

## Community Preservation Committee

December 15, 2008

PRESENT MEMBERS: Mr. Bulman, Chair, Ms. Ivas, Mr. Leavitt, Mr. Limbacher, Mr. McKain, Mr. Scott, Mr. Trafton, Mr. Wood.

OTHERS: Ms. Fenton, Mr. Sharry, Ms. Monroe, Mr. Wait, Ms. Vitelli, Ms. Thibeault, Ms. Crowley, Ms. Bramwell, Mr. McLaughlin, Ms. Horsman

CALL TO ORDER – 7:10 p.m.

I Agenda –

MOTION by Mr. Leavitt, SECOND by Mr. Limbacher, and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED 8-0 to accept the agenda as submitted.

II Application Hearings – 7:12 p.m.

Records Preservation, Bernice Brown, Town Clerk: Ms. Brown reminded the Committee members that this is the third year they have submitted an application. Their primary focus remains the preservation of the documents in the archives at town hall. However they need to address the environmental questions. The difficulties are heat, physical security of the archives, and security specifically relating to fire safety, in terms of the records they keep in the basement. Because they are not a standalone, it is difficult to address this question because it means that they are addressing questions with the building itself. What they would like to do is make adjustments in the areas of plumbing, dehumidifiers and portable air conditioning. First and foremost though, is the security of the garage because it is easily accessible and there are fire concerns. Ms. Brown went on to say that she has spoken with Mr. Bangert, the director of Buildings and Grounds for the Town of Scituate. They recognize what it is they have to do to get moving. Ms. Brown mentioned that the Committee Members have a copy of the one proposal that they have in terms of the security and fire issues. The fire issues do require the authority of the Town Administrator and the Fire Department. Ms. Brown restated that although they are talking about the fire issues, it is in the very early stages and they are really focused on the garage and the security of the garage.

Ms. Brown mentioned that she had given the Committee a summary of what they have been able to accomplish to date and included some samples of where they are going. In point, she mentioned the procedures they are currently putting into place regarding the accessibility and security of documents in the garage. Lockers are being installed in the hallway leading downstairs so when people come in, they would be required to leave their belongings there and bring only a pencil with them. The archivists are also looking into some kind of a system so that they could visually record what is happening in the different archival rooms. At this time, it is very difficult to keep track of activity because the staffing is low and there are several different rooms that the public has access to. Ms. Brown showed the Committee Members an atlas that demonstrated the type of things that people do in terms of removing pages from documents.

Mr. Bulman asked what the remainder of their budget was. Ms. Brown replied that they have been very careful with their budget, and they are just now beginning to use the funding appropriate for last fiscal year. Therefore, the funding they are asking for now could pretty much be devoted to the environmental issues as soon as they can resolve exactly what it is they can do. They are still going to be in a position to continue to do preservation, which was the particular focus. Given a different physical environment, they would only be focusing on the preservation.

Ms. Brown mentioned again the atlas that was just returned from the preservation company, Browns River. The Scituate section of the atlas was missing. These atlases include the names of everyone who was living and the location of their houses. Part of what was happening was that when people used the atlas in the past, they would remove pages. They were able to locate a second atlas and Browns River was able to combine the two atlases so that there is now one complete atlas.

Mr. Scott informed the Members that they archivists still had \$40,000 left. Ms. Brown said that was partly because they were searching for alternative ways to preserve the documents. They had to use Browns River for the large project like the atlas; however for smaller items what they are ideally looking for is to have secondary research materials. Ms. Brown showed the Members a "very rare" Litchfield history. Ms. Brown went on to explain that the Litchfield's are referred to constantly in everything when people begin to do genealogical or land research. She showed the book as it originally was and said that they would not have been able to send it out to be de-acidified and rebound because it would have been far beyond their budget. What they did was to have the book scanned. It will available at the library as well as in the archives at the Town Hall. Ms. Brown mentioned that all of the preservation work will have a statement inside that the restorations were done with CPA funds.

Also scanned were all the WPA records that were done in the 30's, complete records that cover everything from the beginning of Scituate's history up through the 30's. They include every selectmen's' meeting, the name of an individual, a location, an issue that was voted at a selectmen's meeting or town meeting. The information had been put on index cards and stored in the Town Hall basement. They have all been scanned and are available on disk as well as hard copy books. Another important historical artifact that was preserved is the only copy of the Acts and Resolve of the founding of the Plymouth Colony. It had been on loan to the State but was returned to the Town the first of the year.

