



## BOXBOROUGH COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719

Phone: (978) 264-1723 • Fax: (978) 264-3127

www.boxborough-ma.gov

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### MINUTES

March 5, 2015 / Grange Meeting Room / Town Hall

#### **Members present:**

Hugh Fortmiller, At-large      Mitzi Garcia-Weil, Rec. Com.      Rita Gibes Grossman, At-large  
Owen Neville, Planning Board      John Neyland, Ag Com      Dennis Reip, Cons Com  
Alan Rohwer, Historical Com      John Rosamond, Fin Com

**Members absent:** Ron Vogel, Housing Board

#### **Others:**

Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner  
Selina Shaw, Town Administrator  
Susan Bak, Board of Selectmen (BoS)  
Dave Lindberg, Town Building Inspector  
Ed Whitcomb, Steele Farm Advisory Committee (SFAC)  
Bruce Hager, SFAC

7:05 Meeting called to order by Owen Neville

**Minutes of Feb 27, 2015:** Mitzi moved, Hugh seconded to approve. Vote unanimous.

#### **A. 2015 ATM Requests**

##### **1. SFAC Proposal for Steele Farm barn:**

- a. Noted that funding for barn restoration was on the 2014 ATM warrant and passed over in anticipation of possible CPA funding as CPA passed at that ATM.
- b. Replace exterior wood surfaces; windows and window frames; sliding doors; with historically correct wood and mullioned windows. Existing barn paint has lead and removing the wood less expensive than removing paint from existing wood. Also it was noted that much of wood is rotten. Once completed, barn should be in excellent shape and, if maintained, durable into the future.
- c. Barn is on national and state register of historic buildings. Current barn built in 1940s to replace the first barn which was destroyed in 1938 hurricane (Noted that the replacement barn burned down being replaced by current structure.)
- d. SFAC reviewed the materials proposed for the restoration and consistent with CPA, and, after reviewing CPA historic flowchart, this is a historic restoration.
- e. Based on estimates from last year (\$65K - \$90K), SFAC is asking for \$80K, \$10K more than was asked for last year at ATM. Selina and Susan confirmed that estimates from last year were based on prevailing wage.
- f. Community currently uses for activities were discussed: Recreation Commission; the Blanchard elementary school, the Board of Selectmen, and, the barn is the "town shed" as its used for storage by: Land Stewardship Com uses for storage as does SFAC; Boxborough Historical Society; Conservation Commission; Boxborough Minutemen; Blanchard Elementary School; and the Grange

- g. SFAC anticipates that work would start as soon possible if approved at ATM. Bidding process would take about one month; duration of work estimated to take 2-3 months to complete barring weather delays. The goal would be completion by winter.
- h. Rita asked about consequences if delayed another year: additional deterioration; repairs will be more expensive; estimates to do the work may be higher
- i. Hugh asked if there are any oversight agencies for the historic aspects of the renovation. Just the Boxborough Historical Society as they hold the Historic Preservation Restriction that was completed in 2013.
- j. Selina checked that the changes to the CPA legislation allows for capital improvement
- k. Future anticipated expenses with Steele farm will be the house which will require a combined effort of private donor, the Town (CPA, other), and foundations.
- l. Owen asked if the \$80K would be adequate and discussion concluded that it may not
- m. Ed thanked the CPC for their consideration on accelerated time frame for 2015 ATM

## **2. Town Hall restoration (\$95K)**

Dave Lindberg presented two proposals for the Grange Meeting Room, and, for the front entry steps. These funds were passed over at ATM2014 in anticipation of CPA funding. Presented and discussed as follows:

**a. Phase 1 (see H.O. Grange Lobby - Reception Area) (\$35K):** Remove stage and create lobby-reception area with offices on either side of a new center entry on the east side of Grange Hall. Owen questioned if this would be eligible and questioned whether the stage is a significant, historic feature. Selina checked with Town Counsel and their opinion indicates that this would be eligible. (Copy of email requesting opinion attached). Selina indicated that electronic infrastructure would be needed to supply the room and the offices. Dave noted that the construction itself would not be that complicated.

**b. Phase 2 (See H.O. The Grange Meeting Room Preservation and Restoration) (\$50K):** to historic era of 1901 when built. Would intend to remove suspended ceiling; replace damaged floor; repurpose the columns in a similar fashion. Given all aspects of this restoration balanced with the desire to preserve historic features while creating needed office space while addressing access and code issues, members questioned the need to consider a proposal for all of Grange Hall including this entry renovation proposal. Dennis, Hugh and Rita questioned whether a needs and design study with public input would be useful as the changes would be significant for both phases, and, there could be benefits to approaching as one project from a study and design perspective.

