

Braintree Community Preservation Committee
Minutes

April 11, 2011

Johnson Chambers – Town Hall

Present: Anne Murphy (Chair) John Dennehy Pat Flynn Darryl Mikami
Linda Raiss (V-Chair) Michael Dorn Dick Fletcher

Also present: BHC Members: Elizabeth Mees, Ron Frazier, Kate Needleman Herbst
Al Varraso and Paul Carr
David Shaw, Braintree resident
Kelly Phelan, Conservation Administrator & Christine Stickney, Director, PCD

CPA Applications for Funding - Presentation and Discussion:

Town Forest (Presenter Councilor Dan Clifford) – Members were provided with copies of the original application submitted 8/10/09 and the revised application submitted on 2/14/11. Councilor Clifford provided some background on the project and noted that Town Forest is comprised of 164 acres of pristine open space and is an “unnoticed jewel” in the Town of Braintree. He explained the two phases of the project, as outlined in his two applications, and cited criteria he believes the project meets relative to open space, recreation, historical preservation, flooding, wildlife habitat, improving public access, expand hiking/walking and recreation. Linda Raiss commented that she felt the way the project was presented doesn’t give CPC members enough detail about the Phase II proposal concerning the improvements to the dam and questioned how the figure of \$17,500.00 was derived as to the estimated cost. Anne Murphy noted an article in The Boston Globe recently that the state is encouraging removal of dams. Councilor Clifford commented that he would like to have EPA look at it and provide review of implications of either removal or repair. John Dennehy expressed his opinion that of the two phases, the first phase signage is a fundable project and the second phase regarding the dam may not be ready. Dick Fletcher questioned what is meant by the “inner dam” and Councilor Clifford responded the dam within the Town Forest. Due to another commitment Councilor Clifford had to leave. He intended to return to continue discussion with members later in the meeting.

Sunset Lake (Presenter Kelly Phelan, CC Administrator) – members were provided with copies of the “Sunset Lake Stormwater Improvement Project” application submitted on 2/28/11. Ms. Phelan explained the current situation with the lake and the contaminants entering it from storm water structures, overland run-off and other means. Ms. Phelan has applied for and received preliminary approval for a 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution grant [EPA] which would fund 60% of the project and require a local Town match of 40%. Hence, the request for \$29,705.00 from CPC funds. The grant will fund structural Stormwater BMPs (Best Management Practice) to treat storm water before it would discharge into the lake. In addition, the grant will fund public outreach and education efforts to the general public on measures that can be taken to limit contaminants entering the lake such as not feeding geese, cleaning up animal waste, less use of fertilizers on lawns adjacent to the lake, etc. Dick Fletcher questioned the 40% match and Ms. Phelan explained the activities including in-kind services that are counted as well. Linda Raiss **MOTION** to recommend \$29,705.00 to be appropriated from the CPA budget reserve fund with quarterly reporting back to the CPA committee on the progress of the project, seconded by Pat Flynn – unanimously voted.

Old Thayer Library (Presenter Elizabeth Mees, Chair of BHC) – Members were provided with copies of the “Old Thayer Library Exterior Project” application submitted on 2/28/11. Elizabeth Mees provided background on the progress on BHC’s preservation efforts for the Old Thayer Library funded with \$35,000 from the Town’s CPA funds. She noted that the Town has submitted an application seeking \$100,000 to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) program on March 25, 2011. The request before the CPC is to fund the local match of this grant program. The project includes funding for the slate roof, chimneys, gutters & downspouts and some masonry work along the top of the building, Phase I of this extensive building rehabilitation, but Ms. Mees noted is important to preserve the building from further deterioration from the leaking roof and to secure the building envelope. Members discussed the details of the proposed work, what materials may or may not be used on the slate roof and the requirements of the National Register and MHC.

Dick Fletcher questioned what the BHC will do if the grant is not awarded or is awarded for less than the \$100,000. Ms. Mees and Ms. Stickney responded that they would have to return to the historic preservation architect to reassess what the Town could do with a reduced scope and reduced funding.

Linda Raiss asked if anyone remembered there was a past appropriation by Town Meeting for funding to be made available for Town Hall and the Old Thayer Library and requested Staff to inquire with Town Clerk and the Finance Department as to the status of that Town Meeting vote.

John Dennehy expressed his opinion that the work needs to be done and funding of such a project is exactly what the Act deems eligible. John Dennehy **MOTION** to recommend favorably to appropriate \$233,000.00 to match the MPPF grant requirement for Phase I restoration of the Old Thayer Library subject to approval of grant funding, seconded by Mike Dorn
Discussion: Dick Fletcher questioned if the Motion should be for only \$100,000.00. Christine Stickney explained that the total project cost is \$233,000.00 that the grant is seeking, there is a 50% match (not to exceed \$100,000.00) however it is also a reimbursable program where the Town post funds for 150% of the total project cost to have cash flow to pay invoices and then the MHC reimburses the Town as invoices are paid. Discussion ensued on various amounts and whether the motion should be based upon the grant.

Dick Fletcher offered an **AMENDMENT** to the **MOTION** that the amount in the original motion be \$100,000.00, seconded by Linda Raiss – Discussion on the amendment – Elizabeth Mees expressed her concern that if the roof isn’t done the upper levels of the building will deteriorate quickly. The Chair called for a vote on the **AMENDMENT** to the **MOTION** – **Vote 2:5 (In favor – Raiss & Fletcher & Against – Dorn, Dennehy, Mikami & Murphy)** - the Amendment to the Motion fails.

