



RECEIVED
JUL 20 2022

TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK

Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432
Minutes for 6/8/2022

Location: Remote Meeting via Zoom, accessible to public, due to ongoing pandemic

Members present: Janet Providakes, Chair (Housing Authority); Julie Murray, Vice-Chair (Planning Board); Barry Schwarzel (Historical Commission); Jess Gugino, Clerk (Conservation Commission); Jason Mayo (Parks & Recreation); Colleen Krieser (At Large)

Not present: Beth Suedmeyer (At Large)

APAC taped: Yes

7:02 PM – Open Meeting

- **Confirmation of Agenda**

- B. Schwarzel moved to confirm the agenda as posted; J. Murray 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0 (J. Providakes, J. Murray, B. Schwarzel, J. Gugino, J. Mayo).

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- J. Murray moved to approve minutes for 5/4/2022 as corrected; B. Schwarzel 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote 5-0 (J. Providakes, J. Murray, B. Schwarzel, J. Gugino, J. Mayo).

- **Correspondence / Bills**

- Community Preservation Plan Update (\$21,000, FTM 2021)
 - J. Providakes passed on an invoice from JM Goldson, for \$2500.00, to Town Manager Robert Pontbriand for payment of services to date.
- Appraiser
 - J. Providakes has been in touch with an appraiser to look at a parcel of land for sale off Groton-Harvard Road.
 - A scope of work will be forthcoming.

CURRENT BUSINESS

- **Community Preservation Plan Update (\$21,000, FTM 2021)**

- Delaney Almond, of JM Goldson, was present via Zoom.
- Three draft documents for the CPP update were reviewed and commented on.
- Ayer Community Preservation Act Survey
 - The first document to be reviewed was the 17-page survey summary and engagement results.
 - 127 people participated in the survey which was active from mid-March to early May.

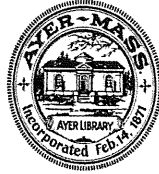


Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 6/8/2022

- The category identified as the highest priority by the majority of participants was the preservation of open space & associated outdoor passive recreation.
 - Next in importance was community housing, with an emphasis on the need for more diverse housing options as well as support for existing residents facing eviction over not being able to afford monthly rents.
 - Historical preservation projects were rated relatively low compared to the above.
- Repeatedly mentioned here and in the forum was the desire of respondents for a community center.
 - Suggestions were made that such a center could be located at the old Washington Street Fire House or the Great Hall at Town Hall.
 - J. Providakes emphasized that the Fire House is now privately owned.
- Public Forum Summary
 - The second document reviewed was the 12-page summary of the public forum held via Zoom Webinar on Wednesday, May 4.
 - 26 people participated in the public forum.
 - As with the survey, the preservation of open space and outdoor passive recreation were identified as the number 1 priority, followed by community housing, and the expressed desire for a community center, perhaps located in an historic building.
- Goals and Priorities
 - The final document reviewed was the 2-page draft of the new CPP's 5 Year Goals.
 - One recommendation from JM Goldson will be that CPC scale back how much funding it provides to historical preservation projects, which accounted for 39% of Ayer CPA funded projects from 2016-2020, because of both survey and forum participants ranking this category as of relatively low priority.
 - Based on public input, the top priority for use of Ayer CPA funds should be the acquisition/preservation of open space, passive recreation, and outdoor recreation projects.
 - The provision of water features for children's play areas was mentioned, along with boat access to Sandy Pond.
 - Efforts to assist local community housing needs, including through continuing and expanding emergency rental assistance, were a strong second in ranking.



