

# TOWN OF HARWICH

## Community Preservation Committee

*Approved 6.9.22*

### Community Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes May 12, 2022

#### I Call to Order

Harwich Community Preservation Committee Meeting called to order per Vote by Chair Dave Nixon at 6:01 PM, on Thursday, May 12, 2022 at the Harwich Town Hall, Donn B. Griffin Room.

VOTE: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Bob Doane - Aye; Elizabeth Harder - Aye; Carole Ridley - Aye; John Ketchum - Aye.

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting called to order.

Absent: Joseph McParland III

Mary Maslowski - joined the meeting in progress.

#### II GUESTS WELCOMED

No Public Comment

#### III APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 7, 2022 Postponed

A motion was made by Kathy Green and seconded by Dave Nixon to amend the CPC Meetings Minutes of February 3, 2022 that were approved at the March 10, 2022 CPC Meeting. Change the voting status of CH 4 to reflect Kathy Green voted Nay and of CH 5 to reflect Kathy Green and Dave Nixon voted Nay.

VOTE: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Bob Doane - Aye; Elizabeth Harder - Aye; Carole Ridley - Aye; John Ketchum - Aye.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### IV NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Recap of the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting

- 1) Dave thanked the committee members for attending the Annual Town Meeting. He thanked Mary for speaking up at the Annual Town Meeting addressing CPC articles.
- 2) Elizabeth questioned how the committee could get more information out to the public about the CPC, where money comes from and how it can be spent, to avoid the same questions about the CPC annually at Town Meetings. Maybe a one-page info sheet on the CPC basics?

Suggestions:

Kathy attended the Annual Voters Information Session and addressed all the CPC articles. The session is aired on Channel 18.

The newspaper runs an article a couple of days prior to the Town Meeting,  
*Mary Maslowski joined the meeting in progress.*

John reminded the committee our Tri-fold brochure explains the CPC. It is available on the CPC webpage. More copies could be printed and handed out as the public arrives at the Town Meeting. A QR code directing residents to the Tri-fold brochure could also be handed out. The code would need to be created.

Residents don't always do their research prior to town meeting. The handouts at the Town Meeting could get the information to the residents that night & provide information to refer to when needed.

Or maybe someone could speak at Town Meeting and clarify the basics.

Carole offered the town used to print more descriptions/explanations in the Warrant. They no longer do that. Maybe the Warrant could have a couple of paragraphs - more explanations written to clear up any confusion.

Dave again thanked Mary for her work at the Town Meeting.

Mary commented she thought Town Meeting went smoothly. On the floor of Town Meeting, the residents asked questions related to the CPC practices, for example the spending of Anticipate Revenues, which we answered straightforwardly. The Applicants addressed questions concerning their proposed projects.

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We hope residents do their homework prior to TM. We do have the Tri-fold brochure. She didn't think people would look at a QR code during Town Meeting.

Kathy offered that she thinks questions come from residents that don't do any prep/research prior to Town Meeting.

The Harwich Conservation Trust does lobby for their articles prior to Town Meeting. Maybe we could use that as a model.

Bob suggested handing out the Tri-fold every year.

But maybe there are too many handouts at Town Meeting, too much competition.

Dave attended the BOS meeting this past Monday. It was suggested the CPC address the CPC basics to the public. In recent years, the CPC has been addressing getting the information out to public in many ways.

Mary agreed. We have increased getting the word out. We have really used the website listing the basics, even listing the projects.

The tools available to everyone to see.

To use social media, like Facebook, would be problematic because it may be considered a public meeting, the record keeping law requires that the record needs to be preserved. Another problem is that the Facebook site would have to be done by someone that might be asked questions, and that person then would be responsible for the answers.

Maybe it would be better to ask the Town to post something on their website page or news releases.

We only have a handful of copies of the original Tri-fold brochures left. Bob, John, and Elizabeth will investigate updating the material (projects and numbers) and get back to the committee, maybe at the July meeting.

### B. Project Managers presenting oral and written reports on their projects with open balances

Town of Harwich - Harwich Natural Resources Director Heinz Proft

2018 Article #57 Hinckley's Pond Remediation & Public Access Project, \$650,000

Pond Remediation - \$575,000 of the \$650,000

*Report will be emailed to committee.*

The treatment and monitoring of the remediation has gone well. The estimates were: \$500,000 to treat the pond. \$75,000 for pre- and post- treatment monitoring of the water. \$75,000 to create the landside public access. The costs for the pond remediation came in less than the estimates. The treatment came in at \$347,000 and the monitoring cost about \$50,000. The costs were less because the treatment dosage was at the minimal level. And it worked best for the pond. Since treatment, one thought was to add a smaller, additional dose in a couple of years. But Heinz is good with what they have now.

