

**Town of Ayer**  
**Community Preservation Committee**

Town Hall \* One Main Street \* Ayer, MA 01432

Minutes for 4/5/2017 - Approved 5/3/2017

Location: Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

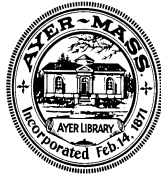
Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Richard Durand (RD) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk, Mark Fermanian (MF) [Planning Board], Julie Murray (JM) [At Large]

Not present: Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large]

APAC taped: NO

**6:08 PM – Open Meeting**

- **Discussion: Community Dog Park Application for CPA Funding**
  - DPW Superintendent Mark Wetzel presented the project.
  - In 2014, the Town received a substantial grant from the Stanton Foundation earmarked for the construction of a community dog park.
    - The grant covers design costs as well as 90% of the anticipated construction cost.
      - The Foundation asks that the Town contribute 10% of the construction cost.
        - Mr. Wetzel anticipates the construction cost to be \$200,000-201,000 and therefore is asking for \$20,000 in CPA funding as the Town's contribution to the project.
      - The grant also includes a small percentage to assist with future improvements.
  - The DPW has held several public input meetings and subsequently selected a location for the park, having considered 4 possibilities.
    - Public input was also solicited through social media, the Town website, a dog park website, via a dog park “work group”, and via email updates.
  - The chosen location is on Snake Hill Road, between the B & M railroad tracks and Fox Run Drive.
    - Assessor's Map 36, Lots 214 and 218, aka “Parcel H-1,” which is a 43,101 sq. ft. parcel.
    - This is a Town-owned parcel that was contributed to the Town by the developer of the Pingry Hill subdivision as part of its Planning Board permitting process.
      - It was originally intended as soccer fields but the Parks & Recreation department did not wish to pursue this use.
  - The dog park will be ADA compliant.
  - The design of the dog park has been largely completed and will consist of:
    - two fenced-in dog play areas, one for large dogs, the other for small dogs;

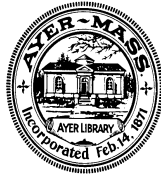


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- parking for 15 vehicles, including handicapped parking;
- 5-ft. high fencing;
- double-gated entrances;
- concrete walkways to the park gate;
- a stone-dust path encircling the outer boundaries of the play areas;
- a 4-inch deep rice stone surface in the dog play areas;
- dog park appurtenances – benches, water fountain, shade structure, bag stations, refuse containers, lighting in the parking area.
- The DPW will maintain the park, including emptying refuse containers 2-3 times/week;
  - A Friends of Ayer Dogs group has also been formed and will assist in monitoring the park and performing light maintenance.
- The DPW is in the process of securing permitting from the Conservation Commission as there are wetlands on an abutting conservation parcel.
- The dog park will be open dawn to dusk.
  - As with other public places, use of the park will be at one's own risk.
  - The DPW will be posting park rules.
    - This will include not allowing children under the age of 13 unless accompanied by an adult.
- Mr. Wetzel detailed several reasons why this project serves the community and justifies CPA funding under the category of "Recreation."
  - there are over 600 licensed dogs in Ayer;
  - dog parks provide exercise and socialization for both dogs and their owners;
  - dog parks promote responsible dog ownership.
- The DPW is in the process of receiving letters of support from the Board of Selectmen; Parks & Recreation; Community & Economic Development; Conservation Commission; and Friends of Ayer Dogs.
- If approved, the DPW will start construction over the summer and plan to have the dog park open in fall 2017.
- MF moved to move the application forward, with CPC holding a Public Hearing at its next meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup>; JG 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Motion approved unanimously.
- JP will advertise the Public Hearing.
- After previous discussion between JG and Town Administrator Robert Pontbriand, a Warrant Article for CPA funding of the dog park will be placed on the Warrant for Spring Town Meeting (May 8, 2017).
  - If for some reason the funding request is denied at CPC's Public Hearing on May 3, the Warrant Article can be withdrawn from action on the floor of Town Meeting.

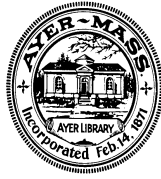


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- No problems with this application are anticipated.
- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
  - MF moved to accept the minutes for 3/1/2017 as written; JM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Correspondence/Bills**
  - Sandy Pond School Association (SPSA), Conditions Assessment Project
    - Spencer & Vogt Group: \$5986.00, additional work on Conditions Assessment including: outlying plans and specifications; treatment recommendations; cyclical maintenance plan; and final report.
      - Invoice # 2017-3174, dated 3/2/2017.
      - MF moved to approve payment of \$5986.00; JM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
        - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Discussion: Update on SPSA Conditions Assessment**
  - Irv Rockwood, Vice President of SPSA, presented CPC with an update.
    - The Sandy Pond School was approved unanimously at the state level as a Historic Site.
      - The application for its listing on the National Register of Historic Sites was sent to the National Park Service on 3/9/2017 and approval at the federal level is also anticipated.
  - The Assessment should be complete by the end of April and will be coming in slightly under budget.
    - It will be over 90 pages in length and is being done according to Massachusetts Historic Commission specifications.
  - While the final report is not yet complete, Mr. Rockwood outlined 4 major issues that have been identified and will need to be addressed as future priorities.
    - 1) Foundation: the Assessment revealed that the foundation has been settling for years;
      - it will need to be arrested and remediated in order to stabilize the entire structure.
      - this will need to be done first as the condition of the foundation affects all other repair and remediation work.
    - 2) Masonry: several areas showing settling and cracks will need to be fixed;
    - 3) Ceiling repair: the ceiling is starting to come down.
      - it is as yet unclear if the existing ceiling can be patched and rehabbed or whether it will need to be replaced entirely.

