

Community Preservation Committee
March 30, 2021
6:30 PM
MINUTES

Members Present: Christopher Feeley, David McNeill, Monique Doyle, Lisa Oxford, Michael Giardino, Joseph Halligan, Wayne Simarrian, Jeffrey Livingstone, Phyllis Messere Malcom

Town staff also in attendance: Town Administrator Jamie Hellen, Assistant to the Town Administrator Chrissy Whelton, Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner,

Other Attendees: Thomas Mercer, Deborah Pellegri, Cobi Frongilo

Chairman Christopher Feeley called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

1. CPC New Member Training -Stuart Saginor, Executive Director, Community Preservation Coalition:

- a. Mr. Saginor started the training session by explaining who the Community Preservation is. He noted the Coalition is a non profit organization made up of other non profit committees such as Mass Audubon, Chapa, Mass Affordable Housing Alliance and several others including representatives from eight communities and 6 at large citizens.
- b. Mr Saginor gave an overview of the services that the Coalition provides such as technical assistance, CPA Advocacy and legislation, ballot measures, training, webinars, workshops and much more. He ran through the Community Preservation Coalition Website and the resousource available.
- c. Mr. Saginor noted that there are currently 186 cities and Towns who have adopted CPA and 0 communities have revoked. Franklin was 1 of 9 who adopted the CPA during the last Presidential Election. He went over some of the most recent projects including 5,800 appropriations made for Historic Preservation, 31,861 acres of Open Space preserved, 2,700 of outdoor recreation projects were funded and 20,000 units of Affordable Housing units were created or supported.
- d. Mr Saginor gave the Committee a little road map of the first year responsibilities. He explained that the first responsibility is to create a Community Preservation Plan of the needs of the Town. He noted some Communities hired an outside consultant or regional Planning agencies to create the plan however many used templates and information for other community plans. He also noted the committee will need to reach out to the community for input on the plan also. Mr. Saginor made the committee aware that one of the ongoing responsibilities is repeating the public hearing every year to gain input from the community and do a light refresh on the plan.
- e. Mr. Saginor explained the Budget process for the Committee. He noted the Town Finance team would handle the budget however they should be updating the committee

with reports or copies of budgets throughout the year such as what is done with other town departments.

- f. Mr. Saginor talked about the coming year and how Franklin being a head of the game is really going to benefit the Committee because the Committee will be able to recommend and submit a budget to the Town Council for FY22. This will give the committee an administrative budget starting July 1st.
- g. Mr. Saginor gave an overview of the process for the annual budget and the Statewide CPA Trust Fund and how the CPA trust Fund disbursement does not come from the State but instead from DOR. He mentioned that funds come from fees charges on documents files at the Registry of Deed. The November 2020 base match was 28.6% of what communities raised at the local level.
- h. Mr. Simarrian asked if the State Match would go up due to the present interest rates on mortgages or in general. Mr. Saginor explained that this year's match looks like it may be higher than last year.
- i. Mr. Saginor went over the Annual Spending and Set aside requirements for all accounts as well as the Administrative Budget.
- j. Mr. Feeley asked if we put 5% in the Administrative Fund can we move that to a different account at a later date. Mr. Saginor said yes however it has to be voted on by the Town Council.
- k. Mr. Giardino asked how many of the 186 cities have an administrative fund for expenses. Mr. Saginor said all but maybe 1 have an Administrative Fund. If you don't spend it, it will go back into the regular CPA Account.
- l. Mr. McNeill asked if it was defined in the CPA law what the administrative account can be used for. Mr. Saginor noted that it is not defined in the law however it has been seen through DOR letter rulings over the years what it can be used for and not.
- m. Mr. Saginor went over the CPA Annual Budget, the required minimum spending or reserve and recommended that we add an FY22 Budget recommendation on the next meeting to send to the Town Council for approval. He gave an overview of the Administrative Account, what it is and how it can be used. Some of the common uses Mr. Saginor mentioned: hiring a part time administrative assistant, professional help such as appraisals, consultants, legal assistance, general studies, due diligence on project recommendations, newspaper ad for public hearings and other misc. expenses.
- n. Mr. Saginor went into Borrowing and what is permitted under CPA such as bonding against local surcharge, not state match and that a two-thirds vote is needed to pass bound projects at Town Council.
- o. Mr. Saginor gave an overview of how CPA projects happen. He explained the committee needs to create an application and process for Applicants and that he recommends the 2 step application process. The committee will then review applications, get input from various stakeholders and committee and either recommend to the Town Council or not.
- p. Mr. Halligan asked if the committee is allowed to spend any money without the Town Councils approval such as appraisals etc. Mr. Saginor said no they do not need approval however the Council must approve the initial 5% in the budget. Mr. Halligan followed up by asking if they go through the whole process of a project and recommend to the Town Council when they vote no, what they can do. Mr. Saginor followed up by

