

Town of Easton  
Community Preservation Act Committee  
Meeting Minutes

Date: November 12, 2009  
Location: Mary Connolly Meeting Room

**Members in Attendance:** Patricia Hunt, Ed Hands, John Grant, Len Cidado, Lee Williams, Colleen Less, Dennis Sheedy, Jim Lee, Greg Strange

**Members not in Attendance:**

**Others in Attendance:** David Colton, Stephanie Danielson, Steve Merlin (AHT), Amy Rodrigues (AHT), Beth Rust (ECR Enterprises), Jennifer Goldson (JM Goldson), Ellen Barlow (AHT), Jennifer Sullivan

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

**Meeting with Affordable Housing Trust – Discussion of Draft Affordable Housing Plan:**

Hunt welcomed members of the Affordable Housing Committee. Colton, Chair of AHT, briefly updated the CPA Committee on AHT draft plan including goals and initiatives to be undertaken over a 5 year period. Consultants (Beth Rust & Jennifer Goldson) have been brought in to put together an action plan. AHT would like CPA feedback on its draft plan. Jennifer Goldson spoke of initiatives including how AHT's budget affects CPA's budget and detailed AHT's analysis of needs, using a housing plan, updated numbers based on market, and listed directions in which to proceed. A variety of town committee members attended AHT's workshop that was held previously and were asked for their feedback. Priorities have been listed and ways to proceed were discussed.

**Goals for AHT** are: 1. convert existing homes to affordable housing and match Easton residents to housing programs; 2. create repository and info online in Town offices for residents; 3. offer relief for homeowners; 4. facilitate redevelopment and new construction for affordable housing units with units to be included in the states affordable housing list.

**5 year plan prioritized:** 1. establish local homebuyer program, deed restricted, to be listed on states affordable housing inventory; 2. offer housing assistance for residents; 3. create Easton Housing Office, which will implement housing goals, initiatives, and to include CPA and AHT.

**Intermediate initiative:** adopt an inclusionary zoning bylaw, wherein residential developers are required to include affordable units within developments.

**Long-term initiative:** 1. small grant program for existing homeowners for home repairs, which would be income qualified for safety repairs; 2. develop rental home ownership for special need housing.

**Budget:** Beth Rust detailed AHT's budget with income coming from CPA funds spread over 5 years, which would be changed as state funds become available; zoning income in fiscal year 2014; interest income, as program development expenses include administrative expenses; fiscal year 2014 small grant program; monies set aside for feasibility studies; salaries for staff support with AHT paying ½ staff salary and CPA paying ½ staff salary.

**Discussion:** Danielson asked about the staff position with AHT. Initially, position would be a proposed 20 hours weekly, and up to 25 hours weekly down the road. Cidado asked about Sudbury zoning bylaws, which has not been implemented and asked if this would be difficult to pass in town as zoning bylaw is more common in cities. Jennifer Goldson stated she's not sure of proportions in cities and towns. Beth Rust stated special permitting with open space and affordable housing is awarded to developers. Hunt stated numbers would be helpful. Hunt asked about a 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyer program with a maximum purchase price on affordable housing and asked if condos are a better option as they are more conducive as far as purchase price with 1<sup>st</sup> time buyers being income eligible when they buy, and move out if their income increases. Hunt suggested focusing on condos due to quicker turnover and aid to serve next family in need. Hunt questioned if there will be an annual review of income and need qualifications. Hands asked if statistics for turnover rate is available. Merlin stated he's not sure stats are available with turnover rates. Williams asked if staff duties would include monitoring of existing units and documenting new units that become available. Beth Rust stated there would be ongoing monitoring of the program's housing availability. Colton stated he's not comfortable with just condos, stating there are smaller homes available to be included in the housing program with 1<sup>st</sup> time buyers adhering to maximum purchase price. Hunt questioned hiring a consultant rather than staff support @ 20 hours weekly as CPA can only go to housing, and not other tasks and how would that be monitored. Merlin stated 20 hours are needed to complete job tasks, paperwork, monitoring, etc, and hiring a consultant one day a week would not be enough to get the work done. Having a contact person on site, dealing personally with the community, retains focus point as AHT being a municipal service for residents and providing service for the community. Staff person would report to CPA with updates. Hunt questioned how AHT would convert existing homes to affordable housing. Jennifer explained the buy-down program; to reduce the mortgage, a permanent deed restriction is needed on the property and units need to meet DAHC requirements, but not all CPA units would count toward affordable units.

**Next Steps:** AHT plans to release a draft next week, ask for public comments by 12/11, goes before BOS with draft plan for feedback, as well as other committee members' feedback, and hopes by 12/16 to adopt AHT Plan.

