

CPC Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 23, 2015 7pm
GAR Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Karen Connolly, Adam Conrad, Harvey Gates, William Limbacher, Joshua McKain, Chris Roberts, Frank Snow

Also in Attendance: Martin O'Toole, Jean Shildneck, Jon Belber, Jessi Finnie, David Ball, Bob Gallagher

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm

Acceptance of Agenda – The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to accept the agenda as presented

Approval of Minutes – The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to accept the December 8, 2014 minutes with an amendment to the hearing dates (due to weather conditions).

The Board voted unanimously (7-0) to accept the January 12, 2015 minutes as written.

SCHEDULED HEARINGS FOR THIS MEETING:

Teak Sherman Community Garden Project (TSCG) – Jean Shildneck, Steering Committee, Jon Belber – Application for \$6,000 to complete fencing project, clear shrubs and tree branches, and for materials to keep the garden sustainable. *CPC Chair Karen Connolly noted that the original application has been changed and the amended version, asking for additional monies, would be added to the CPC Website. (This has been done)*

Jean Shildneck said that the TSCG is in its 6th year. Year after year they have added plots to the garden and now have 35 – the maximum right now. All the “plotters” donate a significant portion of their harvest to the Scituate Food Pantry. The Committee was shown a letter of endorsement from the director of the Food Pantry.

\$5,000 is needed to preserve and upgrade the existing fence that was never completed. There is deer fencing but no rodent fencing and they are experiencing issues with rodents. They also need it for cutting back brush and limbs. Clearing is necessary to improve the quality of some of the newer plots that currently do not get enough sun and to protect the existing fence from damage due to storms. Ms. Shildneck added that the funding would also allow them to add weed barriers and wood chips around the perimeter, which has the added benefit of the creation of a walkway, enhancing the recreational aspects of the garden.

They also need \$1,000 for supplies and materials to help gather rain water for the garden to water more efficiently and, by using less of the town's water, more environmentally friendly. They water by hand – there is no sprinkler system.

Jon Belber explained that if they were to increase and enhance the garden through this CPC funding, the garden would continue to be an important model for sustainable farming. The TSCG is considered a model for other towns: in the last two years alone, representatives from Duxbury, Hingham and Hull have visited the TSCG and set up similar gardens in those towns. These improvements would keep it sustainable and would add to the volume of the harvest. The needs of the Food Pantry are expected to continue to increase.

The Committee asked what the donation to the Food Pantry represents in a dollar amount. Both Ms. Shildneck and Mr. Belber agreed it was between \$1,000 and \$2,000. They do not have a scale and do not know the amount in pounds.

The Committee asked if the “plotters” pay a fee and what it covers. Mr. Belber answered that they charge \$20 per plot which covers the delivery of compost, tools, and gas for the mower. In addition, “plotters” are asked to help with the Food Pantry beds on the perimeter and be available to help other gardeners as needed. These prices have stayed the same for a few years.

When asked if the “plotters” have a Food Pantry donation requirement, Mr. Belber replied that the bylaws they have drawn up are vague and puts the onus on the “plotters”. They are asked to harvest by Monday for Tuesday delivery “a portion of their yield”. When asked, Ms. Shildneck added that the plots are 10 x 10 in size.

The Committee asked what kind of budget Sustainable Scituate has and how much they use for this garden. Mr. Belber said he wasn't sure what the standing is, but they receive some funds from recycling bins outside of Maria's, the Harbor Master's office and the ball fields. Ms. Shildneck added that there are no other projects now and the entire budget is going to the garden (TSCG budget is based on \$20 x 35 plots/\$700).

The Committee asked if they had plans to do fundraising. Ms. Shildneck replied that the First Parish Church has been very supportive and has sent donations to them over the last two years. Church volunteers have come to help with spring cleanup. They also have grants that are pending.

The Committee voiced some concerns that TSCG is depending on CPC for yearly operating funds. The CPC liaisons added that they did discuss operating vs. capital with the applicants and helped them with the revised application to ensure it meets CPC criteria.

Microfiche of Scituate Mariner Project – Jessi Finnie, Scituate Library – Application for \$7,684 to microfiche selected years of the Scituate Mariner and to purchase duplicate rolls of some years to provide complete access of the Mariner via microfiche to library patrons and town residents, as well as out of town researchers. The application asks for full funding but, if that is not available, they can seek funds from the Library Trust.

Ms. Finnie said that, although the Mariner has done some microfilm work, it doesn't have all the resources the library needs. The parent company covers many towns and does not always take the time to microfiche the newspapers. The library has been given permission to purchase duplicate Mariner microfiche rolls from January 1990–December 1992 and January 1996-June 2003, which will reduce the cost. When the project is done, they will have a complete set of years.

