



Town of Ayer
Community Preservation Committee
Town Hall * One Main Street * Ayer, MA 01432
Minutes for 6/7/2017

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
TOWN OF AYER

2017 AUG 25 PM 12:16

Mrs. Susan E. Copeland

Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor

Members present: Janet Providakes (JP) [Housing Authority]- Chair, Beth Suedmeyer (BAS) [At Large], Richard Durand (RD) [Parks & Recreation], Jess Gugino (JG) [Conservation Commission]- Clerk, Julie Murray (JM) [At Large]

Not present: Barry Schwarzel (BES) [Historical Commission], Mark Fermanian (MF) [Planning Board]

APAC taped: NO

6:15PM – Open Meeting

- **Approval of Meeting Minutes**
 - BAS moved to accept the minutes for 5/3/2017 as amended; RD 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Payment of Bills**
 - Lowell Sun: \$224.66, for Public Hearing ads in Nashoba Valley Voice (4/14 and 4/21), Ayer Community Dog Park.
 - RD moved to approve payment of \$224.66; JM 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
- **Correspondence / Announcements**
 - Rain Garden Planting Party
 - The DPW will be holding an informational workshop at its Brook Street offices on 6/10, at 10 a.m.
 - Ayer Central Fire Station
 - A letter of support from CPC, dated 5/10/2017 and addressed to DHCD, was given to Alan Manoian, Director of Community & Economic Development.
 - As discussed at CPC's 5/3 meeting, the letter will accompany the Town's application for a DHCD funding grant to assist the sale and conversion of the historic fire station building into low and moderate income housing.
 - (DHCD: Department of Housing and Community Development)
 - CPC's letter supported this use and indicated it would also be willing to consider an application for CPA funding to aid historical restoration work as well.
 - Sandy Pond School Association (SPSA)
 - JP received a letter from Irv Rockwood, Vice President of SPSA, notifying CPC that the historic schoolhouse, built in 1868, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in May.



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- **Discussion: Open Space Opportunities**
 - Ch. 61 parcel adjacent to Rail Trail (Assessor's Map 4, parcel 39)
 - Ken Diskin, of 180 Washington Street, spoke to CPC about this parcel, owned by Calvin Moore.
 - The parcel is being brought out of Ch. 61 for development into a solar farm ("Ayer Solar II").
 - The owner's participation in the Ch. 61 tax protection plan gives the Town Right-of-First-Refusal (ROFR) to purchase.
 - The appraiser selected by the Town was unable to complete the appraisal due to personal complications.
 - The Town is currently seeking a new appraiser.
 - Mr. Moore initially granted an extension to 6/1 for completion of the appraisal, and has reportedly granted a second extension to an unknown date.
 - Ayer Solar II is currently undergoing review by the Conservation Commission for its permit application for work within wetlands and wetland buffer zone.
 - ConCom is requiring review of the project by a third-party consultant because of the extensive work within an ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern).
 - ConCom is doing a site walk with the consultant on 6/13.
 - JG said she would bring up to ConCom the question of whether MEPA (Mass. Environmental Policy Act) review by the State is also necessary.
 - If the project receives State funding, this and other thresholds might trigger MEPA.
 - Mr. Diskin noted that the project had been scheduled to appear before the Planning Board for a Site Plan Review.
 - The application, though advertised, was withdrawn after the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer informed the applicant that Planning Board review was not required.
 - Mr. Diskin also suggested that Article 47 of the Town's Bylaws, "NPDES Phase II Stormwater Bylaw," might apply to the project.
 - It was his opinion that the Town was not adequately enforcing this bylaw over stormwater drainage.
 - (NPDES: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems, via the Clean Water Act.)
 - BAS said the Town's Master Plan draft (currently in the works) includes as a goal "create a linear park along the Nashua River Rail Trail."
 - This was under the section "Strategies not yet carried out."