saying that unfortunately the way our Town is set up there is no way around that however the vast majority of projects usually get approved. He notes that most of the issues are quality of life issues that do not have a place in the regular budget and most often the Town Council will approve. Mr. Halligan asked what projects are the most popular. Mr. Saginor noted that in large the most popular is Open Space as once you build on it, it is gone. It is one of the main reasons CPA exists. Ms. Doyle asked if someone comes to them with a \$100,000 project and asks you for \$50,000, hire a grant writer and then apply for a grant for the other \$50,000, is that allowed. Mr. Saginor said yes you rarely see it but it is allowed.

- q. Mr. Livingstone asked a question about rights or the asset or work being done pertaining to providing public funds to private entities. Mr. Saginor stated that is something that is usually negotiated and contracts that are signed that detail the rights assigned.
- r. Mr. Halligan asked Mr. Saginor if he has seen CPA join the private sector in construction of affordable housing. Mr. Saginor said absolutely and it's almost always a partnership with the Town and the Developer. Mr. Halligan followed up that being on the planning board they are always talking to developers and we trying to get an affordable component in town and a lot of developers complain about the cost of materials , labor, land value so for instance a 10 unit downtown building, could they apply the to the CPA to sponsor 3 to 4 affordable units in their project. Mr. Saginor said absolutely and its a tremendous way to get affordable housing done.
- s. Mr. Saginor moved on to the Town Councils Role is limited. That they can approve, reject and reduce recommendations as well as reserve amounts recommended by CPC to applicable reserve accounts rather than approving projects.
- t. Mr. Saginor gave some basic tenants of CPA
- u. Mr. Livingstone asked how they get the details of projects from various towns. Mr. Saginor explained most of the details can be found on the Coalition website. He also mentioned that he would add all members to their newsletter that capture this information.
- v. Mr. Livingstone asked if there would be any type of Conference to network as new members. Mr Saginor mentioned that they do offer those but have not recently due to the pandemic but hope to start those up again soon.
- w. Mr. Giardino asked if we are supposed to look for projects in each area every year. Mr. Saginor said they are not required and can take on projects as they see fit. The only thing that is required is to reserve those funds. Mr. Hellen briefly noted that if you chose not to do a project you can build the account for future projects that may cost more than what is funded in one year.
- x. Mr. Halligan asked if the board discovered there was a 10 acre parcel for sale and they felt in the future we could use that property for something like a park or garden but we don't know the exact use at the time, Are they required to choose the exact use at that time. Mr. Saginor said you can buy land for all CPA purposes and a committee would be designated to decide what they want it for and what type of restrictions to place on it.
- y. Stuart closed out his presentation offering his support and assistance and that he wants to see us get up and running and be successful.

- z. Mr. Feeley asked the members if they would like to go ahead and have the FY22 Budget Approval on the next CPA meeting. All members were in favor.
- aa. Ms. Doyle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. McNeill. Roll call vote was unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:39 PM