Ms. Brown said that for the first time they had a group of students from the High School in to do research, and they are expecting to have more because, as part of the high school curriculum, they are beginning to teach a course on Scituate History.

In summation they have money left and they really need to address the issues of the basement itself.

Mr. Scott wanted to confirm that the \$25,000 they were asking for this year was to make physical improvements to the basement, and the \$40,000 balance would go to further preservation of archives. Ms. Brown said that they are waiting on environmental recommendations to see exactly what the costs will be.

Mr. Wood asked if there was money from the Town of Scituate to help. The answer was "not for preservation". Even though Mass General Laws says that it must be done, the budget is only \$1,000.

Ms. Brown went on to further explain the legislation and attempts to improve it.

Mr. Bulman asked if the Litchfield Family History Book would be something that would be for sale. Ms Brown wasn't sure if that would be possible because it was made with CPA funds. She did say that in term of the Atlas, many towns take the page from their own community and mat it and sell it.

Mr. Trafton wanted to know if they could charge for their services Ms. Brown said that they can only if they certify something, or if they do a search personally then they charge what the lowest paid person in the clerk's office makes. More often than not what happens is people come in and do their own research but the archivists spend time helping. Mr. Bulman also reminded the members that under the Freedom of Information Act you are limited as to what you can charge.

7:35 - Girls Softball Field, Mr. Sharry, Mr. Wait, Ms. Monroe; Mr. Sharry reminded the Committee Members that the girl's varsity softball team is the only varsity team that has to travel to play their home games. He stated that this field is not just for the girl's varsity team but for the whole town in general. He mentioned in point about the large men's senior softball league. However, the reason the recreation department is looking at this particular site is to get something at the high school campus. Mr. Sharry introduced the numerous people who had come in support of this project, but in particular wanted to draw the Members' attention to the two high school girls who were in attendance. The recreation department felt it was important for the students to understand the political process. Mr. Sharry pointed out that in the report on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> pages are the final determinations as to what the area is now, what it could potentially be later, and what may have to be done. Mr. Sharry also brought attention to the fact that they have increased their funding request due to the fact that the area may prove to include a vernal pool. If that is the case there will be some extra permitting and replication costs involved, and they want to be prepared for that scenario.

Mr. Bulman asked Mr. Wait to go through the engineering and viability of the project. Mr. Wait went over the map he brought, showing the relationship of the area in discussion relative to current fields and buildings. He showed the layout of the proposed field explaining that it would involve 4,000 square feet of wetland, which can be replicated, although in his opinion he doesn't feel that the Commission will ask them to do that. The question was asked what was meant by "replicate". Mr. Wait explained the State and Town wetland regulations. He further explained that there is about an eight foot drop from one end of the proposed site to the other, so the plan would be to level the area by reducing the higher spot by approximately three feet and push that fill into the lower area.

Mr. Bulman inquired and Mr. Wait confirmed that the area would drain in the direction of the wetlands. Discussion continued as to what type of wetlands the area is, closed or bordering vegetative wetlands.

Mr. Wait proposes that they put a fence up the right and left sides, and mentioned the ball field at Beechwood in Cohasset. Mr. Sharry said that dugouts were a key part of the plan, for safety issues. They have been talking with the men's senior league, and the seniors may be able to help with building dugouts out of cement blocks similar to the ones at the Roach Field on Beaver Dam Rd.

Mr. Limbacher asked if parking would be an issue, and was told that there was sufficient parking.

Mr. Sharry explained that the infield is dirt with a grass outfield, there is no mound in softball.

Mr. Scott asked if the Central Field would still be used. It was explained that it would be. The main goal of this project is to get a field on the high school campus for the girl's varsity team. However, Ms. Vitelli stated that it will be an intergenerational field with many other uses from the youth program which is rapidly expanding, to T-Ball Games, through the men's senior league. As it is now at Central Field, there are real conflicts and safety issues when soccer teams show up to practice, the girls are playing a varsity game and soccer balls are rolling through the softball field.

Mr. Scott put forth concerns that the estimate was based on limited info/plans. He feels the wetlands issue is a real concern with respect to replication. Mr. Scott also questioned Mr. Wait asking if the report submitted with the application was written by a wetlands specialist funded by the CPC? Mr. Scott went on to say that he had real problems with some of the statements made in the report.

