

Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 2/4/2015 - Approved 3/4/2014

Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor, small meeting room

Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Jenn Gibbons (JRG) [Planning Board], Richard Durand (RD) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk

Not present: Vacancy [At Large]

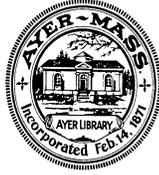
APAC taped: NO

6:08 PM – Open Meeting

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - Clarifications were added to the item discussing the Former Central Fire Station on 12/3/14.
 - RD moved to approve the minutes for 12/3/2014 as amended; BAS 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

- **Correspondence**
 - JP received a copy of the CPA Grant Agreement with Habitat for Humanity for the “Central Avenue Ayer Duplex Housing Unit Construction.”
 - The Agreement is dated 2/3/2015 and has been signed by the BOS and notarized.
 - It details Habitat’s responsibilities in providing project details before CPC signs off on payment of its share of the funding.
 - JG will see that the Agreement reaches Carolyn Read for her signature.
 - Ms. Read is the new Executive Director for Habitat’s North Central Massachusetts region.

- **Old Business**
 - Former Central Fire Station (14 Washington Street) application
 - BES said the Ayer Historical Commission (HC) reviewed a 26-page application submitted by Jeff Garibotto, of GS Holdings, LLC, at its 1/21/15 meeting.
 - HC has written a letter expressing preliminary support for the concept of the building’s restoration and reuse.
 - HC also asked for more detailed architectural drawings before its next meeting.
 - Representatives from GS Holdings presented a much sparser and incomplete application for \$250,000 in CPA funding at CPC’s 1/7/15 meeting.
 - The two categories of CPA funding to be considered are Historical Preservation and Affordable Housing.

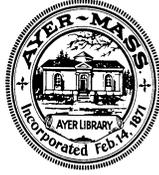


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- The total project cost is estimated to be \$1,278,000.
- The current restoration plan is designed to include six affordable residential units on the first and second floor as well as commercial rental space on the first floor.
- BAS said CPC needs a very clear plan/application at the outset so it can make an informed decision about whether to support funding via Town Meeting vote.
 - JP agreed, saying that CPC supported the idea of preserving the historic structure but could not move forward when presented with a sloppy and inadequate application.
 - CPC members have heard that the application request amount of \$250,000 was simply based on emulating the Fletcher Building application.
 - BAS noted that the application for CPA funding for the Fletcher Building was accompanied by detailed drawings and plans.
- Representatives from GS Holdings were unable to attend tonight's CPC meeting because of being delayed returning to Massachusetts from out-of-state by severe winter weather.
 - JP will email Mr. Garibotto to say that CPC discussed the application further and wanted to know if the more complete architectural designs requested by HC would be ready soon.
- BAS raised the possibility of CPC holding an additional special meeting to consider the application, provided that HC was satisfied with their concerns being addressed.
 - The only way to have an application for CPC funding ready for Spring Town Meeting would be by holding an additional meeting prior to a Public Hearing.
- It is likely that Fall Town Meeting is a more realistic goal.
- Role of Ayer CPC
 - In relation to the Fire Station discussion, BAS also said she would like to see CPC discuss further its role in considering applications, and whether Ayer CPC should function more like a priority-setting organization than simply a stepping stone to Town Meeting votes.
 - At minimum, CPC must determine eligibility of applications for allowable CPA funding under State-mandated guidelines based on the 4 categories of approved uses (Open Space, Historic Resources, Recreational Land, Community Housing).

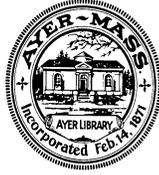


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- All applications for CPC funding are ultimately decided by Town Meeting vote.
- In the past, some Town residents have expressed the view that CPC oversees what is essentially the taxpayers' monies and that therefore the people ought to decide.
 - In this view, CPC is merely a stepping stone to Town Meeting vote.
- BAS said some state CPCs are more active in setting priorities and do not see their role as automatically forwarding every allowable application to Town Meeting vote.
 - JG said a middle ground might be to move an allowable application forward to Town Meeting vote, but the Warrant Article could still indicate CPC's lack of support in some cases.
- Fire Station Historical Photo Restoration Project
 - CPC plans to hold a Public Hearing for this project at its 3/4/15 meeting.
 - JP received an email from Chief Pedrazzi addressing the procurement requirement for multiple quotes for the project.
 - Chief Pedrazzi felt that this step could take place after CPC funding was approved, and that the requested funding would set the maximum cost for the project.
 - On the issue of facsimile copies rather than restoration of the originals, BES said Northeast Document Conservation Center (NDCC) had made that suggestion.
 - Chief Pedrazzi, however, just wants the original photos restored to a certain level and prevented from deteriorating further; he is not interested in facsimiles.
 - BAS said CPC needs a clarified proposal for the Public Hearing that only shows the cost for the work the Fire Department wants done.
 - The current proposal includes the cost of producing facsimiles added into the sum totals.
- **New Business**
 - Town Warrant for Spring Town Meeting
 - JP will start generating the wording for CPC's warrant articles for Spring Town Meeting.
 - These will include the annual set-asides and the funding requests for administrative (\$5000) and due diligence (\$12,000) purposes.
 - CPC members also noted how the wording of some warrant articles in the past has changed from when CPC voted on them, and what actually appeared later in the Town Meeting Warrant.

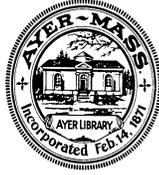


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- In some cases, these changes have not reflected what CPC voted to support.
- Upcoming Applications
 - JP said the Housing Authority may submit an application for CPC funding for generators for the Pleasant Street School.
 - JP needs to see if this would qualify for allowable CPC funding according to the four categories and permitted conditions.
 - BES has heard that the Sandy Pond School House is being put forward for consideration to be listed on the National Register.
 - The group in charge of the School House may apply for CPC funding to hire a consultant to assist with this.
 - JP will inquire with the Community Preservation Coalition to see how this would be categorized and if it would be allowable under CPA funding requirements.
- **Committee Updates**
 - Historical Commission
 - HC is continuing work on a walking tour for downtown Ayer as well as an oral history project.
 - HC also has a shared display at the Shirley Historical Society on Center Road, open Saturdays and Mondays.
 - The display reflects aspects of the shared history of the two towns.
 - Housing Authority
 - HA is overseeing work at the Senior Center/Council on Aging on Pond Street: paving the back lot and installing new windows – both funded by the State.
 - Parks & Recreation Department
 - Parks & Rec is confined to indoor activities for the season.
 - They are also in the process of developing a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) program for girls, and a youth outdoor program.
 - Conservation Commission
 - ConCom has recently issued Orders of Conditions to Borrego Solar, for a solar farm off Park Street, and to Family Dollar, for a store construction on Fitchburg Road.
 - Planning Board
 - PB has a new vacancy posted, given the recent resignation of Jim Lucchesi after 13+ years of service.
 - Jeremy Callahan is the PB's new Chair.
 - PB is working on its Zoning Bylaw revision presentation for Town Meeting.



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- It is also looking into linking digital plans to its agenda for greater accessibility to public review.
- Open Space & Recreation Plan Update Committee
 - OSRP is holding a public input meeting on Monday, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m.
 - Students from the Conway School of Landscape Design have been engaged to assist with the update.
- **Discussion: CPC Annual Report**
 - JP edited CPC's Annual Report and added certain details.
 - When the Town voted to become a CPA community in 2001, it did so at the 3% surcharge rate.
 - Two years later, some residents successfully petitioned Town Meeting to reduce the surcharge rate to 1%.
- **7:37 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - BES moved to adjourn; RD 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.