

**Town of Sharon
Community Preservation Committee
Virtual Meeting held via Zoom**

**CPC Meeting Minutes
2/9/23**

EDC Members

Corey Snow, Chair	Rob Maidman
Marc Bluestein	Dave Martin
Eli Hauser absent	Susan Saunders
Keevin Geller	

Other Attendees

Patricia Achorn - CPC liaison to the Finance Committee joined at 9:21PM	Ira Miller – Finance Committee
	Eric Hooper – DPW Superintendent
Laura Russell - Lake Management Committee	Robert Terpstra
Jim Grasfield – Historical Commission	Shirley Schofield – Historical Commission

Administration

- Chair Snow called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM and shared the evenings agenda.

Minutes

- Mr. Martin moved to accept the minutes of 2/1/23. Mr. Maidman seconded the motion. The Committee voted 5-0-1 (Bluestein) in favor of approval.

2023 Projects

Project # 1- Preservation of Lake Massapoag - \$80,000

- Mr. Bluestein moved to approve \$80,000 for the Lake Mitigation Project taking funds from the undesignated funds. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The motion was withdrawn.
- For the second vote, Chair Snow moved to appropriate \$80,000 for purposes of open space but funds drawn from undesignated because no funds are available in open space. Mr. Bluestein seconded the motion. By roll call vote the CPC vote was unanimous 6-0-0 for all those present.

Project # 2 - DPW Renovation Historic Sharon Water Department Building - \$853,931

- Dave Martin said that Mr. O'Cain sent the historic preservation cost estimate for the Sharon Water Department building project from his architects. It is as follows:
024100 Demolition
 - Remove and salvage time clock for reinstallation \$100
 - Protect existing-to-remain windows \$600

• Remove and demo transom filler above existing front door	\$175
081400 Wood Doors	
• Refinish wood door and frame, double (doors into garage)	\$1,200
• Refinish wood door and frame, single (front door)	\$700
087100 Door Hardware	
• Repair existing door threshold and frame	\$500
088000 Glazing	
• Replacement of damaged/broken glass @ arched window	\$10,900
099100 Painting	
• Brick walls to be sand blasted to remove paint	\$13,440
• Paint to be carefully removed from arched windows then refinish	\$1,500
• Paint/refinish existing window frames	<u>\$1,800</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$30,915</u>

- It was discussed not to sand blast the bricks, just paint over as sandblasting could damage the old bricks. This would create a cost savings of \$13,440 as shown above.
- Eric Hooper thanked the CPC for past Water Department projects. He said he tried to find other external sources of funding but could not. He said the project request is within the CPC purview. Funds are tight due to the purchase of Rattle Snake Hill. The DPW he said will not bring projects in the future.
- Chair Snow said if the project is not funded by CPC then it is funded by the rate payers. He asked Mr. Hooper to explain funding. Mr. Hooper said they have not considered a bond as they have debt from the water tank. Water rates are high enough. We have gone away from pay as you go model. Water rates cover debt service and operating budget.
- Mr. Bluestein thinks the project falls with the auspices of Community Preservation. There is a historic function of the water department. He thinks the SSBC should oversee it. He thinks this will decrease the cost to tax payers.
- Chair Snow clarified that this request is an allowable use of funds.
- Mr. Maidman said when projects are proposed to CPC we look at the merit – does it qualify, is it justified and cost effective. In addition to approving projects we are the steward for the undesignated funds to be used for unforeseen situations. He said that there is an historical piece to the building but it is minuscule compared to the total project. He suggested funding some from historic, some from undesignated and some from the Water Departments ability to bond. He is hoping for a compromise.
- Ira Miller of the Finance Committee said the funding comes from tax payers either way. If it is available why not spend it. Do not tax the payers twice.
- Eric Hooper said he appreciates everyone's thoughts. Any monies from CPC reduces his budgetary needs.
- Jim Grasfield said he is in support of the project. If state funds are available, he will support and back up the Water Department.
- Mr. Bluestein motioned to fund \$853,931 for the Water Department Building. \$543,783 from historic reserves and the remaining \$310,148 from undesignated reserves. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion.
- Mr. Maidman amended the motion to include the stipulation that the SSBC be given and accept responsibility with total oversight as other municipal projects.
- Chair Snow said do we have the ability to say SSBC needs to oversee.
- Ira Miller of Finance Committee said SSBC operates under certain bylaws. At Town Meeting it is proposing increasing SSBC project oversight from \$500,000 to one million dollars. He is unsure where we would be at Town Meeting. There are specific operating rules. They may not be able to accept or not accept under Sharon Bylaws.