The water treatment was needed, the public access was a benefit for the town. The water treatment side of the project is complete. The public access side of the project is ongoing, conducted by Harwich Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski.

Open balance of the treatment side of the project is \$245,186 plus \$75,000 slated for the landside public access side of the project. The \$75,000 was an estimate for the work.

Could the open balance be shared to help complete the landside public access portion of the project?

Town of Harwich - Harwich Conservation Administrator Amy Usowski

2018 Article #57 Hinckley's Pond Remediation & Public Access Project, \$650,000

Public Access - \$75,000 of the \$650,000

*Report handed out.*

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The land – jointly held by the Town and State – was chosen to provide the public a little area park and provide access to the pond via a staircase down to the water. Amy attributes the delays of this portion of the project to the many town employee turnovers. She does a contract for the engineering site plan now. It will be completed this spring. It then will go to the State for comment. And then to the Town's ConsCom and BOS. Amy has met with contractors to remove some 14 invasive and/or dead hazardous trees on this site. She has received an approximate \$5,000 quote for this work. She will be signing the contract soon to have the job done this spring/summer.

Prices have increased for materials and work since the project was planned in 2018. Amy is optimistic she can complete the project within the \$75,000 budget. The numbers have changed a bit: Engineering is about \$10,000. Trees about \$5,000. The bike pavilion and staircase will be the big-ticket items. She doesn't have those numbers yet. To stay within budget, it would help if the Town would remove the asphalt and do some preliminary work. So, the whole project may cost a little more than the \$75,000, maybe as much as \$100,000.

Committee comments:

It was suggested if the budget is stretched, the public access stairway be completed and segment the pavilion to next year.

A legal opinion may be needed to answer if the open balance of the funds from the water treatment side of the project could be used for the landside public access side. Research will be needed to review the ATM Warrant vote.

It was offered this is a disappointment. For two years, this project was rejected until it included the landside public access section. The committee voted to approve \$75,000 for the landside public access part of this project. If the funds cannot be used from the open balance of the water treatment and the landside public access cannot stay within the \$75,000 budget, Amy can request additional funds in a new warrant project.

2019 Article #45 Red River Beach Shoreline Stabilization Project, \$100,000

*Report handed out.*

Amy offered that this project will be revisited. It has been held up by the State because it a hard solution to the erosion problem. She has seen others receive similar approvals though. Last year Amy requested an emergency order for a temporary solution of placing some loose stones on site. That and some plantings have helped reduce the erosion. If we could keep the people off the fence, that would be helpful. Prior work of dumping sand there was not a satisfactory solution.

Amy would like to use the \$20,000 of this project's \$100,000 funds to do a new necessary engineering survey and complete the permitting process. The balance of \$80,000 would be returned to the CPC accounts. When and if the project can move ahead, Amy will return and request the funds.

Committee comments:

It was questioned if \$25,000 might be a better estimate. Amy felt confident \$20,000 would be sufficient.

If the original Warrant Article didn't include engineering survey and permit, it is questioned if this project could cover this expense. Review of this is needed. The original survey was from 2016.

Amy will need to return for answers at a future CPC meeting. Research is needed.

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

*Report handed out.*

Amy reported she is making headway. They installed the top priority signs. Fencing has been purchased. Three hundred feet of fencing has been installed by the DPW. They have closed off illegal drivable access points. Walkable access is still open. They removed dumped couches, barbecue grills and lawn chairs, and bags of garbage. They have installed some fencing and fallen some trees to discourage ATVs illegal access. She has also purchased extra signs to go in as needed. They want to curb illegal use of the land.

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The herring run's parking lot will be moved back a little. Wildflower seed mix will be added, mixed with the planting of shrubs to soften the area.

Trail cameras were discussed. Trail cameras will be added this year. There is an additional cost for sending trail photos to online users. It was suggested Amy speak to Recreation Director Eric Beebe, to see about the Town's plan.

