

Town of Easton
Community Preservation Act Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: December 10, 2009
Location: Mary Connolly Meeting Room

Members in Attendance: Ed Hands, John Grant, Dennis Sheedy, Jim Lee, Greg Strange

Members not in Attendance: Hunt, Less, Cidado, Williams

Others in Attendance: Alice Savage

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Lee at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Hands, 2nd Grant, minutes of 11/12/09 approved unanimously.

Approval of Executive Session Minutes:

Motion Hands, 2nd Grant, to release executive session minutes of 8/25/08, 3/12/09, 4/23/09 & 7/23/09, unanimous.

Report on 245R Bay Road (Sullivan property) – Grant gave overview of walk through. 2 committee members present at the meeting who saw property. Grant stated land has been subdivided on paper. Property is mostly wetland, however a portion is not. Property abuts and is part of a right of way, with conservation land abutting area. Area houses critical habitat for rare species of snake (black rat snake.) Savage asked if a portion of the property were to be developed what impact it would have on this snake habitat. Grant stated it would impact the development of the habitat. Strange doesn't see how area could be developed without involving the area of abutters, and asked how the committee goes about acquiring land. Grant stated committee buys land in pieces, especially if habitat is worth protecting. Lee asked what the next step is in the process. Grant stated the next step would be if committee wants to get an appraisal and then make an offer. Grant suggested committee discuss further at January meeting and get appraisal.

Report on Center Street property (Jones property) – Grant updated the committee on walk through. Members went 1/3 way into property. Property is 32 acres. French drains installed years ago were unsuccessful. Upland is filled over wetland, which impacts development. It's a challenge site, which drains from all directions into the property, and has nearly no development potential. No habitat issues on land that anyone is aware of. Savage stated this is a very challenging site as far as development and has limited conservation value, as it's not connected to other conservation land and not on acquisition list for open space. Grant stated if property not on list it is not eligible for state reimbursement, but that it could be added on at a later date. Hands stated his concern

with regards to purchasing every property that comes our way that could potentially do harm in the long run when a priority property becomes available. Hands suggested discussing this property further at the January meeting.

Status on Appraisals:

Planning Dept commented on appraisals requested by CPA Committee. Alice Savage asked the committee to reconsider its request for appraisals stating the committee should build trust with owners prior to obtaining an appraisal and inform owners of such as not to risk trust. Savage stated due to market conditions an appraisal done now may be lower than in the future. Grant stated South Easton property is potentially impacted. Property is critical land for sports/athletic fields, has wetlands, archeological site, and is the most expensive property. Grant stated Clover Valley appraisal is the most important to be finished as it was already started and just needs completing. Savage suggested using a conservative estimate rather than getting an appraisal that will potentially change in a year or 2. Hands asked if committee gets an appraisal now, will it need to re-done in 5 years on particular properties. Hands suggested putting Howard and Gill aside, and focus on Clover Valley property. Hands asked what spending limits are. Savage stated town accountant is updating figures on budget.

- Hands moved to table appraisal discussion until January meeting, 2nd Strange, unanimous.

Sale of town owned land – Library & Oakes Ames Hall (Lincoln Street property):

Savage stated Town purchased land 10 years ago for library expansion, which never took off. Town wants to recoup monies by selling land as an estate lot. Grant asked why the Town is selling land if the library needs parking area, as this land could be used for that purpose. Strange stated he didn't think ConCom would not permit parking on this parcel of land. Savage stated land unsuitable for expansion.

No invoices.

Other Business:

Received CPA Proposal Application for Povoas Park (Center & Bridge Street Property).

Community Preservation Issues:

Housing: Sheedy – state cut operating budget by 4.8%. Housing committee close to having a state appointed board member.

Historic: Hands – met Tuesday, 12/8, voted a letter of support for continued negotiations on Shovel Shop. Committee to send a letter approving the process.

Planning & Zoning: Strange – working on bylaws this coming year. Hands suggested a joint meeting with Historical Committee and Planning Board.

Savage requesting CPA Committee meet downstairs in larger meeting room due to public attendance at next meeting, and reschedule meeting due her vacation schedule.

Committee agrees to book larger meeting room. Grant suggested keeping meeting on Thursday. Lee will be late due to class schedule beginning in January, T/Th until 7:15.

- Motion Hands, 2nd Grant, next meeting on 1/28/10, unanimous.

Adjournment: Motion Hands,, 2nd Grant, meeting adjourned at pm. 8:15 pm.

Karen Gilbride-Raynard, Secretary Date

Avery Lee Williams, Clerk Date