Dick Fletcher questioned John Dennehy if his original motion included which fund the monies would come from – John noted it didn’t. Linda Raiss also questioned if the motion included quarterly reporting. John noted it didn’t. John Dennehy then offered the following **AMENDMENT** to his original **MOTION** to include “the general reserve fund” and “the BHC report quarterly on the project” be inserted, seconded by Mike Dorn – vote: unanimously favorable the amendment passes. The Chair then called for the vote on the **ORIGINAL MOTION AS AMENDED** Vote: unanimously favorable.

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Union School/American Legion Building (Presenter Al Varraso, member of BHC & American Legion) – Members were provided with copies of the “Union School” application (\$10,000) submitted on 8/31/10 and a letter from Braintree Post #86 detailing the Legion’s expenditures to date on the building and an estimate of services from Strekalovsky Architectural Firm as to the cost of an architectural assessment. Al Varraso informed the CPC members that the building is currently experiencing leaks every time it rains and that they had a contractor out to look at it. There is no doubt a new roof and the wood sheathing below will have to be replaced. The situation is becoming critical. Al Varraso reminded the members of a past appropriation that was lost because it had not been utilized within the required fiscal year. Linda Raiss questioned the requested amount \$10,000.00 given the estimate received from Strekalovsky and her concerns with an increase amount needed to do the estimate. Anne Murphy questioned if the CPC should just give funds to do the roof? John Dennehy asked what it would cost to do the roof and Al Varraso said he could look into it. Members discussed Anne’s and John’s comments and concluded that Al Varraso should obtain an additional estimate of what it would cost to have plans and specifications done in addition to the original architectural estimate so that we can get this underway with regards to the roof. Pat Flynn questioned if there is a lease with Legion and Al said they have always been there. Dick Fletcher recalled something with Veterans and municipal buildings. The CPC asked Al Varraso to return on 5/9/11 with the additional information and they would look at it again.

Historical Inventory Forms (Presenters E. Mees & Ron Frazier from BHC) – members were provided with the Historic Inventory application and supporting documentation submitted on 3/1/10 along with a historic inventory map (8” x 11”) showing an area in Braintree Square. Elizabeth Mees explained the role and responsibility of the BHC relative to the inventory of historic structures throughout the community. In 2002, the BHC had a “Historic Resource Book” done that included some areas of the Town but it was essentially an incomplete inventory. The BHC will like to add to that work with an additional area in the Braintree Square Elm Street area (using the map). Linda Raiss questioned if you would be amending the booklet? Ms. Mees said somewhat but it is the actual service of investigating and filling out the Inventory Forms required of MHC. Dick Fletcher questioned the criteria of eligible activities under historic resources and if funding of the forms would lead to “preservation”? John Dennehy noted that this type of documentation is the first step and that in time the Town may be looking to implement a demolition delay bylaw in which these forms would be critical to understanding the history of a structure. David Shaw asked to speak to his experience with inventory forms, demolition delay bylaws and the process of municipal acceptance. Ron Frazier noted in the past Town Meeting annually appropriated funds for this and he recalled funds from the CPC being allocated. Linda Raiss noted that the current CPC members voted to return those funds since they had not been used to date. Dick Fletcher **MOTION** to recommend appropriation of \$10,000.00 from the Historical Reserve fund for the BHC inventory form project, subject to quarterly reporting and it to be administered through the Planning and Community Development department, seconded by Linda Raiss – unanimously voted.

Continued - Town Forest (Presenter Councilor Dan Clifford)

Councilor Clifford returned to the meeting at which time John Dennehy offered a **MOTION** to recommend approving an appropriation of \$3,400 for Phase I of the Town Forest Project to the Town Council, seconded by Michael Dorn

Discussion – Pat Flynn spoke to the e-mail received by the committee from Mary Mitchell (DOR) and said the opinion appears to indicate it can go either way regarding the expenditure of funds. Dick Fletcher provided his opinion relative to the statute and how this does not fit into the criteria for approval. Mike Dorn expressed his opinion the project assists in the “preservation” of Town Forest. Discussion among the members as to the proposal included pending legislation before the General Court that may change the statute to clarify this gray area and the second half of the proposal. Linda Raiss agreed with Pat Flynn’s previous comments and added that the first application that came to us regarding signage and the parking area is a gray area and now we have a revision for the dam that appears could be an eligible activity with little detail. Anne Murphy questioned if the CPC should wait to see if the General Court passes the legislation and expressed her concern it is a small amount of funding, but if challenged could be expensive litigation. Darryl Mikami expressed his appreciation of residents’ interest in the Forest but noted there is no overall philosophy of the forest, oversight and management and urged Councilor Clifford to get a Town Forest committee reestablished or some entity to oversee it. Councilor Clifford reiterated his comments that the project meets funding criteria and guidelines and noted his own time and effort that has been put into seeing this through. Pat Flynn questioned if the kiosk/signage is vandalized who will address it and seek enforcement? The Chair called for the vote on the **MOTION – Vote (4:3:0) – In favor of the Motion: Dennehy, Dorn, Flynn and Mikami – Against the Motion: Raiss, Fletcher and Murphy** – The Motion passed by majority vote.

Vote for CPA “buckets” – FY2012

This matter was tabled to the 4/24 meeting to obtain the CPA figures from the Finance department.

Town Council Matters:

Christine will send an e-mail to the Town Solicitor as to where the previous requests stand and send also these new matters from tonight.

Appraisal report:

This matter was carried over from last meeting, members appear satisfied with the report and Linda Raiss **MOTION** to offer \$15,000.00 to the property owner, seconded by Pat Flynn – unanimously voted. Christine will contact the owner.

Minutes:

Linda Raiss noted some minor corrections. John Dennehy **MOTION** to accept the minutes of 3/14/11 as amended, seconded by Linda Raiss – Unanimously voted.

Dick Fletcher **MOTION** to adjourn, seconded by Linda Raiss – unanimously voted. Meeting adjourned at 10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Stickney, Director