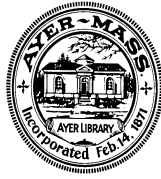


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- 4) Roof: the current asphalt-shingle roof is water-tight but nearing the end of its useful life.
  - Spencer & Vogt will be recommending that replacement of the roof return to the original historical use of cedar shake roofing.
- Mr. Rockwood said that SPSA will be seeking future funding, likely next spring, for these 4 issue-areas from both CPC and the Massachusetts Historical Preservation Fund.
- Mr. Rockwood noted that the SPSA held a successful open house last year, done jointly with the Groton Historical Society.
  - Three open houses are planned for this year, the first taking place in May as part of the regional Hidden Treasures program.
- **Discussion: Open Space Opportunity Properties**
  - 26 Oak Ridge Drive
    - Several residents from Oak Ridge Drive were present to discuss the possibility of CPC considering purchase of a small parcel (16,745 sq. ft.) at 26 Oak Ridge.
      - The residents present were: Bonnie Tillotson, Carol Daley, and Ed and Penny Kelley.
    - The assessed land value of the parcel is \$85,600, although the residents were not sure if the owner, Roger Kanniard, would be willing to sell for that price.
      - The parcel abuts the Oak Ridge entrance to the Pine Meadow Conservation Land and is directly across the street from Flannagan Pond (aka Fletchers Pond).
      - Ms. Tillotson spoke of the possibility of using the parcel to create a parking area for public boat access to the pond.
        - The topography slopes somewhat steeply up from the road on this parcel.
    - JP explained that applications for CPA funding require a sponsoring entity, such as a town board, resident group, etc.
      - As a first step, JP and JG recommended that feedback as to the parcel's usability for parking and pond access be solicited from DPW Superintendent Wetzel as well as Jeff Thomas, from the Parks & Recreation department.
        - JP will contact both.
        - JG said it was unlikely the Conservation Commission would sponsor an application for funding to purpose given the high cost for such as small parcel of land.

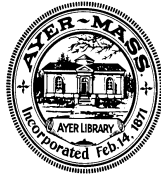


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- Emily's Way
  - The developer has offered the 4.27 acre parcel to the Town for purchase for \$225,000.
  - Parks & Recreation has not expressed interest in this parcel thus far.
  - JP will inquire further as to Town interest in its acquisition.
- **CPC Warrant Articles for Spring Town Meeting (May 8, 2017)**
  - JP reviewed the wording for the 5 CPC-related articles to be printed in the Spring Town Meeting Warrant and asked for votes to accept each article.
  - Community Preservation Act, distribution of Community Preservation Fund FY2018 estimated annual revenue:
    - \$5000, to meet the **administrative** expenses and all other necessary and proper expenses of the CPC for FY 2018;
    - \$81,878, for acquisition, creation, preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of **open space**, excluding land for recreational use;
    - \$22,595, for acquisition, preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of **historic resources**;
    - \$22,595, for acquisition, creation, preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and support of **community housing**;
    - \$81,878, for the **Undesignated Fund Balance / General Fund**.
      - This category is also where funding for recreational projects would be taken from.
    - MF moved to accept the wording of this Warrant article as amended; BES 2<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Motion approved unanimously.
  - Transfer of Funds, for due diligence, from Community Preservation Fund FY2018
    - \$12,000, for future appropriation by the CPC for general open space purposes.
    - MF moved to accept the wording of this Warrant article; JM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Motion approved unanimously.
  - Pleasant Street School Generator
    - \$120,000, to Ayer Elderly Housing Partnership / Ayer Housing Authority for purchase and installation of an emergency generator at Historical Pleasant Street School Apartments.
      - CPA category: Historic Preservation.
    - MF moved to accept the wording of this Warrant article; BES 2<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Motion approved unanimously.
  - Pirone Park Perimeter Path
    - \$72,000, to the Ayer Parks Department for construction of an ADA-compliant perimeter path around portions of Pirone Park.



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- CPA category: Undesignated Fund Balance for Open Space / General Fund.
  - MF moved to accept the wording of this Warrant article; JM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.
  - Ayer Community Dog Park
    - \$20,000, to the Ayer Department of Public Works to support the construction of a dog park on Snake Hill Road.
      - CPA category: Undesignated Fund Balance for Open Space / General Fund.
    - MF moved to approve inclusion of this Warrant article for Spring Town Meeting, with the understanding that action to be taken on it at STM on 5/8/2017 is contingent upon a favorable CPC vote at its Public Hearing on 5/3/2017; JM 2<sup>nd</sup>.
      - Motion approved unanimously.
- **7:25 PM – Adjourn Meeting**
  - CPC's Next Meeting: May 3, 6 p.m.
  - MF moved to adjourn; RD 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Motion approved unanimously.