

Town of Sharon
Community Preservation Committee
Minutes of 9/23/19
Community Center

Committee Attendees Present

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Corey Snow, Chair absent | Susan Jo Rich |
| Eli Hauser | Marc Bluestein |
| Rob Maidman | Keevin Geller |
| Susan Saunders absent | |

Others

Fred Turkington, Peg Arguimbau

Meeting Initiation

Rob Maidman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Rattlesnake Hill

Fred Turkington, Town Administrator came before the CPC to let the Committee know that the Town is in active negotiations to purchase Rattle Snake Hill from the existing owners. He said he is working with the State and a nonprofit group to obtain funds to preserve this open space with a few ANR's. The potential purchase would involve the appropriation of up to \$2.5M in undesignated CPA funds and borrowing up to \$5M for 20 years with Town CPA tax revenue other than the 10% set aside for historic preservation and affordable housing to pay the debt service. He said that final details of the purchase remain in negotiation, and is hopeful that a purchase and sales agreement will be executed by the end of the week so that the acquisition can be considered at the November 4th Special Town Meeting. He stated that the Finance Committee makes their recommendation on October 8th.

This is the number one open space acquisition for the Town. This was discussed 20 years ago but a purchase was never able to be executed. There would be no Town tax impact. Town Meeting would need to appropriate the CPC funds.

Mr. Bluestein commented that this would have an impact on future monies for open space and recreation for the next 20 years. Mr. Turkington reviewed the fund balances. He said we would see growth for the state reimbursement and get more from capital projects. If the High School project passes we would then get more State funding.

Mr. Maidman asked what the State contribution is estimated to be. Mr. Turkington said it is the portion of what we are putting forth. He said the terms are that the purchase and sales is closed by the end of the year. The negotiations include leaving small ANR lots on Mountain Street. The State would hold a Conservation Restriction on the whole property that the Town owns. The nonprofit group who would be helping with funding wants the Conservation Restriction in place to preserve the land.

Mr. Maidman said if the project is consummated would it leave the Town free of any previous litigation as pertains to this property. Mr. Turkington said yes it would.

Mr. Maidman asked if there is any possibility for the Town as a municipal entity to reserve a portion for totally affordable housing. Mr. Turkington said this is a challenging negotiation and would not allow for affordable housing because of the current partners. Mr. Bluestein said in 2003/2004 the thought was to cut off two parcels for a recreation facility and fire substation. Mr. Turkington said neither party will budge on this. It will not be happening. He said the lots on Mountain Street will be ANR lots and conforming. The maximum exposure is 2.5 million dollars for the CPC predicated on the Town borrowing 5 million dollars to be paid with CPC revenues going forward for 20 years.

Mr. Geller commented that he thinks this is a good deal. A discussion ensued amongst the Committee members.

Ms. Arguimbau commented that many people from DCR toured the site. The feeling is positive she said. The land needs to be appraised. The entire parcel is smack in a core habitat for endangered species. Representatives from the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife were also on site. She said the Conservation Commission is not a part of the negotiations; its Fred Turkington and the Select Board only.

Mr. Hauser asked what the number of acres is and Mr. Turkington said it is 325 – 338 acres.

The warrant cutoff date is October 9th.

Mr. Hauser questioned what the actual priorities are for the Town.

Mr. Maidman commented that this was an informational gathering session. The Committee will meet again next week to vote.

Minutes

Mr. Maidman moved and Mr. Bluestein seconded the motion to approve the minutes of 4/1/19. The Committee voted 5-0-0 in favor of approval.

Adjournment

Mr. Geller moved to close the meeting and Mr. Bluestein seconded the motion. The Committee voted 5-0-0 in favor of adjourning at 7:55 PM.