Herring numbers are drastically down this year. Heinz would be a better source of information on that matter. Amy reported that the Boston's IMAX Theatre at the Museum of Science will feature Harwich's Herring Run.

### C. Discussion of the 2022 CH 6 Adult Shared Housing Project

Follow-up from last month's CPC meeting - Public Comment period, Kathy reported she contacted the project manager of 2022 CH 6, Jeff Locantore, to explain the CPC process. We were concerned they didn't understand why we couldn't have a discussion during the public comment period. She explained their project's application needs clarification; it lacked information needed to go forward. The land – is it under the AH Trust? Their budget needs clarity. Written estimates of work are needed. Mortgage needs? The committee still needs answers to the questions that were sent to Jeff regarding their project. She told him they didn't need to wait until October to go over what their project application needs to include and invited them to come back.

It was stated the CPC funds community housing projects, as seen in prior CH projects like the Buy Down funding programs. In this climate could the town vote to fund this project? Who is the better spokesperson?

It was questioned is the project applicants should be an advocate for a project on the Town Meeting floor or if the CPC should address the public? Some presenters, like HCT Michael Lach, are wonderful public speakers.

### D. Vote to return CPC projects' open balances to CPC accounts

A motion was made by Kathy Green, seconded by Elizabeth Harder to rescind \$245,186 from the 2018 Article #57 Hinckley's Pond Remediation & Public Access Project.

Discussion: It was suggested the committee wait to vote on the return of funds until we explore the reallocation of funds from the water treatment side of the project to the landside public access side of the project could be allowed.

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

Motion failed.

### E. Discussion on CPC funding percentages

Dave reported the Harwich Finance Director Carol Coppola has moved on and Harwich will soon have a new Finance Director.

Annually the Harwich CPC budget receives a 3% levy on Real Estate Taxes, which accounts for one to three million dollars, plus an additional two to twelve thousand dollars from the State. The State informs the town of the amounts. They decide if any additional amounts will come in. We work on estimates in our budget. Carol has been conservative on the estimates she gives us. This system has worked. But with a new Finance Director, we don't know how they will manage the numbers. We have had difficulties in the past with other Finance Directors. The CPC has been tracking down the CPC accounts for years. Carol is leaving the CPC accounts in order, and we don't want to go backwards. The procedure will need to be reviewed. We work with these estimates, the Anticipates Revenue, to fund the projects. We need to plan to go forward with.

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### V Old Business:

#### A. Update on the written policies of the CPC Application – Carole Ridley

The drafted 2022 CPC Application was reviewed and corrects were made. Carole will clean up the draft. It would be great to have it ready as soon as possible.

#### B. Follow-up on neighboring towns' Affordable Housing Trusts – Elizabeth Harder

The follow-up will have to wait until the neighboring towns have their Town Meetings. Their answers would be dependent on the outcome to their TM votes. She will be able to address this topic in a month or so.

### VI. Other

- It was noted that though the CPC was informed by the Town Administrator and the BOS Chair that they planned to withdraw the AHT's Article #32 for \$50,000 to pay for the part-time Housing Coordinator on the floor of the Town Meeting if their budget passed that allocates pay for a full time HC, they did not. It was confusing that during the Town Meeting, Don Howell spoke to support the Article. Since initially the CPC voted to support the funding, we cannot rescind the funds at this time. We will need to review if the funds will be spent on what was approved at Town Meeting, even though the new Town Budget dedicates money to pay the HC's salary.
- It was noted the Finance Director Coppola wouldn't approve to pay the submitted Real Estate Appraisal bill until July 1. The delay was confusing.
- The CPC received an email today from the Bikeways Committee: "Members of the Chatham & Harwich Bikeways Committees will meet at the Old Colony Rail Trail town boundary monument on Wednesday May 18 at 10:30. The purpose of the meeting is to give recognition to the towns' CPC's for granting funding for the monument. The Chair of the Chatham CPC committee will be there." Dave invited any CPC members to attend if they could.

### VII. Agenda Points for the next Meeting - Thursday, June 9, 2022

- Vote: To return CPC projects' open balances to CPC accounts
- Discussion: Recognition of CPA funded projects; visible signs that project was funded with CPA monies.
- Discussion: Perceptions of where the CPC is and where it is going? Should the committee act proactively to inform the town taxpayers what the CPC is and what it offers to the town?

### VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by Kathy Green to adjourn.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment at 8:26 PM.