

# TOWN OF HARWICH COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

*Approved April 13, 2023*

## **Community Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes March 30, 2023**

*Recording and Taping Notification: As required by law the Town may audio or video record this meeting. Any person intending to either audio or video record this open session is required to inform the chair.*

### I Call to Order

Harwich Community Preservation Committee Meeting called to order with quorum of committee members present by Chair Dave Nixon at 6:03 PM, on Thursday, March 30, 2023 at the Harwich Town Hall, Donn B. Griffin Room.

Present: Chair Dave Nixon, Vice-Chair Kathy Green, Elizabeth Harder, Bob Doane, Mary Maslowski, Kelly Barber, and John Ketchum.

Carole Ridley joined the meeting in progress.

### II Guests Welcomed

No Public Comment

CPC member Mary Maslowski announced that Larry Brophy, a Harwich Affordable Housing Trust Member in addition to having served on the Planning Committee, recently passed away. He was a kind and caring Harwich resident who just wanted to give back. The committee observed a moment of silence in his honor.

*6:05 PM Carole Ridley joined the meeting in progress.*

### III New Business:

- a. Update Status Report on the following CPC funded open projects:  
Harwich Cemetery Administrator Robbin Kelley

*Handout: Report on both projects*

- i. 2021 Article #29 (6) Phase I of II, Veterans Memorial Circle at Evergreen Cemetery, Flag Poles  
Contracts have been awarded for installing the flag poles and the needed electrical service. The hardscape design has been completed and has gone out to bid to landscaping companies. *Work must be completed by October 2023 for Veterans Day Services at the cemetery.* Once the hardscape is completed, the flags will be installed.

- ii. 2022 Article #31 East Harwich Union Cemetery Gravestone Preservation Project  
The project went out to bid and has been awarded to Village Green Restoration. Work to begin repairing the broken headstones the last week in April.

- b. Executive Director Cyndi Williams, Harwich Chamber of Commerce, CPC sign logo suggestions  
*CPC branding in outdoor signs and for use in print and digital media.*

*Handout: Print media of logo*

Ms. Williams presented the committee her Commerce of Chambers drafted logo design options. The signs employed the "Harwich" logo alongside her newly created CPC logo. Twelve years ago, the town and chamber jointly created the Harwich logo. This would be a great opportunity to use this branding.

Committee members thanked Ms. Williams for returning so quickly with a design when they had been struggling to get companies and schools to even reply.

Committee members pointed out some issues:

- 1) The font size of the CPC logo wording may be too small to read.
- 2) Concerns for resizing and when used in multiple media options – webpage, hardcopy printing, outdoor signs.
- 3) Clarity might be improved in a high-resolution format.
- 4) Tag line change to something like "Project received funding assistance from the taxpayers of Harwich through the Community Preservation Act." Flexibility is needed using the word *assistance*. If a project is fully funded with CPA funds, *assistance* should be omitted.
- 5) In the Historic Resources circle, change *Revitalize* to *Preserve*

The CPC will take home the design options to think them over.

Ms. Williams will make the recommended changes and attend the next CPC meeting.

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- d. Discussion and possible reconsidering the vote on the 2022/2023 CPA Funding Request of **CH2** Harwich Affordable Housing Trust Funds, Harwich Affordable Housing Trust, Request \$500,000.

Project applications can be found on:

<https://www.harwich-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee/pages/2022-2023-cpa-funding-requests-for-fy2024>

Harwich Selectperson Mary Anderson asked the CPC to reconsider the funding amount of \$250,000 for the Affordable Housing Trust warrant article. Typically, the Trust receives annual CPA funding at \$500,000. She is aware the Trust has been dysfunctional, but recently there has been improvement. Larry Ballentine is the Selectmen Advisor on the Trust. A hired consultant has done a site review. They are working on an RFP to move forward. They are looking at creating a Buy-Down Program. They will need money to do it.

They wouldn't have been able to purchase the land parcel near Long Pond without the CPA funds in the bank.

BOS Mike MacAskill offered to answer any questions the CPC had.

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by Bob Doane, to reconsider the vote relative to the Harwich Affordable Housing Trust application.

Discussion: A committee member is concerned that other housing projects may be coming down the pike that could use the extra funds if not given now to the Trust.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Nay; Elizabeth Harder - Nay; Bob Doane – Aye; Mary Maslowski– Aye; Kelly Barber – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Carole Ridley - Aye.

Motion PASSED. 6 in favor, 2 against

A motion was made by Bob Doane, seconded by Carole Ridley to approve the article at \$500,000.00.  
*(Funding the Affordable Housing Trust warrant article.)*

Discussion: One committee member reminded the committee that housing projects are expensive, including the surveys, creating RFPs, the possible need of consultants, engineering environmental testing, etc. The average cost range is \$300,000 to \$500,000 per unit. For example, a project in Brewster cost \$500,000 per unit. Funding this article at \$500,000 is worth it.

