

TOWN OF HARWICH  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Approved 10.12.23

**Community Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 14, 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 Vice Chair Kathy Green at 6:02 PM, on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at the Harwich Town Hall, Donn B. Griffin Room.

Present: Vice-Chair Kathy Green, Bob Doane, Mary Maslowski, John Ketchum, and Marcy Vigneau

Absent: Chair Dave Nixon and Kelly Barber

Guests: Harwich Rec Director Eric Beebe, Harwich Cemetery Director Robbin Kelly, Harwich Fire Association President Bruce Young & Project Manager Joe Rego, Harwich Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski, and Harwich Conservation Trust Executive Director Michael Lach

II Welcome Guests

- A. No Public Comment

III Approval of Minutes

- A. Approval of CPC Meeting Minutes: August 24, 2023

A motion was made by Bob Doane, seconded by Mary Maslowski to accept the August 24, 2023 meeting minutes with correction.

VOTE: Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Mary Maslowski - Aye; Bob Doane - Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum - Aye.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

IV New Business

- A. Update Status Reports:

1) Harwich Recreation Department, Recreation Director Eric Beebe (*Report*)

- 2019 Article #43 Sand Pond Restroom Replacement, \$125,000 and 2023 Article #33 Sand Pond Restroom Additional Funding Project, \$35,000

They have accepted the bid on the project's septic system. When they sent out the bid for the building, they didn't receive any bids. They have reworked the bid and plan to send it out soon. With the addition of the 2023 Article #33 they estimate they should have enough funds to complete the project. The restroom should be open for next summer.

- 2021 Article #29 (5) Senior Memorial Field Fencing, \$40,181

The funding for this project can be rescinded by the CPC and all monies returned to the CPC accounts. All the received bids came in over Article's budget. The Recreation Department and Commission is planning to re-submit an application for this project on October 2, 2023. Prices for materials have gone through the roof since the project was organized.

- 2022 Article #36 Pickleball/Basketball Project at Brooks Park, \$245,500

An engineer designed the plans. The plans were used in the RFP. Sept. 28 the bids are due. Plan to start work soon.

- 2023 Article #31 Senior Softball Fields Restroom Project, \$150,000

Plan to send out with the Sand Pond Restroom project bidding, economy of scale. Plan to have ready for next summer.

- 2023 Article #32 Brooks Park Tennis/Pickle Ball Court Re-Surfacing Project, \$110,000

Invitation for Bids and RFP has been posted for this project, bidding opens today. Plan to have contract soon and within budget. Plan to have ready for next spring.

A motion was made by Bob Doane, seconded by Marcy Vigneau to rescind 2021 Article #29 (5) Senior Memorial Field Fencing, \$40,181 and return to general fund.

VOTE: Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Mary Maslowski - Aye; Bob Doane - Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum - Aye.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

# TOWN OF HARWICH

## COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

9.14.23 CPC Meeting Page 2

2) Harwich Fire Association, Project Manager Joe Rego and HFA President Bruce Young *(Report)*

- 2023 Article #29 The Old Fire Station - 203 Bank Street Project, \$350,000

The historical preservation project work has begun. The roof, siding, trim, windows and doors have been replaced. The garage doors have been ordered and are expected by the end of October. Then the building will be watertight.

Contractors will be doing the signage, cobblestone apron, and lighting.

Their construction estimates are in line. Though, they did find some structural issues. The HFA has used some of their own money to address.

The structure has been improved. They haven't received any negative responses from the community.

Unfortunately, twice their site has had their bundles of shingles stolen.

They have started working on the interior second floor permits.

In answer to the Bundle the Warrant Articles question, they would prefer to keep the Articles separate.

3) Harwich Cemetery Department, Harwich Cemetery Director Robbin Kelley *(Report)*

- 2021 Article #29 (6) Veterans Memorial Circle at Evergreen Cemetery, Flag Poles, \$48,385

The granite is to be delivered in October. They plan to raise the flag on this finished site this Veterans Day. Robbin invited the committee to this ceremony.

- 2022 Article #31 East Harwich Union Cemetery Gravestone Preservation Project, \$118,000

Project expected to be completed by the end of this October. Contract awarded to Green Village Restoration came in under budget at \$61,890.00.

Repairs were made to some of the damaged gravestones that had chips and broken pieces. Some could be just glued, in other cases, molds were used to create the missing corners. Some stones had to be dug up. The damaged stones were sprayed for cleaning, using an effective and gentle cleaning agent. The company will clean only the specified stones. There is a volunteer group that is cleaning the gravestones in the town's North Harwich Cemetery, after that they will start at the East Harwich Union Cemetery and clean the untouched stones.

The company's onsite storage container will leave once the project is complete.

Robbin does have a database with all the names for this cemetery. Before and after photos are taken of the gravestones in this project, as is her practice. Robbin's office also has a complete database for all the graves in Harwich's cemeteries.