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- The Ayer Solar II parcel would meet this goal, and would, according to Mr. Diskin, help maintain the informal path that runs from the Rail Trail to Groton-Harvard Road.
- JP will write a letter on behalf of CPC to Town Administrator Pontbriand urging the Town to pursue the appraisal under the Ch. 61 ROFR process.
- Emily's Way (between Groton-Harvard Road and Highland Avenue)
 - Earlier in the day, JP met with Carly Antonellis, from the Town Administrator's office, to go over maps of this undeveloped land.
 - The owner, Matt Field, has offered it to the Town for \$225,000.
 - The appraisal which the Town had done came in at \$85,000.
 - Mr. Field has indicated he would be constructing Ch. 40B housing (approximately 100 units) if he proceeds with development.
 - Mr. Field owns the house-parcel that would directly connect the Emily's Way parcel to Groton-Harvard Road (the former Luchessi property).
 - He is currently renting out this house but has told the Town he would provide an easement along this parcel to the road if the Town were to acquire it for conservation/recreation purposes.
 - He also said an easement already exists to High Street, on the other side of the parcel.
 - BAS questioned whether this would be a priority parcel although she noted the value of a walking path from Winthrop to Groton-Harvard Road.
 - Her opinion was that this area was better for transit-oriented development rather than conservation.
 - At the same time, it was noted that if the adjacent Huidlin and Sifakis properties could be acquired, this would enhance the value of this area to the Town.
 - CPC does, however, have limited funding resources.
 - All agreed that \$225,000 was far too much to spend, especially given the appraisal.
 - CPC is willing to pursue this opportunity a bit further, in order to see if a more reasonable purchase price could be negotiated.
 - JG will ask ConCom if they would be willing to sponsor a CPC application, should an acceptable price be negotiated
 - JP will contact Town Administrator Pontbriand.
- **Discussion: Town Master Plan Update (re CPC)**
 - CPC reviewed the 2-page draft document, "Ayer CPA Status," for the Master Plan.



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- The document was compiled by Roberta Mitchell, of the Community Opportunities Group, with material taken from the Community Preservation Coalition, the (now-expired) "Community Preservation Plan 2010-2014," and CPC's record of completed projects and future goals.
- It was noted that the "Strategies not yet carried out" section said no Open Space has been acquired to date, despite the old plan identifying such acquisition as a high priority.
 - The Tooker property was acquired with CPA funds prior to 2011 but BAS said this is not listed on the State's Open Space maps so therefore not credited.
 - It is possible that this is because there is no official Conservation Restriction (CR) attached to the Tooker parcel.
 - ConCom will be asked about pursuing this.
 - BAS said that Anne Gagnon, of the Division of Fish & Wildlife, said they might be willing to hold such a CR.
- **Discussion: Updating the Community Preservation 5-Year Plan**
 - JP will seek three proposals for this work, including from Jen Goldson (who did the 2010-2014 Plan) and the Community Opportunities Group (currently working on the Master Plan).
 - JP will contact Town Accountant Lisa Gabree for up-to-date figures on the funds CPC has in its Administrative Account.
- **Discussion: Grant Agreements Review**
 - CPC members reviewed three recent Grant Agreements for Ayer CPA-funded projects.
 - BAS raised the question of whether CPC may want to specify the type of signage crediting Ayer CPC as required in the Agreements.
 - This may be taken up at a subsequent meeting with regard to future Grant Agreements.
 - RD moved to approve and sign the Grant Agreement for the Ayer Community Dog Park; JG 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
 - RD moved to approve and sign the Grant Agreement for the Pirone Park Perimeter Path; BAS 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.
 - RD moved to approve and sign the Grant Agreement for the Pleasant Street School Emergency Generator; JM 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.



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- **8:05 PM – Adjourn Meeting**

- CPC's next meeting: July 5, 2017, at 6 p.m.
 - The agenda for this meeting will include:
 - review and approval of revised CPC application forms;
 - discussion on considering requesting a CPA surcharge increase from Town Meeting;
 - funding a Conservation Fund;
 - updating the 5-year Community Preservation Plan.
- JG moved to adjourn; JM 2nd.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Jessica G. Gugino, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved by Community Preservation Committee:

7/5/2017

Signature Indicating Approval:

Jessica G. Gugino