

**Northampton Community Preservation Committee Minutes
October 5, 2016**

Time: 7:00 pm
Place: City Council Chambers, 212 Main Street

Members Present: Brian Adams, Chris Hellman, Linda Morley, Jack Finn, Ann Brooks,
David Whitehill, David Drake, Jeff Jones
Staff Present: Sarah LaValley

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

General Public Comment

None

Chair's Report

The CPC welcomed Ann, the new representative from the Planning Board, to the Committee. Brian stated that the Seth Thomas Clock was unveiled the previous week, at Pulaski Park along Main Street. Work has begun on the second phase of Pulaski Park, and should be complete by spring 2017. A ribbon cutting will be held at the Connecticut River Greenway boathouse and dock on October 14.

Approval of Minutes

June 21, 2016 –David D. moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by David W, the motion carried unanimously, with minor corrections.

Review Academy of Music Plans for Historic Curtain Accessibility

Linda moved to accept the plan. Seconded by Jack. Linda noted that the plan is essentially the same as the previous plan which the CPC found to be inadequate, with an addition of a minor education component. Sarah stated that she relayed the Committee's concerns about limited opportunities for accessibility to the Academy. Jack noted that the Academy seems to be being honest about limitations about accessibility. The motion carried unanimously. Staff will pay all remaining project invoices.

**Review and Approve Council Orders for Historic Northampton Collection
Preservation Small Grants Project Recommendations**

David D. moved to approve the Gare project Order as presented by staff. Seconded by Linda, the motion carried unanimously.

David D. moved to approve the Pro Brush project Order as presented by staff. Seconded by Linda, the motion carried unanimously. Sarah will prepare a cover letter and submit to City Council.

Review and Approve FY2017 Financial Transfers

Brian stated that ten percent of total revenues for the fiscal year must be set aside for open space, historic preservation, and community housing. The Committee reviewed a council order presented by staff that transfers funds to these accounts, and includes debt payments as well. Linda noted that the amount available for the fiscal year is greater than the amounts shown in the Council Order. Sarah stated that available funds include surplus funds from prior years. David D. moved to approve the transfers. Seconded by Linda, the motion carried unanimously.

Meetings With Applicants

Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability introduced himself, and stated that the City is working on more concurrent open space acquisitions than ever before.

Burt's Bog and Turtles and Affordable Housing – Office of Planning & Sustainability

Wayne stated that Doug Kohl had been acquiring land for a large development, but was not able to complete the project before he died. The area is in the middle of a large post-war neighborhood, and includes the City's only bog, and habitat for rare turtles. It includes frontage on four different streets. The developers concept was initially a large concept with many lots. The

presence of endangered species would have limited the buildout, but it still could have been a significant development. The City supports development in the right places, but not in environmentally sensitive areas. The acquisition plan includes 10 development lots along Burts Pit Road, some of which will be dedicated to affordable housing. The hope is to offer these to Habitat for Humanity, if they have the capacity for them. In either case, future prices will be limited by the same type of formula used by Habitat.

Linda noted that \$51,000 is the requested community housing portion, and asked if there is any possibility that the housing portion could be increased, and the open space portion decreased. Wayne replied that the breakdown could be altered, and will follow-up with additional information.

David W. asked what percentage of the City is now considered pristine open space. Wayne replied that approximately 20% of the city is currently protected open space, but that less than this total is considered pristine. David D. asked how the City can ensure the values of the larger market rate lots. Wayne stated that a design competition will be held for a few of the lots, and developers will be required to use one of the selected designs.

David W. asked about the proposed common driveways. Wayne replied that the market rate owners could potentially be required to develop the driveways, but those details are not finalized. Jeff stated that he is happy that much of the Burts Pit Road frontage will remain open space.

Wayne added that a bike path connection will also be planned on the area in the future.

David W. asked if the project could still be completed if CPA funding were not provided. Wayne replied that there are contingency plans, but those are not preferred scenarios.

Conservation Fund – Conservation Commission

Wayne stated that if current projects receive all of the CPA and Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) grants for which staff have applied, some of the pending acquisitions could be completed. If some grants are not received and the Conservation Fund is not replenished, some acquisitions will not be possible.

David D. asked if bonding is allowable for acquisitions. Wayne stated that it is.

Connecticut River Greenway River Access – Office of Planning and Sustainability

Wayne stated that the CPC has been very generous in funding this project, which was one of the Open Space Plans big priorities. The ramp and dock comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act legally, but the City would like it to be as accessible as possible, as well as complete needed paving. The Land and Water Conservation Fund for the project is successful, and a local match is required.

Linda noted that the previous unfunded application for paving from Northampton Community rowing had a smaller estimate for paving. Wayne replied that their plan was to pave less of the area.

Wayne stated that fundraising for the paving would be very difficult, and the rowing programs have conducted recent campaigns for the boathouse.

David D. stated that he feels very strongly about dock accessibility and that it is worth the investment for a quality dock.

Mineral Hills to Barnes Aquifer Acquisition – Conservation Commission

Wayne stated that there is a current subdivision approval for 24 units on the property. The neighborhood was not in favor of that plan. A smaller alternative with fewer lots would involve less infrastructure, and could be developed easily. The acquisition proposal includes four lots for Habitat for Humanity, and some CDBG funds have also been received. The CPA request will be reduced if a LAND grant is received.

Broad Brook Connection Acquisition – Conservation Commission

Wayne stated that this acquisition will connect the Beaver Brook/Broad Brook Greenway to North Farms Road. The lot does not meet current zoning, but is grandfathered and could be developed. Additional opportunities for more connections are possible in the future.

Other Business Not Foreseen When Agenda was Published

The Committee discussed site visits – October 15 and 22 seemed to be the best dates.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.