Ms. Finnie explained that, if approved, this will be an important historical resource for the town that will be available forever for people to use for research. Although the newspapers hold up well in archival boxes they become very delicate over time. She added that this is a time sensitive project due to the upcoming library renovation. Storage of the older, more delicate newspapers is costly. For this reason, they are hoping to get this done before the library renovation begins.

The Committee asked why microfiche is better and Ms. Finnie indicated that it is still the gold standard for preservation because it holds up better and is more fire resistant. It is also easy and less expensive to digitize microfilm. There was additional discussion on the wording on the application regarding the funds being requested. Ms. Finnie clarified that they are hoping to receive the full amount but could go to the Trust if it was not available. She emphasized that it was extremely important to get this project done before the renovation begins.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY – Dave Ball and Bob Gallagher, Historical Society – *They submitted five projects and during some initial discussion, Mr. Ball indicated that the Lighthouse Lantern Room was a top priority and the others are all equal. He agreed to drop the Lawson Tower Museum Evaluation for this year. The Committee asked that the Historical Society reach out to the Historic Commission for their input on the various projects.*

Lighthouse Lantern Room Evaluation Project – Application for \$14,700 to evaluate the structural integrity of the steel frame and wood components in the Lighthouse Lantern Room, as well as the catwalk and railing associated with the gallery, in anticipation of restoration.

Dave Ball explained that, when they did some work at the lighthouse a few years ago, the contractor said that they should take a look at the lantern room and the structure to see if there are issues. Since that comment was made, they have seen rot on the wood frame of the Lantern Room and are concerned about the condition of the copper that covers the catwalk and the roof. Additionally, they need to determine what material the catwalk is made of. They hope it is concrete but it may be timber.

The money would be used for a study to evaluate the structure and determine what steps can be taken now to forestall worse wear. Mr. Ball believes it is prudent to do this evaluation now, before they are faced with a major re-build. He added that he personally doesn't think it will be a huge problem but if not addressed would be more costly for replacement, as much as \$100,000. Because the Lantern Room has a reinforced steel frame and a wood structure, the \$14,500 request would be split between a structural engineer, a metal expert and a carpenter.

Bob Gallagher added that, about 6 weeks ago, they installed a new camera on the ladder and that has given them a better look at the pieces that run along the seams; they can see that the steel is rusted and breaking down. He added that the north side is worse. He has been there for six years and he has seen the intermediate level (as you climb up the ladder) become more wet. Mr. Gallagher added that the Lantern Room has not been worked on since it was restored in 1930.

Lighthouse Boardwalk Project – Application for \$16,800 to install a removable wooden boardwalk that would extend from the flagpole near the Lighthouse driveway, run along the current fence, and turn 90 degrees to connect with the concrete walkway that wraps around the Lighthouse on the North side.

Mr. Ball and Mr. Gallagher said that the benefits of the removable walkway are many, including adding a significant stretch to the Harbor Walk project, granting greater access to the ocean in the areas affected by the revetment last year, and providing educational opportunities with more signage. It will also help with potential liability issues related to those seeking access to the area by cutting through the yard by the house.

The walkway would be 168 feet long, four feet wide, and made with pressure treated wood. They looked at National Park models as design guides. They recommend a removable walkway, like those at Egypt and Peggotty beaches, to extend the life of the walkway. The project would be a tremendous asset that would also keep people from trying to navigate along the rocks in that area.

The Committee asked if the estimate would be enough due to the costs of pressure treated wood. Mr. Ball said that a contractor estimated \$13,800 for the work and, with money available for extra costs, he is comfortable with the estimate.

When asked if the Historical Society is required to come up with 10% of the cost for this project, Mr. Ball responded that it is town owned property. There was additional discussion on the conditions of the jetty and the old and new walls, how much debris has been washed up, if the Lighthouse is protected by the current walls, and handicapped accessibility, which is on the other side of the Light.

Cushing Shay and Lafayette Carriage Restoration – (Additional background) Although they are in two separate applications, these two projects go hand in hand due to the estimates they received for the work. Mr. Ball originally thought it would cost \$50,000 to restore the Shay. He said that a contact at the Daniel Webster state park recommended that they speak to someone in Northampton, Mass, who had restored a carriage for them. After viewing photos, they received an estimate of \$11,800 for the Shay and \$13,800 for the Carriage. The estimate was read out loud to the Committee which gave the assurance that they would be restored as near to the original condition as possible.

Lafayette Carriage – Application for \$18,000 to restore the carriage of the Marquis de Lafayette, an aide and personal friend of George Washington, and make improvements to the Cudworth Barn where it is stored. The Historical Society will contribute \$1,800, for a total cost of \$19,800.

