

Community Preservation Committee
At the Shutesbury Town Hall upper level Conference Room
April 11, 2013

Community Preservation Committee (CPC) members present: Chairman and Community at Large Member Donald Fletcher, Select Board/Recreation and Parks Committee Representative Al Springer, Conservation Commission Representative Linda Avis Scott, Historical Commission Representative Leslie Bracebridge, and Finance Committee Representative Allen Hanson. Absent: Housing Authority Representative Rita Farrell, Open Space Committee Representative Susan Essig. Vacant Positions: Planning Board and Recreation Committee Representatives.

Others present: Town Accountant Gail Weiss through the budget and town meeting funding articles reviews.

- I. Chairman Fletcher opened the meeting at 6:02 PM and welcomed a motion and second to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2013. **The CPC unanimously voted to approve the minutes of March 21, 2013 as written.**

II. Subjects Discussed:

- A. **Review of Shutesbury's Community Preservation Funding Accounts:** Town Accountant Gail Weiss provided Community Preservation Committee members with and reviewed a trial balance sheet summarizing Shutesbury's Community Preservation Funds and balances available for appropriation at town meeting.
- B. **Review and vote to approve CPC warrant articles for the May 4, 2013 Annual Town Meeting.** Note - The votes will allow final needed edits based on input from the Town Administrator, moderator and counsel. Town Accountant Gail Weiss:
 1. Has been advised to anticipate a state match of approximately 22%. We will learn the full amount in October of 2013.
 2. Based on that advise, Gail recommended increasing the draft town meeting warrant Article 1 for FY 14 estimated annual revenue distributions from \$4500 to \$5,000 for each of the three minimum of 10% categories: Open Space, Historic and Community Housing and increasing the FY 14 Community Preservation Fund budgeted reserve to \$29,750.

The Community Preservation Committee unanimously voted to approve the wording for the May 4 annual town meeting Article 1 as written in the draft presented to tonight's meeting, with \$500 increases dollar amounts as above, and to allow Chairman Fletcher authority to make any final needed edits based on input from the Town Administrator, Moderator and Counsel.

3. Town Accountant Weiss calculated that the CPC could increase the upper limit on the amount in Town Meeting Draft Warrant Article 2 for proper administration and operation expenses from \$2,250 to \$2,350. Committee members voiced keeping all funds available for any possible proper administration and operation expenses, understanding that funds not used return to the undesignated fund balance at the end of the fiscal year.

The Community Preservation Committee unanimously voted to approve the wording for the May 4 Annual Town Meeting Article 2 as written in the draft presented to tonight's meeting, increasing the amount to \$2,350, and to allow Chairman Fletcher authority to make any final needed edits based on input from the Town Administrator, Moderator and Counsel.

4. Chairman Fletcher reviewed his understanding of proposed Annual Town Meeting draft Article 3 – that the 10% of funds designated for historic resources would be depleted first and

the balance of the estimated \$21,650 cost to repair and restore the hearse house would come from the Community Preservation Act undesignated “catch-all” account fund balance.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to recommend Article 3 to the May 4, 2013 Annual Town Meeting, as written in the draft warrant article, to be funded first from the CPA funds designated for historic resources. Once those funds are depleted, the balance will come from the CPA fund balance. The vote included allowing Chairman Fletcher authority to make any minor final needed edits based on input from the Town Administrator, Moderator and Counsel in lieu of calling a CPC meeting.

5. Chairman Fletcher reviewed his understanding with Town Administrator Torres and Moderator Kim regarding what Town Meeting can and cannot do with the articles including discussion on what other towns have found: Town meeting can approve or deny the article recommended by the Community Preservation Committee. A traditional rule of thumb with town meeting articles generally has always been that town meeting can vote a lower funding amount, but not a substantially higher amount. Recent legal questions concern whether a downward funding amount than that of the CPC’s recommendation would be valid since it would not be the recommendation of the CPC. There is no case law to give direction on this, so Moderator Kim has stated that she will not allow a downward amendment on this article.

III. Other Business: Historical Commission representative Leslie Bracebridge thanked Chairman Fletcher for preparing an article for the CPC for the *Our Town* town-wide newsletter. She reported that the Historical Commission had also prepared an informational article for *Our Town*. Since there would be no reliably good weather or way to promote an “open house” of the small hearse house before town meeting, on behalf of the Commission and for the general principle of historic preservation, Leslie is preparing a binder of photographs of the hearse house, including interior carpentry, as the building is now, and including an overview of the history of the hearse house and cemetery, which will be available for Town Meeting and which will later be stored with the Historical Commission’s compilation of historic documents for future reference, in the event that the project is approved and the building is changed. Leslie also shared photos of the Wales and the Brimfield, Massachusetts’ hearse houses that she had visited and photographed on Sunday.

IV. A next short meeting was scheduled for June 13 at 6 PM to debrief following town meeting.

V. The Community Preservation Committee adjourned at 6:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Bracebridge
Community Preservation Committee Member