local residents and abutters before coming up with a preliminary plan.
 - GL asked whether thought had been given to creating an additional entrance from the Jackson Street side of the park.

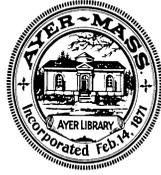


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- Mr. Jansen said there were safety concerns over doing this as there is no sidewalk or lighting on that side.
- GL suggested talking to Shriver about help with a sidewalk.
- Mr. Jansen said the Housing Authority thought the pocket park was best categorized in CPA terms as “open space.”
 - AR and SH said no, this would be categorized as “recreation.”
 - BS noted that “open space” applies primarily to the preservation of habitat and natural resources.
- Resident Dave Bodurtha said that while the park looked great, he was disappointed that there was no area provided for kids to throw balls, etc.
 - Mr. Jansen said that neighbors with kids had said they were more interested in having an area on the northern side of the park open for wintertime sledding.
 - Mr. Jansen also noted that the lot has a 17% grade that would be difficult for many forms of ballplaying.
 - Mr. Bodurtha clarified that a Public Hearing for input will be scheduled soon.
- The logistical technicalities of CPC’s potential funding of the project were discussed.
 - BS expressed concern that the handout indicated a lot of design detail has already taken place prior to input being solicited from a Public Hearing.
 - The CPC had previously asked for a phased funding schedule to allow for public input prior to design.
 - Mr. Jansen said the \$10,000 budgeted for Phase 1 primarily involves architect fees that would occur leading up to Spring Town Meeting in May 2011.
 - AR said it would have been better to go through a session of Town Meeting just for approval of the \$10,000 needed for Phase 1.
 - However, the project now seems to be midway through Phase 1, where architect fees for the initial concept plan have already been incurred.
 - AR said that the CPC cannot fund work that has already been done.
 - Mr. Jansen said the Housing Authority was concerned with spreading the process out too far and had attempted to condense the process.



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- He also noted that the CPC has had difficulty in the past with making a quorum, which also has delayed moving the project forward.
- SH and GL pointed out that a conceptual design plan is needed to bring the CPC funding request before Spring Town Meeting regardless.
- GL said it would be better to go before Town Meeting and ask for funding for all 3 phases of the project as a whole (\$100,000).
 - He expressed concern that if the project is divided up for Town Meeting, then the situation might arise where one phase is approved but a later phase at a subsequent Town Meeting might not be, which would potentially result in a half-finished project.
- Mr. Jansen said the Housing Authority is seeking the major source of funding first, and later on will look for additional fundraising sources through the sale of memorial benches, trees, etc.
- AR again clarified that the CPC cannot reimburse the Housing Authority for work already done (eg. the Housing Authority cannot borrow money, spend it, and later be reimbursed by CPA funds; nor can billing be submitted at a later date for work done prior to the approval of funding).
 - It was noted that the CPA-funded purchase of the Tooker property was able to use administrative funds to pay for the preparatory work leading up to the purchase; that is not the case with the pocket park proposal.
- Ms. Pinard expressed confusion over what the CPC wants, and said the Housing Authority thought it was coming before the CPC to get support for the next phase. She said that to do the pre-application, some form of scaled drawing was necessary.
- AR acknowledged misunderstandings but reassured Ms. Pinard that the CPC has now been given the information it needs.
- Having determined that the pocket park proposal is eligible for consideration of CPA funding, GL moved to schedule a Public Hearing for the Pleasant Street School Pocket Park for 1/5/11; JP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- **8:06 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - GL moved to adjourn; JP 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.