- A vote was taken on the amendment and the vote was 5-1-0 in favor of approval of the amendment.
- The above motion was retracted and Chair Snow moved that this project be approved with \$543,783 being taken from the historic reserves and \$310,148 from the undesignated funds contingent that the project is under the purview of the SSBC. Mr. Bluestein seconded the motion. By roll call vote the vote was 3(Marc, Keevin, Susan)-3(Dave, Rob, Corey)-0. The vote was tied and the motion did not pass.
- Ms. Saunders asked if a compromise motion can be made
- Mr. Maidman proposed a new motion to state that \$100,000 be taken from historical reserves, \$326,965 from the undesignated funds which totals \$426,965. The remaining \$426,965 should come from the Water Departments capabilities but if accepted the Historical Commission will give their approval so that Mr., Hooper can research funding. Half and half is what is being proposed. Ms. Saunders said if the Water Department is unable to obtain state or federal funding then we result in a next round of deliberations.
- Mr. Martin said we do support the project. Any State commission can contact the Historic Commission.
- Mr. Maidman moved to approve the Water Department Building Rehabilitation request to be funded as follows: \$100,000 from the historic reserves and \$326,500 from the undesignated reserves. \$426,500 to come from the Water Department enterprise bonding capabilities and pending Town Meeting vote supervision of the project should be done by the SSBC. Commitment to revisit funding concept next year for potential revision. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion. By roll call vote 4(Keevin, Susan, David, Rob)-2(Corey, Marc)-0 the motion carries.
- Mr. Hooper said some funding is better than none.
- Chair Maidman said he is hoping matching funding can help with the applicants' process.
- Chair Snow moved to suspend the bylaw required to take a vote at two meetings for the Water Department Building project. Mr. Maidman seconded the motion and the Committee voted 4-2-0 in favor of suspending the bylaw requiring to take a vote at two meetings.

Project # 3 - DPW cemetery restoration for the Moose Hill Cemetery - \$50,000

At the 1/12/23 meeting:

- Mr. Geller moved to approve \$50,000 for the DPW Cemetery Restoration of Moose Hill Cemetery. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The funding should be used from the reserve funds. By roll call vote all present members voted in favor by a vote of 5-0-0. A second vote on this project needs to be taken at the next meeting.
- Mr. Geller moved to enact the second vote for the Moose Hill Cemetery project in the amount of \$50,000. Mr. Bluestein seconded the motion. The Committee unanimously voted 6-0-0 in favor of approval of this project. All funds are to be taken from the historical funds category.

Project # 4 - Unitarian Church Playground Project - \$8,156

- Chair Snow said he does not believe that action can be taken on this project as there are too many open questions. He said it would be good to engage with Attorney Gelerman to see if this is actionable for next year.
- Mr. Maidman said he thinks this project can be fundraised. He agreed this needs Attorney Gelerman to investigate to determine if a public asset in use easements is possible and can public funding be provided.

- Chair Snow said it remains unclear whether permit deed restriction is needed. The opponent has not lost interest in this project.
- Chair Snow recommended that we take no action. All CPC members present were in agreement that no action should be taken.

Project #5 - Hixson Farms siding project - \$53,642

- Paul Dumochel sent along an updated cost: Hard Cost Total: \$42,914, Soft Cost Total: \$10,728 with a Total Development Cost: \$53,642
- Mr. Maidman moved to approve the request from the Sharon Housing Authority for \$53,642 to repair/replace the exterior siding for the Ralph Generoso Building. A roll call vote was taken and the vote was 6-0-0 in favor of approval to take the funds from housing reserves.
- Chair Snow moved to suspend the bylaw requirements to vote on projects at two separate meetings for the Sharon Housing Project. All voted yes unanimously by roll call vote.

Annual Operating Budget

For the second vote, Chair Snow moved to appropriate \$20,000 from the undesignated funds for CPC fiscal year 2024 operating budget. Mr. Geller seconded the motion. The Committee voted 6-0-0 in favor by roll call vote.

Debt Service

For the second vote, Chair Snow moved to recommend appropriation of \$361,950 for debt service. Mr. Geller seconded the motion. The CPC voted 6-0-0 by roll call vote in favor of approval.

Reserves

The current reserves are:

Historic - \$593,783.37

Housing - \$440,993.59

Undesignated - \$1,487,643.35

Open Space - 0

\$281,921.07 is funding that is open from previous projects.

Meeting Schedule

No meeting scheduled until fall, 2023

Send letters to each department and provide suggested or final date for submission.

Start date for submission should be November. Need to make people aware.

Future projects – 2/8/23 Email from Jim Grasfield to the CPC

Dear Chairman Snow and Members of the CPC, As requested at your last meeting on February 1, the Historical Commission has put together a preliminary list of projects that are likely to request funding in the historic category from the CPC in the next one to three years. This list is of known projects and is not meant to be all inclusive. The costs of these projects have not been finalized, so conservative estimates of their costs are shown where possible.

1. Restoration and preservation of the remaining 8 historic cemeteries: The DPW has already requested \$50,000 for the restoration of the Moose Hill Burial Ground for this year which is in addition to the \$3,900 cost for the preservation consultants who assessed the cemetery and its gravestones and researched its history. Once this project is successfully completed this year, the Forestry & Grounds Division of the DPW will likely request additional funding for similar conservation efforts at the remaining 8 historic cemeteries in Sharon. Some of these cemeteries (Chestnut Tree and West) are considerably larger than Moose Hill, and some are considerably smaller (Tisdale, Lothrop, Drake). On average it is estimated that the consulting work and preservation work at these cemeteries will average \$50,000 per cemetery bringing the total for this important project to at least \$400,000.