Mr. Ball said that, for its age, the carriage is in remarkable condition and was last used in 1986 during the 350th anniversary of the town. The Cudworth Barn will need improvements to make it better suited for storage of the restored carriage. He confirmed that the Daniel Webster carriage is not stored in a climate controlled environment and so feels that the Cudworth Barn will be adequate with enhancements. He added that the Barn is alarmed and is in pretty good condition overall.

Asked about the timing, Mr. Ball indicated that the Shay would be sent first, and would take approximately 3 or 4 to 5 months each. Mr. Ball added that the goal is to be able to have it drawn by a horse in a town parade.

The Committee asked what relationship Lafayette or his carriage has to Scituate. Mr. Gallagher explained that the Briggs family in Norwell gave the carriage and the Cudworth Barn to the Town of Scituate. There is some documentation that Lafayette had been in the area, but it is not clear how the Briggs family got the carriage.

Cushing Shay and Old Oaken Bucket House Improvements Project – Application for \$69,000 for improvements to the Old Oaken Bucket House, including the Museum Ell, driveway and parking, outbuildings, and trails. The application includes \$11,800 to restore the Cushing Shay, one of the most important artifacts of one of the Town's most important citizens, which is stored there. The Historical Society will contribute \$6,900, for a total cost of \$76,900. The Historical Society hopes that they can get funding approval this year, but spread the work over two years.

Mr. Ball said that this is a more complex project that involves many different improvements on the property. They are hoping to better utilize this National Historic Site and make it open to the public. To do that, they need a wider driveway and better parking. The Museum Ell (built in 1665) previously had work done on the roof, sidewall and sills. Now, they would like to do internal improvements to the museum exhibit space to better showcase Scituate history, including Chief Justice Cushing and the flourishing Art Colony at the turn of the century. They also need to make improvements to the two trails behind the house, one leading to a magnificent Buttonwood tree. (It was mentioned that Pam Martell will do the design work.) They also would like to do improvements to the garage, which may be used for additional museum space.

The other aspect of the application is the restoration of the Cushing Shay. Mr. Gallagher noted that the town should have a lot more focus on Chief Cushing, our most famous resident and the restoration of the Shay is critical to that goal. Mr. Ball noted that they went to the Supreme Court to see if they would restore it for them and then exhibit the Shay on loan from the Town. Although they expressed interest, they determined that it would not fit through the doors to the exhibit area.

The Committee asked if projects over a certain amount of money require competitive bids. Mr. Ball said that they received separate estimates for the different projects. It was confirmed that the Historical Society owns this property. There was further discussion about why the Cushing Shay is stored at the Old Oaken Bucket House and it was explained that they had the storage space for it.

Mr. Gallagher added that with these improvements and more historical displays, there will be a lot more traffic and interest in this property. It was suggested that the Committee look at the Historical Society website at www.scituatehistoricalsociety.org and Mr. Gallagher's Lighthouse website at www.oldscituelight.com.

Old Business

- **Paid Invoices** – Ms. Connolly said that she has copies of all the bills that have been paid over the past few months if anyone wanted to review them.
- **Vinal Ave Pathway Application** – Ms. Connolly shared a letter from Jeffrey Kalla, a representative of the neighbors who oppose this project. She noted that she and Marla Minier had met with the neighbors, for a follow-up discussion after the hearing, and suggested that they speak with school officials to come to some conclusion. She noted that if this is a safety issue, then the School Committee should address it.

The Committee discussed their concerns about the sidewalk vs. pathway debate and CPC's role in some of the projects that have been submitted. It was suggested that, instead of individuals coming to CPC with sidewalk applications, an alternative be found for these requests. It was mentioned that in Norwell they have a Path/Sidewalk Committee that recommends what projects should be done through the CPC. There was a discussion on what funding sources are available as the Safe Routes to School funding is gone.

Committee members generally agreed that they are in favor of projects that would complete the loop around town, like Gannett Road, The Driftway and the Harbor Walk.

- Financial updates - The balances for various CPC funds and money that has not been allocated were reviewed. The Committee also received the expense summary as of 1/31/2015. Ms. Connolly said that with the override, the Town Administrator estimates that CPC should get an extra \$163,000.

New Business

- Gates Rehabilitation Hearing - In anticipation of next week's meeting, Ms. Connolly shared a page from the Community Preservation Act that points to the CPC's ability to "set aside funds for general purposes that are consistent with community preservation". She directed them to the website for more information on this point.

The Committee discussed the non-specific nature of the Gates School rehabilitation plan and whether or not it met with that CPA provision. Additional comments were made regarding Town Hall buildings that have been renovated with CPC money being historic buildings in those towns. It was suggested that the town residents are weary of overrides and CPC can and should be a valuable tool to defray taxpayer costs on a project like Gates.

Motion to adjourn at 9 pm – all in favor.

*Submitted by
Mary Sprague
Administrative Assistant*