Town of Ayer Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 6/8/2022

- Achieving the State's goal of individual communities having at least 10% affordable housing available was discussed as another goal for Ayer.
 - J. Providakes noted that of 351 Massachusetts communities, only 77 (22%) have thus far met this goal.
- The potential adaptive reuse of historic buildings in Town for a community center was an additional goal.
 - While a community center is a good idea, it is hard to fit into a CPA funding category as such a center would not qualify as *outdoor* passive recreation.
 - J. Providakes will follow up with a question on this, and if any options are available, to the CPA Coalition.
- J. Providakes also asked Ms. Almond to incorporate more references to the Town's 2017 Master Plan as well as the Open Space and Recreation Plan, to clearly show how CPC is actively working toward implementing some of the goals identified in these documents.
- Next Steps
 - Ms. Almond asked that if CPC members had additional comments on these three draft documents, these comments be emailed to her by the end of the following week.
 - JM Goldson plans to have a draft updated CPP ready for CPC to review at its next meeting on July 6.
- **CPC Grant Agreements**
 - (C. Krieser joined the meeting at 7:40 PM)
 - Flannagan Pond Public Access Feasibility Study (\$25,000, STM 2022), Ayer Department of Public Works (DPW)
 - The draft agreement was reviewed.
 - Rewording for #5, requiring the DPW to permanently display CPC funding of this in all communications and locations, was suggested.
 - For this project there is no 'location' for such display, and CPC funding should only be required in communications related to this project.
 - Rewording of #4 was also suggested as typically requests for CPC grant payments to vendors are submitted throughout a project, not held until the project's completion.
 - Ayer Public Library Digitization of *The Public Spirit/Nashoba Valley Voice*, 1869-2021 (\$25,000, STM 2022)
 - The draft agreement was reviewed.

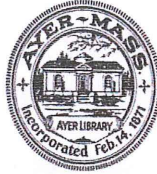


Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 6/8/2022

- Similar rewording for items 4 and 5, as described above, was also suggested.
- A question was also raised about the wording of the term of the grant agreement (#1), from April 15, 2022 to April 24, 2023.
 - CPC had suggested during the review process that the Library amend its original application to specifically increase the funding request so as to cover the full project that will take several years to complete.
- Pirone Park Playground Project (Remediation, Removal, and Reconstruction of Kiddie Junction) (\$400,000, STM 2022), Ayer Parks Department
 - Related rewording of items 4 and 5 was suggested.
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 - J. Gugino and J. Murray brought up an email received June 5 from resident Laurie Nehring about an upcoming Auction on June 21 for several foreclosed properties.
 - Ms. Nehring asked if CPC had the ability to purchase an undeveloped/landlocked property (0 Winthrop Street, Map 27, Parcel 29) listed at a value of \$2800.
 - The lot abuts other open space as well as a property already owned by the Town.
 - It is also in proximity to another piece of land that CPC is seeking an appraisal for (see above under Correspondence/Bills).
 - While this lot would not meet the qualifications for use of the Conservation Fund, and while otherwise use of CPC money directly for open space purchases requires a vote by Town Meeting, the question of whether the Select Board could respond was raised.
 - CPC also has funding that would cover \$2800 in its due diligence and administrative funds.
 - J. Providakes will contact Town Manager Pontbriand about this.
- **Committee Updates**
 - Historical Commission (B. Schwarzel)
 - Work on the Historical Resources Inventory Project suffered a Covid-related delay.
 - Housing Authority (J. Providakes)
 - Renovations at Pond Street to put in ADA-accessible partitions, to create more Covid-safe intake areas, are nearly complete.
 - Affordable Housing Trust (C. Krieser)



Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee

Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 6/8/2022

- The Affordable Housing Committee sent a letter to the State in support of the nonprofit NOAH (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing) friendly chapter 40B project proposed on Fitchburg Road.
 - The letter encourages the State to waive its funding qualification requirement: the State typically will not assist with funding unless the purchase price of land does not exceed the appraisal.
- Parks Department (J. Mayo)
 - For the Pirone Park “Kiddie Junction” removal, remediation, and replacement project, Parks will be putting the removal/remediation phase of the project out to bid soon.
 - Plans for the replacement/construction project are also coming along and the Parks Commission expects to be able to vote on a plan at its next meeting.
- Conservation Commission (J. Gugino)
 - Heather Hampson took over as Conservation Agent as of Monday, June 6.
 - The 2022 invasive aquatic weed management/treatment program has begun on Sandy, Flannagan, and Pine Meadow ponds.
- Planning Board (J. Murray)
 - They are finalizing new regulations for Open Space Residential Development subdivisions.
 - Jonathan Kranz as taken over as the new Chair of the Planning Board.
- Nashua River Wild and Scenic Stewardship Council (B. Suedmeyer)
 - No report.
- **8:03 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
 - CPC’s Next Meeting: July 6, 2022, 7 p.m.
 - B. Schwarzel moved to adjourn; C. Krieser 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously 6-0.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date / Signature Indicating Approval: _____

7/6/2022 *Jessica G. Gugino*