2. Inventory of historic homes, buildings, and structures in Sharon: The SHC has undertaken five historic inventories (1968, two in the mid 1970's, 2008, and 2011) to research and document the significant number of historic edifices that were constructed over the last 300 years in Sharon that are still standing.

Each of these inventories has documented only a fraction of the total number of historic structures in the Town. The SHC has been preparing to undertake a more comprehensive survey that will document many of the houses, buildings, and structures that have not yet been inventoried and update the original surveys of Sharon's oldest homes which were not documented as professionally and with as much research as the latter surveys. This work is done by an outside consulting firm with extensive architectural and historical knowledge with guidance provided by the SHC. It is anticipated that an inventory of this nature will cost between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

3. Historic fencing at the small graveyards: The CPC approved the SHC's Cemetery Preservation Project in 2022 that included an historic fence for the vulnerable Oliver Lothrop Burial Yard on Walpole Street. The SHC anticipates requesting funding for protective fencing for the other small graveyards to help define their boundaries, protect the gravestones from vandalism, and demarcate the cemeteries (along with signage) for visitors to these small cemeteries. It is estimated that this project would need between \$75,000 and \$100,000 to achieve.

4. Digitization of important historic documents: Several years ago, the Town Clerk's Office and the Library were awarded \$50,000 from the CPC to digitize some of the vital records in the possession of both Town entities. This successful project was just the tip of the iceberg. There are numerous historic documents, maps, photographs, drawings, blueprints, plot plans, etc. in the possession of many entities within the Town (the Historic Society, the Historic Commission, and various other Town boards and committees) that have yet to be preserved and conserved through digitization. Making digital copies of these rare and vulnerable items not only preserves the originals in perpetuity but also makes them available to the public. The size and scope of this project has yet to be fully estimated, but it is conservatively estimated that this project could easily cost five to ten times the cost of the vital records digitization project.

5. History in the Streets Project: The SHC in conjunction with the Historical Society plan to propose a project that will post permanent signage throughout the Town which provides the public with historical information and historic photographs of important buildings and sites in Sharon – both currently existing and those that are long gone. The purpose of this project is to educate the public on the history of important buildings and sites within the Town which still are standing as well as show the locations of important historic buildings and sites in the Town which have been demolished. These signs will include brief histories and historic photos which will memorialize these important places for generations of Sharon residents to come. This type of project has been successfully implemented in a number of historic towns in New England and serves as a vital reminder of the historical evolutions of these towns. The cost of this project has yet to be estimated and will be dependent on the number of signs erected. A project of this magnitude could easily exceed \$100,000.

6. 11 North Main Street (current library) restoration: Regardless of the fate of the new library project, the original library building is in need of important restoration, renovation, and structural work which was not part of the Library Trustees' proposal for the construction of the new library building. The original 1914 Carnegie Library building at the center of 11 North Main Street is an architectural jewel for the Town, and it is protected in Historic District One. There is no current estimate for the work that needs to be done to the building, but it is likely that the Library Trustees and the Town will seek CPC funds in the historic category to rehabilitate the building in whole or in part.

As you can see from these estimates, this clearly shows that there are several worthy projects that will need CPC funding that in total exceed the funds that are currently in the historic category. It is important to note that none of these proposed historic projects (except the library) have any other funding source beyond the CPC to accomplish their important preservation objectives.

There is one other issue to consider when evaluating the overall use of CPC funds in the historic category. At the CPC Meeting it was suggested that Sharon has very few historic assets on which to spend CPC funds in the historic category. The SHC thought it might be informative to list some of the historic assets (buildings and structures) owned by the Town which would be eligible for CPC funding in the historic category from the CPC. This list is meant to be illustrative not all inclusive:

1. The nine historic cemeteries
2. The current library building at 11 North Main Street
3. The Water Department Building
4. The Hammershop Pond Dam
5. The Mann's Pond Dam
6. The Wilbur School
7. The Community Center building (f/k/a Sunset Lodge)
8. The South Pleasant Street School (public housing)
9. 1 School Street (f/k/a The Center School)
10. The historic buildings at Camp Everwood (both campuses)
11. The historic Maskwonicut Street Bridge The SHC hopes that this summary is helpful to the CPC in apportioning spending from the CPC's historic category.

The SHC is grateful for the CPC's consideration of all of these worthy preservation projects in the historic category, and we look forward to working with the CPC to help evaluate these and other projects when they are formally presented to the CPC.
Best regards, Jim Grasfield Chairman Sharon Historical Commission

Adjournment

Mr. Martin moved to adjourn and Mr. Geller seconded the motion. The Committee voted by roll call unanimously to adjourn at 9:50 PM.