



CPC MEETING MINUTES
March 10, 2014
GAR Hall, Country Way, Scituate

Members Present: Mrs. Lisa Halbower-Fenton Chair, Mr. Stephen Coulter, Mrs. Marla Minier, Mr. Bill Limbacher, Mr. Rob McCarry, Mr. Frank Snow, Mrs. Camille Wells, Mr. Dave Smith, Mr. Harvey Gates

Other Present: Cynde Robbins, Shawn Harris Chairman Board of Selectmen, John Danehay Board of Selectmen, Chris Roberts Recreation Department

- Call to order 7:00 pm. Motion made by Lisa Halbower-Fenton. Second Camille Wells. All in favor.
- Acceptance of Agenda. Motion was made by Bill Limbacher. Second Marla Minier. All in favor.
- Acceptance of Minutes. Motion was made by Marla Minier. Second Stephen Coulter. All in favor.
- Discussion with Board of Selectmen: Board of Selectmen Chairman Shawn Harris and Selectmen John Danehay addressed the committee. Mr. Danehay thanked the committee for discussing the Board of Selectmen's CPC application. They would like to understand the criteria used in making the decision to deny their application of \$600,000 to be earmarked for a future strategic plan that entails the building of the new Middle School. Mr. Danehay stated that he was disappointed that the Board did not get the opportunity to present their application to the committee. The Board will be looking into to next year's application process. If the Middle School is moved to the High School campus than the High School fields will be relocated. Mr. Danehay stated that the town is in need of fields. The scope of the town projects includes a new Middle School, Town Hall, First Responder's Building and Recreational Field Complex. The Gates building is 100 years old and the Board of Selectmen is interested in the renovation of it for the new Town Hall. Mr. Danehay said that if the town votes to go ahead with the projects high costs are involved. The Board believes that CPA funds could offset the effects on taxes the projects will have on the town. Lisa welcomed the Board of Selectmen to the meeting. She mentioned the meeting the Board had with Frank and Marla, stating that it was productive. Regarding the BOS application, the CP Act does not allow for the "setting aside of funds for a potential future project." This is why the BOS project was voted ineligible by the committee last fall. Lisa also added that Nancy Holt, Town Accountant just reconciled the CPA funds balance sheet. The General Fund healthy, however the committee believes in not spending beyond the amount of funds which come in each year. Lisa mentioned that she had a discussion with Trish and explained this to her. The CPC is diligent in supporting projects the community wants. Projects are supported by the Advisory Committee and Board of Selectmen before going to Annual Town Meeting. The vote by the town is indicative of the support the town has for a project in which case the CPC would fully support offsetting project costs where possible with CPC funding. If the



article written for the Special Town Meeting in the fall states a site and a breakdown of costs required as well as timing and other necessary details, an application could be submitted for next year's funding period. Lisa asked the Mr. Danehay and Mr. Harris if this April's Article will include a question about a new use for the Gates School. Mr. Harris stated that the Special Town Meeting in the fall is for the new Middle School. The intended opening for the new school is fall of 2017. The plan for the Gates project will not be congruent with the Middle School. The plan for the Gates project is for it to be on the warrant for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting. The 2015 Article will include the recreational and historical components of the Gates property. By the fall of 2015, the usage for the Gates School will be defined by the time a CPC application can be presented. By the fall of this year, the need for new fields will be determined after the Middle School vote. Marla stated that fields are going to be displaced if the school moves to the High School complex. If that in fact happens then the Recreation Department will be looking for funding for new fields; however a site for new fields needs to be determined. Rob asked if Gates's back field will remain open. There will be a loss of parking spaces and two tennis courts if the Gates's project is constructed. Chris Roberts, Recreation Department said there will be a loss of two courts and the High School Tennis Team needs five courts in order to play matches. New fields are the number one priority for the town, Mr. Danehay said. He also said that these projects are all necessary for the town. Lisa mentioned that CPC understands the town has multiple projects in mind that will require funding, however CPC considers the benefits of all applications for the town in each category; Historical, Recreation, Open Space, and Affordable Housing. Chris Roberts said he could provide the committee with a Recreation project priority list because the department just updated their plan. He said he knows that right now there are many Recreation projects that have been voted to be supported by CPA funds and they are all in a "back log" state. Even though there are all these pending projects there is always the need for fields in the town. The Recreation Department needs to find land in the town to support the need for fields. The department needs to look for property and Mr. Roberts believes that Frank knows where to look for potential parcels. Mr. Roberts said that the other projects could be pushed aside to purchase land for fields. There is more of a demand on fields in town especially now since flag football is coming. Lisa asked, since fields are a priority are the costs of new fields being incorporated into the plans for the new middle school like surrounding towns have done with school based projects. Frank noted that property like Damon in which a family is preserving as open space because of their passion for land does not mean it is potential field property. The Ellis property consists of 100 acres and was purchased with town funds in 1970. The town kept 48 acres for their use and the remaining was given to Conservation. In 1994 with the 48 acres, the town agreed to rent the 3.1 acres and the Ellis House to the Scituate Art Association. Sixteen acres was given to the School Board and again the remaining was given back to the Conservation Commission. Since the School Board owns these 16 acres of property and the land is fit for fields, it was asked why the parcel is not being considered for school fields. Mr. Danehay said that in the fall of 2012 the town tried to buy the acreage back from the School Board for a potential Public Safety Building and it was shot down. Frank said that there is 20 acres up there that is not in the care and custody of the Conservation Commission. The area is flat and the best place for fields. Mr. Danehay argued with Frank that the Damon property is also flat and would be a great spot for an Athletic Field Complex. Mr. Danehay said the property could be used for recreation and conservation and that it was just a tree farm. Frank stated that the Damon property is deemed open space because of its diverse habitat and proximity to an aquifer. The Damon property abuts up to the South Swamp. The South Swamp consists of pristine habitat. The Damon property has never been clear cut in order to conserve