**c. Town Hall Steps (See H.O. Town Hall Front Steps Preservation and Restoration) (\$10K):**

1. Steps are crumbling and pose a significant safety hazard as they serve as emergency exit for the Grange Hall. It is unknown what the step detail was in 1901.
2. Owen questioned the need to consider the immediate landscape abutting the steps vis a vis landscaping and the war memorial as this was not included in the proposal.

## **3. Town Records preservation (12K):**

Town Clerk proposal to preserve town records dating from 1835. Owen presented as Elizabeth Markiewicz, the Town Clerk, could not attend.

- a. Funds were requested at last year's ATM for this project.

- b. Owen cited Mass General Law which requires that Town have records bound and restored.
- c. Mitzi asked if all aspects of the project were qualified. Yes, need to restore and bind original documents.
- d. John R. clarified that original draft of article asked for ~\$32K. However, now will request to fund over a three year period.

#### **4. Housing Board consultant request. (\$7-9K):**

In that Ron Vogel, Housing Board, could not attend, Selina and Owen summarized Housing Board concerns regarding the expense of hiring a consultant to monitor the Town's affordable housing stock to assure affordable housing restrictions are not lost. This costs about \$7K per year which is currently funded by the *Affordable Housing Trust* (not under Town Meeting control). Owen was wondering if this was "supplanting" what should be a routine Town expense from the Housing Board, which has not budgeted for this expense from the Town Budget; discussion if this was allowable; CPC decided it was consistent based on allowable expenses, and, Town Counsel confirmed (attached).

#### **B. CPA Funding**

1. Using data from Town Accountant, it is anticipated that FY16 will yield approximately \$170K from the surcharge plus FY2015 state distribution for a total of \$200K.
2. As of the fall, \$156,029.32 (FY2015 surcharge) should be available once it's been certified by the DOR in September. This money will be available, however these monies will need to be appropriated accordingly at a TM (STM or ATM) before they can be spent. Susan noted that if we have a STM, it will be late fall. At last CPC meeting, a fall STM was anticipated, however, it is not clear if one will be required.

#### **C. CPC Process and Project Application Documents**

1. Discussed the balance of the committee's desire to have a sound, vetted process in order with the desire to address ATM's expectation for articles passed over at last ATM. Consensus that despite desire to use time to develop the process, proposals presented were discussed with the intent to submit recommendations to this year's ATM concurrent with work to develop sound planning and application process. Hugh referenced CPC requirements, specifically, the public hearing and CPA plan, and questioned timing: now vs. this summer. John N. suggested that we slow down and do our plan and develop our process but suggested that some of the urgent projects could be funded from general funds.

Mitzi pointed out the Rec Com would wait as they are working with Acton Rec Com on a regional proposal for next year's ATM for TJ OGrady Skate Park.

2. Consensus of the meeting to review proposals presented at this meeting:
  - a. Steele Farm Barn: vetted for last year's ATM;
  - b. Grange Hall: consensus for support of these projects for Grange Hall, however, do not support consideration at this ATM. CPC would like to see more public input on the use of Grange Hall and design implications which would require additional professional input. Dennis and Rita thought professional architectural or interior design services would be beneficial to save money in long term.

- c. Town Hall front steps: safety issues noted as being urgent.
- d. Town documents: John R. said this be considered a three year project
- e. Housing Board consultant: In that there is still lack of clarity on CPA eligibility, it was suggested that a formal proposal be considered by CPC in two weeks.

3. 2015 ATM warrant articles: Town Counsel suggests CPC recommend the required 10% for each of the three purposes for FY2015 surcharge collection. Regarding 2016FY; 10% for each purpose (~\$20K); \$5K for administrative overhead, and balance to the general CPA fund.

**VOTE:** Hugh moved and Dennis seconded, to set aside the required 10% for each category or “bucket” of Open Space/Recreation; Housing; Historic, according to Town Counsel recommendations and language for the article accordingly for FY2015. Unanimous.

**VOTE:** FY16 appropriation. Mitzi moved and Dennis seconded that of the approximate \$200K in CPA funds, that 10% be allocated to each purpose and 5% for administration. Clarified that CPC voting on the intent of what’s required for ATM2015 CPA budget and that Town Counsel will draft the article accordingly. Unanimous.

**VOTE:** Dennis moved and Mitzi seconded the following CPA projects for FY2016 be sent to ATM2015 with CPC recommendations, unanimous:

- Steele Farm Barn restoration at \$90
- Town Hall front steps for \$10K
- Phase I of Town document preservation for \$12K

#### **D. CPC Public hearing on April 30<sup>th</sup>**

Discussed the advantages of conforming to the requirement to do so and possible disadvantages of moving too quickly. Sense of the meeting to have a public hearing on April 30th. Selina and Adam will assist in posting and finding funding source. Hugh requested input from the Fin Com for that meeting on the capital plan.

**10:02 Adjourn:** Rita moved, John seconded to adjourn, vote unanimous.