- 2023 Article #28 Revolutionary & Civil War Memorials Project, \$256,282.40

Robbin and her team have been working with Lynn at the Harwich Historical Commission, vetting all her extensive research on the veterans. They have categorized where the veterans were born, when they died, where they were buried, if they were married and to whom, and if they had a pension. If the veteran had a pension, they are included. Their length of service is not a factor. Robbin is paying close attention to the spelling of the names. This project should go out to bid by the end of this year. Turnaround time is thought to be about 6-8 months for the stones to come here.

Other organizations have asked for her data. People are excited about this project. The three binders of research for this project will be scanned to be available digitally.

A special account in the town has been set up to receive donations. Robbin has been actively seeking contributions for this project through mailings and personally appearing in front of groups. The Brewster CPC had declined to contribute funds, but Robbin will soon meet with the Brewster Historical Commission to request support.

4) Harwich Conservation Department, Harwich Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski *(Report)*

- 2018 Article #57 Public Access of the Hinckley's Pond Remediation & Public Access Project, \$75,000

So far, \$4,500 has been spent on engineering. This project has encountered many setbacks over the years, in 2018/19 the town lost its Engineering and Surveying Department; in 2020/21 Covid delays; then, they had to do another site survey.

Since 2022, Amy has repeatedly sent requests with the new site plan to the State's DCR for their approval and has gotten nowhere. The State owns the majority of this project's land adjacent to the bike path. The planned ADA platform is on State owned land. Amy is now in contact with David Burnes, the Director of Partnerships with the Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation and hopes to get this project going. It will not cost the State anything. The town will maintain it. Amy has drafted all the permits.

The town owns the land at the top of the stairs to the water shore. The trees that need to be removed on town-owned land will be done once the project gets going.

# TOWN OF HARWICH

## COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

9.14.23 CPC Meeting Page 3

Committee members pointed out this project has been on the books for 5-6 years, but acknowledged during COVID the State wasn't really spending money on outside services, but it's hard to think the State won't approve this project. This situation is really frustrating. We have to get this done. People will be able to enjoy this public access for years to come. It would be a nice improvement.

- 2020 Article #31 (4) Restoration & Rehabilitation of Town-Owned Conservation Lands, \$20,000

This project's money has been well spent on 300 feet of installed fencing, the majority of it to keep people out of sensitive areas; created new signs listing the rules and regulations and have installed most of them; and purchased four new trail cameras to monitor illegal activities.

Amy is working on the Bell's Neck Land Management Plan and hopes to have it adopted in a month or two. They have been considering using the remaining balance of \$12,735.00 on an entrance gate with an electronic timer off Depot Street to use at night and certain times to prevent illegal activity.

A committee member offered the Wetlands Protection Fund might have some money available for the electronic timer.

- 5) Harwich Natural Resources Department, Harwich Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski reported (Heinz Profit has retired)

- 2023 Article #34 Skinequit Pond Remediation Project, \$92,000

The Harwich Conservation Commission has approved the project. A permit has been issued. The BOS plans to award the bid next week at \$89,028. Work will take place this fall, after Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>. The herring should be gone by then and the water temperatures should still be above 40 degrees.

Amy thanked the Watershed Association of South Harwich group, who did most of the work on this project.

- 6) Harwich Conservation Trust, HCT Executive Director Michael Lach (*Report*)

- 2021 Article #34 Harwich Natural Heritage Trail, Phase 1, \$150,000
- 2022 Article #34 Harwich Natural Heritage Trail, Phase 2, \$75,000

Both these projects are part of a larger project, the Cold Brook Ecological Restoration project. The HCT has contracted with Eco-restoration to do the construction of Phases 1 & 2, which began about two weeks ago. Estimated completion of both projects is by May/June 2024.

Parking? The Harwich Fire Association, who is rehabbing the old fire station at the head of the trail, and the HCT are working on a new joint parking lot project proposal. Estimation of this proposed CPC project is about \$250,000. Details to come. The thought is to have both the parking lot and trails open at the same time to the public, rather than open the trails for a short time, only to have to close them and then work on the parking lot.

- 2023 Article #24 Bells Neck Road-Herring River Land Preservation Project, \$125,000

The property purchase includes these CPC funds, fundraising by the HCT, and hopefully a State grant. They have submitted their grant application to the State. They may hear back by November or December.

This land is to have a conservation restriction. The CPC project is to pay for the conservation restriction. The 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article lacked the language for the State's statute of a conservation restriction to be imposed on this property. A new article has been written to correct this error and will be included in the next town meeting for town approval. No new funding will be needed. The CPC will need to review and support the new article for it to go forward. In the past, the turnaround time from legal writing the articles and the warrant going to press haven't really allowed time for the CPC to review the articles. In the future, we want to change this situation and be more attentive to the details to avoid problems.

