



WILLIAMSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
31 NORTH STREET  
MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 21, 2024

This meeting of the Williamstown Community Preservation Committee was held in person with remote participation via Zoom and streamed live on Willinet.org., & broadcast live on Willinet's Spectrum cable TV channel 1303.

**Present:** Phil McKnight, Joe Finnegan, Jane Patton, Charles Fox, Benjamin Greenfield, and Steve Dew via zoom

**Absent:** Nate Buddington

**Also Present:** Linda Sciarappa Minute Recorder

Chair Phil McKnight opened the meeting at 5:49 p.m.

Andy Hogeland, President of the Affordable Housing Trust asked that his warrant article be taken out of order so that he could attend another meeting and the committee was agreeable to his request. The committee discussed the warrant article for affordable housing trust, with amended language proposed by Andy Hogeland. Phil McKnight moved to adopt the article as submitted and as amended, seconded by Jane Patton. Discussion followed. The phrase, "including acquisition of land", and the language that at the end would be to find a grant to the Williamstown affordable housing trust and unrestricted funds for initiatives and programs related to furthering affordable housing and Williamstown, including acquisition of land. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

**1. Consideration and Approval of the Minutes of CPC Meetings in 2023 and January 24, 2024**

Approval of Minutes 11/22/22, 1/25/23, 2/8/23 and 3/8/23:

Motion to approve the four sets of meeting minutes made by Joe Finnegan, seconded Steve Dew. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

Approval of Minutes 1/24/24:

Motion to approve the Minutes of 1/24/24 made by Jane Patton, seconded by Benjamin Greenfield. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

## **2. Review of the Committee's Financial Position for FY 2025 Applications**

Phil McKnight discussed the Committee's financial position for the FY25 applications. The CPC proposed to use \$ 216,100 of FY25 funds for the FY25 allocations. In addition to that, CPC is drawing back into their funding amounts from two different sources. McKnight referred to a spreadsheet. The amount of \$ 232,532 was available for allocation. In January, CPC recommended \$ 216,100 for allocation leaving \$16,432 in reserve. McKnight explained how unspent funds from previous fiscal years would be used in the current year. The carryover to FY25 was \$ 3,000 from FY2020, \$85 from FY2007 plus \$ 29,175.45 unspent funds from FY2013. Those amounts were mentioned in the proposed warrant articles.

Jane Patton asked if the plan was to go back to Town Meeting on this or was CPC checking with town counsel on this? McKnight responded that because Town Meeting had voted on the \$ 50,000 in FY21 and \$ 29,175.45 in FY13 for a specific purpose, that the CPC would have the authority to bring them back in as long as they were spent within those same categories. Town counsel would have an opportunity to see what the CPC proposed and let them know if it needs to be handled differently. The Town Manager reached out to KP Law and is awaiting a response.

## **3. Consideration of the Proposed Warrants Articles for the Community Preservation Act FY 2025 Applications as Approved on January 24, 2024:**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION - COMMITTEE EXPENSES**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to hear and act on the report of the Community Preservation Committee on the Fiscal Year 2025 Community Preservation Act budget and to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues in the sum of \$5,000 to meet the administrative expenses of the Community Preservation Committee for FY2025 or take any other action in relation thereto.

## **Williamstown Meeting House Preservation Fund**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION - HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues for historic preservation purposes under the Community Preservation Act, including the amount of \$3,000 in unspent funds authorized in FY2013 for historic preservation purposes, for a total sum of \$50,000, which funds shall revert to the CPA fund if not expended by June 30, 2025, to fund a grant to the Williamstown Meetinghouse Preservation Fund, Inc., to renovate and preserve for the future the structure known as the Meetinghouse, currently owned by First Congregational Church of Williamstown, in accordance with the application submitted to and recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the organization upon such terms and conditions as may be appropriate and to authorize the Select Board to accept property interests as may be appropriate, or take any other action in relation thereto.

## **Williamstown Affordable Housing Trust**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION – COMMUNITY HOUSING**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues for community housing purposes under the Community Preservation Act, including the amount of \$29,175.45 in unspent funds previously authorized in FY2013 to the Affordable Housing Commission, now terminated, for community housing purposes and the amount of \$85 in unspent funds previously authorized in FY2007 for community housing purposes, for a total sum of \$70,000 to fund a grant to the Williamstown Affordable Housing Trust in unrestricted funds for initiatives and programs related to furthering affordable housing in Williamstown, including acquisition of land, and recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the organization upon such terms and conditions as may be appropriate and to authorize the Select Board to accept property interests as may be appropriate, or take any other action in relation thereto.