habitat and protect the aquifer. Mr. Danehay commented that you could just put up a buffer. Frank said that the five family members are in agreement to selling the property to CPC in order to preserve it which was their father's wish. Mr. Danehay said he was not interested in the sellers reasoning for preserving the land. He said "I am only concerned with the needs and wants of the town. And the town needs fields." Mr. Danehay believes that Damon is a perfect fit for an Athletic Field Complex because of its topography. Lisa differed, stating that the Damon property is not conveniently located. The Ellis property is centrally located on 3A and the Jenkins School field could also be renovated. Lisa also noted that the Curtis property was once up for sale and is also a potential field parcel as it is next to a school. The Curtis property abuts the Hatherly School and could be used for fields. Lisa also pointed out that the Bailey Ellis Property Article was poorly presented to town in 2012 which is why it was shot down. Harvey agreed with Lisa that the project presented to the town was vague. Mr. Roberts said that the Jenkins's field is land locked. Mr. Danehay wants a large parcel of land in order to cluster fields together. Rob said that it is important to look at the big picture right now. He said that there are a lot of moving parts which are all dependent on the approval of the Gates Middle School and where the school is placed. If the Middle School goes behind the High School then there will be a greater need for a field complex. At that point new fields will be a serious priority. Mr. Roberts feels that the present fields cannot just be patched up. Mr. Danehay said that the Board of Selectmen wants the CPC to understand the need so CPA funds will not be overspent. A lacrosse field requires two acres of land which is the largest required acreage for a sports field requirement. The twenty acres on the Ellis property could accommodate many fields. Marla felt that the Damon family would rescind their selling offer if fields are designated as usage for the property. Mr. Danehay said that he is not supporting a development up there but he is supporting fields because the town needs fields. He then asked the committee if when Open Space applications are presented to CPC, there needs to be a talk about using the property for fields. Lisa agreed that it would be a good question to propose to an applicant. Lisa said they could make the question part of protocol. Mr. Roberts asked if more money could be offered to Damon if they agreed to fields. He felt that the recreation value would go up making the land more valuable. Harvey asked Cynde if there was any possibility that they would be amendable to fields. Cynde replied no, they are preserving their father's wish of saving the woods. The family is adamant about keeping their father's wishes. Lisa stated that the Ellis property is a viable alternative which is already owned by the Schools. The reason it was pushed back by the town was because of the presentation. Lisa said she would support a project on the Ellis property. The property is centrally located, easy to get to, and close to everything. Frank said he knew the father and his mind set. He loved the woods and the woods were part of who he was. Frank also said that if a lacrosse field uses 1.36 acres, then there could be eight fields on the Ellis property. Harvey said it makes sense to have all the fields in one location. Bill agreed because of the synergy. Frank said he understood the controversy over Ellis; however the town could also request more land back from Conservation Commission. Mr. Harris said that he also knew Roger Damon. Roger could have developed at any time but he chose to preserve it. Mr. Harris said that John and Chris are only asking questions. He agreed that the Ellis property was a better choice and location. Roger Damon's property does not have good access. Mr. Harris asked if CPC would support fields on the Ellis property. The Ellis property fields could possibly be accessed from Mann Lot Road. Mr. Harris said most likely the Middle School will go in the back of the High School. Bill said that an athletic complex at Ellis could be independent of the Middle School being located there or a Public Safety and fields could go there. The original support for Ellis came only from the Board of Selectmen however having the support of the Recreation Department and