- 7) Harwich Affordable Housing Trust - *postponed*

- 2023 Article #25 Harwich Affordable Housing Trust Fund, \$500,000

- 8) Harwich HDHC, HDHC Member Bob Doane (*Report*)

- 2020 Article #31 (1) Update of Town Historic Areas and Property Inventory Project, \$34,000

The original RFP went out to bid but failed to receive any responses. The plan is to wait a few months and try again. This project is great for online research, done remotely. The RFP requires the person to have certain qualifications. The HDHC has received a recommendation and will try contacting that party. Town bidding procedures have legal rules that must be followed. The Town has to post the RFP through the town process, in addition, it will go on the State's bidding list, and a committee can send the bid out to people as well.

# TOWN OF HARWICH

## COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

9.14.23 CPC Meeting Page 4

Mary thanked Bob Doane for all his work on the prep for this project. The list has identified the clusters for the RFP, allowing for separated villages to be worked on. Last time the 100 Year list was done, a deep dive was not done. Some of the buildings on the 100 Year List don't have their background documented. The MACRIS database now requires this "Historical Narrative." They are trying to fix the lack of historical narrative and update the 100 Year List. One question that needs to be answered in the cluster research is does removing this building impact the neighborhood? A back-up plan? A second RFP may be attractive to architectural students that may be able to do this project on a flat rate salary platform. The RFP will need to be tweaked to fit this piecemeal approach. They will know by next May which way they will go.

### 9) Brooks Academy Museum Commission - *postponed*

- 2019 Article #41 Assessment & Restoration of Foundation, \$130,000
- 2021 Article #31 Structural Improvements Project, \$1,150,000
- 2023 Article #27 Brooks Academy Exterior Preservation & Windows Restoration Project, \$690,000

#### B. Discussion and possible voting: Rescind open balances to CPC accounts

- 2023 Article #30 Harwich Oak Street Bikeways Crossing Lights Project, \$13,000

Kathy read into the record the August 15, 2023 memorandum (*see report*) from Town of Harwich DPW Director Lincoln Hooper stating he wanted to request that the \$13k for the bike crossing lights planned for Oak Street at Old Colony be returned to the CPC. In July 2023 he was notified that a \$1.2M project had been approved by MassDOT's Project Review Committee. That project will reconstruct all the major road crossings on the Old Colony Rail Trail (the Harwich owned trail), including Oak Street, and is paid entirely by MassDOT.

So, if the State plans to pay for the crossing light in the future, why buy and install a set now?

The committee discussed the safety of this intersection and stressed the unknown date (in term of years) when this crossing light would be added.

Discussion on Rescinding of 2023 Article #30 was tabled. It was decided that the parties involved, Mr. Hooper and a representative from the Bikeway Committee, be invited to the next CPC meeting to discuss this project. Add: What happened to the lights on Lover's Lane?

### V Old Business

#### A. Update: Online Application, John Ketchum

- It was suggested John keep a manual of the online application procedures this year.
- When an application is submitted, (it is time stamped), John is notified. He sends the applicant an email with instructions with the next steps, including submitting their supplemental paperwork and the Oct. 3 deadline for their paper copies to be delivered to the Admin Office at Town Hall. Kathy will notify the Admin Office to expect the paper copies.
- Note for future online applications: currently when applications are printed out, they are labeled "draft." When the applicant seeks other committees' support of their application this may be a hiccup, needing an explanation. This should be fixed for next year.
- John will forward submitted applications to committee via Google Docs. John will need committee email list.
- Jan will keep a running list of submitted applications, divided into CPC's four categories and assign numbers to them.
- A few days after the Oct. 3 deadline, John will add the submitted applications to the CPC webpage/town website.
- "Confidential" applications will not be added to the website. They will remain "Confidential" until applicant instructs us to remove "Confidential" designation. Applicants will hand out paper copies in executive session for review.
- Presentations will begin at the next meeting: Oct. 12. Jan will reach out to Mike Lach, Harwich Conservation Trust, who has submitted applications.
- Jan will again email past project managers to remind them: 1) Deadline is approaching for application submissions. 2) Applications are online only. 3) Applications are being accepted now.

TOWN OF HARWICH  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

9.14.23 CPC Meeting Page 5

B. Update: New CPC signs

- Kathy is waiting to speak with Harwich Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Cyndi Williams; need to see mockup of new banner and street sign before they are ordered.

C. CPC Meeting Calendar

- Review of meeting points needed to cover the application to warrant process.
- Strive to have more time to work on legal considerations in the warrant articles to avoid problems.
- Executive Session may be needed; this will increase time added in a meeting.
- The number of extra meetings this fall to be decided once we see how many applications have been submitted.

VI Other

VII Next meeting's Agenda points - Thursday, October 12, 2023 at the Harwich Town Hall, 6:00 PM

- Review: Meeting Dates
- Project Managers' Presentations: Update Status Reports – Brooks Academy and Harwich Affordable Trust
- Presentations: Beginning - new applications; list all the new projects submitted
- Discussion: Bikeways Article Rescinding
- Update: New CPC signs

VIII Adjournment

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by Marcy Vigneau to adjourn.

VOTE: Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Mary Maslowski - Aye; Bob Doane- Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum - Aye.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Adjournment at 7:55 PM