## **Sand Springs**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION - RECREATION**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues for recreation purposes under the Community Preservation Act, the sum of \$11,100, which funds shall revert to the CPA fund if not expended by June 30, 2025, to fund a grant to Sands Springs Recreational Center, Inc., for recreation purposes in accordance with the application submitted to and recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the organization upon such terms and conditions as may be appropriate and to authorize the Select Board to accept property interests as may be appropriate, or take any other action in relation thereto.

## **Multi Use Path Fitness Court**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION - RECREATION**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues for recreation purposes under the Community Preservation Act, the sum of \$90,000, which funds shall revert to the CPA fund if not expended by June 30, 2025, to fund a grant to the Town of Williamstown in the name of the Multi Use Path Fitness Center for recreation purposes in accordance with the application submitted to and recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the organization upon such terms and conditions as may be appropriate and to authorize the Select Board to accept property interests as may be appropriate, or take any other action in relation thereto.

## **Williamstown Skatepark**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION - RECREATION**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund FY2025 estimated annual revenues for recreation purposes under the Community Preservation Act, including the amount of \$50,000 in unspent funds authorized in FY2021 for recreation purposes, for a total sum of \$75,000, which funds shall revert to the CPA fund if not expended by June 30, 2025, to fund a grant to the New England Mountain Bike Association – Purple Valley Chapter

for recreation purposes in accordance with the application submitted to and recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, and to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the organization upon such terms and conditions as may be appropriate and to authorize the Select Board to accept property interests as may be appropriate, or take any other action in relation thereto.

Motion made by McKnight to approve all proposed warrant articles with no changes except for Affordable Housing Trust which was approved by the committee earlier in the meeting, seconded by Finnegan. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0:McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

Discussion followed regarding changing the wording in the Meeting House warrant to “preserve for the future” instead of “in the future”. Motion made by Fox to make the change, seconded by Dew. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

#### **4. Consideration of a Proposal to Amend the Town’s Bylaws as They Relate to the CPC to Allow for an Additional Member of the Committee**

### **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION – TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN BY-LAW AMENDMENT**

**Article XXXX.** To see if the Town will vote to amend Section 22-1(Establishment) of its By-Laws which established a Community Preservation Committee,consisting of eight voting members pursuant to the provisions of MCL, c.44B, Section 5, as heretofore amended, by allowing for a ninth member of the Community Preservation Committee,as provided for in the original enabling statute; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Considerable discussion ensued. The bylaw allows for 8 voting members, which is one less than the statute provides the town can have. This bylaw would increase the voting members of the committee by one additional community member. Mcknight clarified that the ninth member can be appointed by the Select Board. The first five representatives are by statute coming from various boards and commissions. When

the bylaw was passed in 2002 or so, the town added three additional members, one from the finance committee, the Town Manager and a community representative.

Patton discussed the Select Board's procedure for reviewing applicants. Greenfield expressed concern about the Select Board's potential influence on the committee, citing an "old boy network" and a desire for a more diverse representation. Patton suggested that the appointment to the committee is a great entry level into other town boards and committees. There are approximately four meetings. The amount of time the CPC takes up is less time spent being on other boards or committees. This is not some insidious way for the Select Board to get more people on the committee. There being no further discussion, motion made by McKnight that the proposed warrant article be put forward, seconded by Patton. The motion passed by a roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

**5. Review of the History of the CPC's Participation in the Community Preservation Act Since 2002 and Consideration of Different Approaches and Emphasis in the Future to Proposed Funding Requests**

Discussion followed. Phil McKnight asks the committee to consider an education program to inform the town about the available funding categories and encourage recommendations for projects.

Ben Greenfield expressed uncertainty about the future of open space funding, while Phil McKnight highlighted the stability of historic resources and community housing funding.

Phil McKnight mentioned that the town will have a lot of money soon and suggests that the Affordable Housing Trust and the Meeting House could increase their requests.

Jane Patton noted that the unspent \$50,000 for a recreation study was likely due to COVID and interim town managers, rather than a lack of interest or commitment.

Dew suggested that the town should prioritize funding for recreational opportunities that are welcoming to everyone, regardless of income level.

**6. Other Business:** There was no other business.

**7. Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 p.m. made by Greenfield, seconded by Finnegan. The motion passed by roll call vote. 6-0: McKnight-aye, Patton-aye, Finnegan-aye, Fox-aye, Greenfield-aye, Dew-aye

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Sciarappa, Assistant to the Town Manager