CPC will be more effective in gaining community approval. Bill pointed out that the CPC General Fund cannot just be spent; there are guidelines that are followed for the disbursement of funds. Presently, CPA funds are being held for the following voted Recreation projects: softball field, replacement playground, basketball courts, roadway trails, and back lights for High School Athletic Complex. Frank said that there can be a revote if there is a need for money to be redistributed in order to accommodate the new priority of ball fields. The start time for these projects is dependent on the fall Town Meeting. The need and location of fields will be determined depending on what happens with the Middle School. The Special Town Meeting will be requesting a Proposition 2 ½ override from the taxpayers in the town. Lisa said that based on the vote in the fall the Board of Selectmen will still be able to submit an application for funding by November 1st. CPA does not allow for the earmarking of funds in any category. Lisa, Frank, Bill, Camille, Marla, Stephen, Harvey, and Rob all agreed to support the need for new fields. Lisa stated however that she will not support on applicant making a condition on another's applicant's proposal. Support for recreational fields however is based on how CPA funds are applied for. Rob said a more viable Recreation Plan will be forthcoming after the vote. Marla said it will important for the line of communication to stay open between the Board of Selectmen and the CPC. Mr. Roberts asked Frank to consider properties for Recreation fields. Mr. Harris mentioned to ask about the Curtis property. Lisa stated that the open space supporters of the Maxwell Trust as an advocate who proactively researches land purchase opportunities for preservation and aids in the execution of applications and purchases. The Recreation Dept. should create a similar advocate/research role for their quest for ball fields instead of requiring open space projects to fill that need. There was agreement that the Ellis property was a good fit because the twenty acres provides enough land for fields and a Public Safety Building. Ellis also makes sense because the property is owned by the School Board and the School Board should support school fields. Marketing the usage of the Ellis property to the community will now include the support from CPC and the Recreation Department.

- Recap: Lisa said that the presentation and vote by the Advisory Committee for the proposed projects was positive. There was pushback by the Board of Selectmen at their presentation. The Board of Selectmen asked if the Damon Property could be used as a site for athletic fields. The owner was not in agreement with the idea. Lisa said that the Board of Selectmen meets tomorrow night for a vote on the CPC projects. She advised the committee that they may vote down the Damon Memorial Preserve project however the project will still be on the Town warrant for a vote by the town at the April annual Meeting. Lisa also said that the format of the Town Meeting will be the same as last year. If there is an objection to a project that project will require a separate vote. If there are no objections the moderator will run down the names and write ups of the projects and they will be voted as one.
- Old Business: The Mossing Shed Transfer application was voted for \$18,500 in CPA funds. Peter Levitt wrote the original application. On this application The Historical Society has agreed to contribute 15% of the cost. The actual budget made by Pam Martel was for \$26,500. The application was submitted without consideration for the 15% deduction for the Historical contribution. At the Board of Selectmen's presentation Dave Ball realized there was no way the project could be done for the \$18,500 in CPA funding. The real number he is looking for is \$22,525 in funding. Lisa asked for an amendment to the requested dollar amount so the project can be done in entirety. Frank Snow made a Motion to fund no more than \$23,000 for the Mossing Shed Transfer project. Second Bill Limbacher. All in favor. Lisa asked

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Priscilla to send an email to Trish on the newly voted dollar amount for the Mossing Shed Transfer project.

- New Business: Frank announced that at 7pm on Wednesday at Mt. Hope, there will be a trail meeting. The discussion will include Bates Lane Parking and how to integrate the recommendations from the Conway Proposal. Marla commented that it would be great to integrate the recommended trails on to the CPC trail map site as well as in town publication.
- Adjourn 8:35 pm. Motion was made by Bill Limbacher. Second Stephen Coulter. All in favor

Priscilla Grable
Assistant