Mr. Leavitt wanted to know how this proposed field would compare with other fields in the area, first class or second class. In his opinion Scituate tends to "be cheap", and within reason, Mr. Leavitt would like to see this become a first class field.

Mr. Bulman asked the applicant if there was a more detailed budget. His concern is that there is enough money to get the project done. Mr. Sharry said that they do have a complete breakdown of the numbers and Mr. Bulman asked to see it. He also asked that the applicant go over the numbers with a contractor to confirm if the numbers per yard are realistic etc. Mr. Bulman noted that due to the economy, this is probably a great time to build a field. The applicant stated that there is a local company RAD that has done work on town fields before, the applicant will check with them.

Mr. Wait asked what would happen if the contractor came back with a different number, and Mr. Bulman answered that the concern of the Committee is that a project gets 75% done and then the applicant would have to come back and ask for more money. The CPC is interested in seeing a realistic budget. The CPC would like to know now if the project is going to cost more money, not later, once it has been committed to and money already spent.

Mr. Leavitt asked if there was a contingency built into the budget and suggested that there should be. He reminded the applicant that it is money the CPC can always take back if not spent.

Mr. Bulman noted that the total project cost was listed at \$325,000 yet the funding request was only \$300,000. Where is the other \$25,000 coming from? Mr. Sharry said that they were actually up to \$315,000 because they added some in for contingency bring the total project cost to \$340,000. He answered that they are looking to do private fundraising tapping into user group fees, and the girl's softball team has started some fundraising projects. Mr. Sharry asked the Committee Members to keep in mind that compared to some of the other organizations in town, softball is a lot smaller and probably isn't able to fundraise as well as say basketball, football or soccer that have 800 to 1000 kids participating, giving you larger pool to draw from.

Mr. McKain asked if the \$3,000 for conceptual studies is built into the amount the applicant was hoping to raise. He was told it would be part of the \$25,000.

Mr. Wood wanted to confirm that at present the exact boundaries of the wetlands were not known. He also questioned the status of the vernal pool. Mr. Wait said that the approximate boundaries of

the wetlands had been located with the previous funding provided, but that the vernal pool status couldn't be determined until the spring.

Mr. Wood then asked the Committee if Scituate ever used CPA fund to fill in a wetland area. Mr. Leavitt expressed the opinion that the area in question was a created wetlands and Mr. Bulman reiterated that Con.Com. would probably make you replicate it. Mr. Bulman said that he was not aware of anything in the regulations that said you couldn't do it with CPA funds. Mr. Wood then wanted to know if there were any other areas in town being considered as possible sites for the field. It was explained that the last location was the one proposed at the Cushing School in a previous application to the CPC, but it was withdrawn because of the cost of taking down so many trees. Again the goal is trying to get the girls' field on or as close to the high school campus as possible. Mr. Bulman reminded the Members that the existing field at Cushing School couldn't be re-done with CPC funds, and that's why the applicant looked into the wooded area adjacent.

Mr. Bjorklund suggested that the Recreation Department speak to Mr. Glen Pratt of Cohasset with respect to the Beechwood ball field for any input on the proposed Scituate project.

III General Business: - 8:20 p.m.

There was discussion as to what the state match would be. Figures on the spreadsheet were updated and Lisa Fenton confirmed that she had the correct figures for the Advisory Board.

There was an exchange of ideas on some of the projects presented and projects that may be presented in the future. Mr. Bulman updated the members on the status of the Affordable Housing Trust and expressed his opinion that over the years the open space and historical categories have received more than their required 10% share of the CPA funds and he felt it was important, given the opportunity, to try and get the recreation project done and do another round of funding for the Affordable Housing Trust.

There was continued discussion and exchange of ideas on the Hennessey application. Questions arose regarding the price per acre, how important is it that the piece is contiguous to other open space acquisitions, and that it is a water supply for Cohasset. Given the possibility of other open space projects coming before the CPC in the near future, should so much of the 2010 budget be spent on that? Ms. Fenton reminded the Members that there is nearly 2.5 million dollars left in MBTA mitigation funds that were being held aside for open space and it has always been the thought that that money would go toward buying land important to the water resources of the Town.

ADJOURNMENT –

MOTION by Mr. Limbacher, SECOND by Ms. Ivas and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen S. Crowell