Williams stressed the importance of CPA's funding of 10% meeting guidelines of AHT. DHCD approves affordable housing units and affordable restriction needs approval of DHCD. Williams stated the committee was interested in buying affordability restrictions on existing homes with income-eligible persons already residing there. Why would those units not count as affordable housing under 40B? Beth explained that DHCD requires an affirmative marketing of the units and these units would not comply. One community had tried to do this program, but it never got off the ground. Hunt asked for verification that such a program would not count under 40B.

There being no further questions or comments, Hunt thanked the AHT for its presentation.

### **245R Bay Road – Sullivan Property**

- Motion by Hunt, to move up 245R Bay Road discussion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Less, unanimous.

Jennifer Sullivan was present to discuss 245R Bay Road property. Correspondence received from Dave Martin asking the CPA Committee if there was any interest in buying this property. Sullivan described parcel as 17 acres off Bay Road, 150 ft frontage with 50 ft entrance on either side. Abutters want to combine excess land in rear and develop it. Sullivan presented 2 options: 1. Plans drawn up for an 8 lot residential compound with entrance at Debra Lee, and 2 lots behind 2 abutters. 2. Build 2 estate lots with same entrance as in option 1.

Sullivan asked what the process is for CPA to buy land. Hunt explained the process. 1<sup>st</sup> – need committee approval and then any proposal needs Town Meeting approval. Grant stated high tension wires cross rear of property, Town owns 2 areas, 1 north which abuts NRT property, Beaver Brook Woods, and land on other side of property is approximately 12 acres. Grant stated area is critical turtle habitat, butterfly habitat, and has value for connectivity and habitat.

Hunt suggested looking at property, do a site visit and assess property's value as open space/critical habitat. Walk through scheduled prior to next meeting on 11/27 @ 8 o'clock @ 245 Bay Road.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- Motion by Williams, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grant, minutes of 9/10/09 approved unanimously as amended changing Williams to Lee, with Cidado, Less, Sheedy & Strange abstaining.
- Motion by Less, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grant, minutes of 9/24/09 approved unanimously with Lee & Strange abstaining.
- Motion by Williams to approve for accuracy the executive session minutes of 9/24/09, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grant, unanimous, with Hands, Lee & Strange abstaining.

Motion Hands, 2<sup>nd</sup> Williams, to release the following executive session minutes as the reason for the executive session no longer exists, 2/9/06, 12/8/05, 11/10/05, 9/8/05, 8/11/05, 7/21/05, 6/9/05, 5/5/05, 12/16/04, 4/8/04, 1/7/03, 12/13/01, unanimous.

**Off Center Street Jones Property** – Williams gave an update on the history of the property, located near Lantern Lane, 17 acres +, primarily rocky land, upland in rear, with no access at moment, 3-6 lots possible. Parcel represents an estate lot, need to cross wetlands to access property. Grant is negotiating with grandson of property owner who initially was interested in conservation of the land. The home's deteriorating condition requires demolition. During a more recent discussion, the grandson stated interest has been picking up as far as purchase of property. 40B possible, but Danielson stated parcel is very, very wet land, and its potential is very limited. Grant stated property is worth

purchasing if price reasonable. From a conservation viewpoint it serves as open space area for the neighborhood.

Proceed with walk through on 11/27 @ 8 o'clock @ 245 Bay Road then proceed to Center Street property for walk through. Hands to take photos.

Invoice for housing feasibility study which was approved at last meeting was signed by the Committee.

**Reorganization of Committee:**

- Motion by Hands, for Hunt to finish up fiscal year as Chair with Lee in-training as vice chair, Williams continues as clerk, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sheedy, unanimous.

**Other Business:**

**Update on Massapoag Property** - closing end of November, title issues resolved, negotiated good price. Danielson stated did not receive grant for property on Massapoag. Commonwealth Capital application was not submitted online and no notification sent.

- Motion Grant, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hands, to authorize Hunt to sign invoice for title insurance in an amount of approximately \$3000.00, unanimous.

Letter of thanks received from Unity Church for CPA funding for restoration project and to Ed Hands for his work on the project.

Williams updated the committee on Black Brook Farm (Gill property).

Hunt suggested getting Clover Valley appraisal in writing, a verbal appraisal was received, but not a written appraisal. Hunt also suggested an appraisal on Bertarelli property. Grant stated Bertarelli won't allow appraiser on property or okay a walk through.

- Motion by Hunt, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grant, to complete Clover Valley appraisal, and appraise Bertarelli and Gill properties in written form, in an amount not to exceed \$5000.00 on Clover Valley, and an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00 for Bertarelli and Gill properties, unanimous.

Hunt formally welcomed Greg Strange to the Committee.

Next meeting 12/10/09.

**Adjournment:** Motion Lee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sheedy, meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m., unanimous.

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Karen Gilbride-Raynard, Secretary      Date

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Avery Lee Williams, Clerk      Date