Other committee members offered there are misunderstandings on this committee's position on this vote. They were not opposed to this funding, it was not a punishing vote, but they found the application and the Trust representative provided a lack of information. The CPC needs to determine the merit of a project. The CPC cannot do a critical review without information. Year after year the CPC has asked for more details. They are surprised that the Trust representatives have not provided the Trust's plans or strategies going forward. The CPC hasn't seen any real effort in addressing this. What are the housing needs? What are the financial needs? What is the money going to be spent on? Members are very concerned with the Trust continuing to submit applications without any details, plans, or budgets.

If the Trust representatives are asking for \$500,000, they should be supplying answers. It is about the process; the Trust is not communicating with the CPC. This is a lot of money, and they were not comfortable continuing to contribute to the Trust on this basis.

Harwich BOS Chair MacAskill spoke for the selectmen, saying the BOS have taken this on, they are very involved. A selectman is on the Trust's board. The Town Administrator is on the Trust's board. It is a fiduciary trust. Funds are in the bank so it can act when something comes up. This gives them the ability to act year-round.

The BOS have gotten involved with the Trust and are aware of their past inactivity. They are working on moving it forward. They have been listening to the CPC and the taxpayers. They are looking at making changes in the Trust.

The Trust was drafted and passed at Town Meeting. The intent of the Trust is to have a separate organization to move the needle forward on affordable housing. Unlike other CPC applicants, the way the Trust was set up, the Trustees are empowered to determine the best way their funds are to be spent.

Another committee member wanted to clarify a thought from the March 20<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting, that the CPC didn't consider funding the Trust at \$500,000. Yes, the CPC did. The motion did not pass.

It was asked what the Trust's other sources of funds were beyond CPA? Cell Tower Revenue and Short-Term Rental Tax. The Short-Term Rental Tax can be voted to contribute to Housing, but isn't at this time. It was also commented that the Trust has properties that can be sold for funds.

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Some committee members expressed they were glad the BOS are addressing the issues with the Trust and look forward to the changes to come. We want this process to work for the town.

Trust Board Member Brendon Landy reported Consultant Goldstein is creating an action plan for the Trust.

Selectman Chair MacAskill personally guaranteed to provide the CPC with more information in the future. Both MacAskill and Anderson pledged to work with the Trust and give the CPC more information in the future. The BOS will stay involved; improvement to come.

The numbers were reviewed if this motion passed. Could we afford \$500,000?

The motion was amended by Bob Doane and seconded by Kelly Barber to approve the breakdown up to \$500,000, \$210,000 FY22 Community Housing Reserve, \$14,351.51 FY22 Undesignated Fund, \$191,200 FY24 Estimated Revenue Community Housing Reserve, and \$84,448.49 FY24 Estimated Revenue Undesignated Fund, to fund the Affordable Housing Trust.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Nay; Elizabeth Harder - Nay; Bob Doane – Aye; Mary Maslowski– Aye; Kelly Barber – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Carole Ridley - Aye.

Motion PASSED. 6 in favor, 2 against

#### IV. Old Business:

#### V. Other:

At the Town Administrator's and Dave's request, Mary Maslowski spoke to Town Counsel about the warrant articles and reviewed the wording on the buckets' appropriations and housekeeping article. *Appropriate Sums of Money from the Fiscal Year 2024 Estimated Annual Revenues of the Community Preservation Act Fund.*

Town Counsel John Giorgio is concerned that the Town would be double spending the money and wanted to change the article.

It was questioned – how will the 10% allocation get into the Revenues (buckets)?

Mr. Giorgio thought that by Statutes, the town financial/accounting departments would address funding allocations.

Harwich resident Linda Cebula questioned the change. This is the same way this has been done for years. The Town Counsel wrote the article. He should be asked why he has an issue with the article and wants to change it.

After reviewing past warrants, the Town Meeting Warrant Article for funding the buckets has been in place for years. The wording was slightly changed in 2019.

Harwich resident Bob MacCready reported Mr. Giorgio has passed on this article all these years. He should explain why suddenly he has changed his mind on this article. A committee member thought Mr. Giorgio should speak to the whole committee on this subject. We could invite Mr. Giorgio to the next meeting, but there is not enough time before they print the warrant. It can be changed on the floor of the Town Meeting, but that isn't the best option.

The CPC hasn't seen the final drafted warrant. It was part of last week's BOS meeting packet. Jan will forward it to the CPC.

Mary agreed to speak to Mr. Giorgio and press the point. She will let the committee know the result.

#### VI. Next scheduled meeting's Agenda points – April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting

- 1) Update Status Reports and presentations
- 2) Update on CPC logo/branding

#### VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Kelly Barber, seconded by Elizabeth Harder to adjourn.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Elizabeth Harder - Aye; Bob Doane – Aye; Mary Maslowski– Aye; Kelly Barber – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Carole Ridley - Aye.

Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment at 7:44 PM