

**Community Preservation Committee Report**  
**2009-2010**

The members of the Shutesbury's Community Preservation Committee are Susan Essig, Secretary; Rita Farrell; Al Springer; Bill Wells; Linda Rotondi; Don Wakoluk; Leslie Bracebridge; and Donald Fletcher, Chair.

At the May 2009 Town Meeting, George Arvanitis presented the recommendation of the Community Preservation Act Study Committee. That committee did excellent work and Town meeting overwhelmingly approved their recommendation. So, in addition to George, I want to recognize the work of the other members -Paul Lyons - Chair, Susie Mosher, Rita Farrell, Joanne Sunshower, Amanda Alix, and Mark Pocsik.

The Study Committee recommended that Shutesbury approve a Community Preservation bylaw and become a Community Preservation community pursuant to Massachusetts Community Preservation Act statute. That statute was designed to provide Cities and Towns a new funding source for sustainable growth – specifically for preserving and improving a community's character by:

acquiring and preserving open space and land for recreation,  
acquiring and preserving historic buildings and landscapes, and  
creating and supporting affordable housing.

The two sources of funds are:

- 1- A 1.5% surcharge on real estate taxes, with exceptions for the 1<sup>st</sup> \$100,000 of valuation and for low income residents, and
- 2 a state match that was 100% for a few years but has declined to 32%

Last year Shutesbury Town Meeting voted to approve the Study Committee's recommendation and join the Community Preservation program and, the final step in the process occurred when a town wide ballot vote approved a Community Preservation bylaw in November.

Since approval of Shutesbury's Community Preservation Bylaw in November, the CPC was formed with 8 volunteers representing the Conservation Committee, Historical Commission, Planning Board, Select Board, Community Housing, Open Space, and Finance. As I was the only Committee member not representing another committee, I got to be the Chair person.

Since being created we have accomplished the following:

- ▶ voted officers of the Committee
- ▶ arranged for and were provided an orientation by the staff of the Community Preservation Coalition
- ▶ studied the plans and processes used in several towns that have had CPC's for a few years.
- ▶ prepared an initial draft for Shutesbury's application process,
- ▶ the warrant presented to Town Meeting this morning, and
- ▶ outlined of our activities for next fiscal year.

The warrant article presented at Town Meeting includes three routine items to allow the CPC to do our work and to insure the CPC funds are used as intended.

The first part of the warrant reserves for “later appropriation” 10% of the fund, \$3,500, in each of three categories, as we are required;

It appropriates 5% of funds, \$1,750., to allow us to pay for required administrative expenses, such as paying for legal notices; and

finally, there is a request “to retain unobligated funds as ‘budgetary reserve’. That means that any funds not spent would be reserved for future Community Preservation expenses.

Our plans for next year include:

- ▶ developing an application process and form;
- ▶ completing a study of the needs, possibilities and resources of the town;
- ▶ gathering input by conferring with other town committees, and from existing Shutesbury plans, such as the Draft Open Space and Master Plan;
- ▶ supporting Community Preservation as an agenda item at an ‘all town boards meeting’ next fall;
- ▶ convening a public hearing;
- ▶ finalizing a town plan with the input and information gathered including guidelines for projects requesting funding in each category;
- ▶ receiving and reviewing proposed projects – next winter; and
- ▶ finally, returning to 2011 town meeting with our recommendations.

Funding any projects with CPC funds does require approval by Town Meeting.

Respectfully submitted by  
Donald Fletcher, Chair  
Community Preservation Committee  
May 1, 2010