

Northampton Community Preservation Committee Minutes
November 2, 2016

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

Members Present: Brian Adams, Chris Hellman, Linda Morley, Jack Finn, Ann Brooks, Julia Chevan , Jeff Jones (7:28)

Staff Present: John Frey

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

General Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

October 19, 2016 –Linda moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Chris, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment Session on CPA Applications

Historic Building Study - Smith Charities

Lydia Szych, President of Smith Charities read multiple letters of support ([support letters viewable on Northampton CPA website](#)).

Hampshire County Courthouse Restoration – HCOG

Todd Ford, Fern Street, HCOG Executive Director read multiple letters of support ([support letters viewable on Northampton CPA website](#)).

Eileen Stewart, Williamsburg Town Councilor spoke favorably of the project noting the Courthouse is very central to the community and CPA support crucial to access of state funds. Joe Kearns, HCOG Councillor of Middlefield, MA spoke favorably of the project.

CT River Greenway – Northampton OPS

Dorrie Brooks, Federal Street, President of Northampton Community Rowing spoke favorably of the project noting members of general public are actively using park as are over 120 club members. Other non-profits doing fundraisers and events at the site. All Out Adventures will begin using the facilities next year. The site is not currently ADA compliant. Need paving for ADA compliance and long-term viability.

MJ Adams, Norwood Avenue spoke favorably of the project noting her daughters have used the facilities.

Chuck McCullagh, Easthampton, Board Member of Northampton Community Rowing expressed his support of the project, especially for full accessibility.

Laurie Sanders, Westhampton spoke favorably of the project noting the park sits along a very important stretch geologically, culturally, and ecologically speaking. It is a terrific location especially since Northampton has a long border with the river but few access points.

Beaver Brook & Broad Brook Conservation Area – BBC & LCA

Peter Flinkon, Haydenville Road spoke favorably of the project noting it is the most visible conservation site in Northampton. The site is very accessible and easy to use. It will make a beautiful gateway into the city from west if supported.

David Pritchard, Haydenville spoke favorably of the project noting its extensive use of volunteer work. BBC and LCA have an excellent track record of completing projects.

Broad Brook to Beaver Brook Acquisition – Northampton Conservation Commission

Laurie Sanders, Westhampton spoke favorably of the project noting it is not the best piece, but very important link providing access and habitat protection.

Bob Zimmerman, North Farms Road spoke favorably of the project noting it is unique because it is a major pathway for animal movement. He also stated BBC supports and will contribute to acquisition. He would like to see a parking lot for 5-6 cars and no hunting permitted.

Bogs and Turtles and Affordable Housing – Northampton OPS

Megan McDonough, Executive Director for Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity spoke favorably of the project noting she appreciates the city's ability to balance conservation along with providing affordable housing. Home ownership is a valuable resource to the community.

Laurie Sanders, Westhampton spoke favorably of the project noting it is one of richest and most interesting sites in Northampton. This is the original Burt's pit area. The peat bog is unique feature in Northampton as most others are gone. It includes a number of species rare to Northampton and the Commonwealth. Historical past owners include Seager, Bottom, and Northampton State Hospital. Also, it is already being used as a recreational area.

MJ Adams, 60 Norwood Avenue spoke favorably of the project noting she is proud that Northampton has taken leadership role in encouraging affordable housing and human habitat.

Mineral Hills Acquisition – Northampton Conservation Commission

Megan McDonough, Executive Director for Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity spoke favorably of the project noting it includes an adjacent parcel for affordable housing.

Laurie Sanders, Westhampton spoke favorably of the project noting the altered landscape here is very interesting. The area includes a number of native american artifacts.

Conservation Fund 11 – Northampton Conservation Commission

None

Financial Review

John Frey presented the FY2017 CPA budget. Approximately \$912,000 is available for the two funding rounds. Unfortunately, this number is not certain until the state announces matching fund amounts in mid-November.

Begin Funding Recommendations for Round 2 2016 CPA Funds

The committee agreed to a short check-in of each project. The general feeling was that all the projects are high quality and appear worthy of support. Any outstanding reservations or questions are highlighted below. Full discussion will begin at the next meeting at which time hopefully these questions have been answered and the state match number has been announced.

Historic Building Study - Smith Charities

Julia Chevan stated she is struggling with public/private use and needs compelling argument to justify. Linda Morley noted this is just a study and does not see a pathway to final funding. Jeff Jones is concerned with lack of public access to second floor.

Hampshire County Courthouse Restoration – HCOG

The majority questioned if Northampton's contribution is truly the missing link to securing the state funding. It was suggested possibly conditioning the CPA contribution on getting state funding.

CT River Greenway – Northampton OPS

Chris Hellman stated he would like to know exactly what needs to be done to make accessible.
Ann Brooks suggested match money should be a condition of funding.

Beaver Brook & Broad Brook Cons Area – BBC & LCA

Jeff Jones noted we cannot fund all land, so need to prioritize.

Broad Brook to Beaver Brook Acquisition – Northampton Conservation Commission

Jack Finn questioned the development potential for this parcel. Universally it was stated this project appears to be the lowest priority.

Bogs and Turtles and Affordable Housing – Northampton OPS

Jack Finn noted this project is the highest priority according to Conservation Commission. Brian Adams questioned the category allocation wondering if it is 50/50 or could be flexible.

Mineral Hills Acquisition - Northampton Conservation Commission

Jack Finn noted it is unusual for all these applications at once, but uncertain if opportunities will come again. Brian Adams wondered if deferment is possible.

Conservation Fund 11 – Northampton Conservation Commission

None

Other Business Not Foreseen When Agenda was Published

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.