Town of West Tisbury

Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

Meeting Minutes - November 14, 2018, 5:30 pm

Howes House

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bea Phear, at 5:30 pm.

Present: Bea Phear, Leslie Eaton, Ted Jochsberger, Cheryl Lowe,

 John Brannen, John Rau, Nancy Dole, Doug Ruskin

Others: Heidi Dietterich, Administrative Assistant

Public Hearing:

Chairman Phear opened the annual public hearing by reading the Public Hearing announcement:

“The West Tisbury Community Preservation Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, at 5:30 pm at The Howes House, to review FY 2019 Applications for Community Preservation Act funding. All are welcome to attend and take part in the discussion of Applications that, if approved, will be voted on at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting.”

Those present for the public hearing included: Anne Billings, Jana Bertkau, Cathlin Baker, Karen Tewhey, Simone DeSorcy, Dorothy Young, Pierre Vaillancourt, Marie Allen, Beth Kramer, Leah Smith, Dan Waters, Wayne Smith, Rise Terney, Marjorie Peirce, David Vigneault, Philippe Jordi.

The Committee introduced themselves and then asked that the Maley/Field Gallery representative begin their presentation. Bea Phear recused herself from this discussion and Leslie Eaton took over the meeting.

Leah Smith, a Trustee of the Library, was the representative speaking for the Maley/Field Gallery project. She indicated that the estimates that had been received for the landscaping work were all three to four times higher than estimated. Other funding sources for this project included private funding and the Edy Foundation. The Committee asked why the applicant did not present the lowest bid in their application? Smith indicated that the estimates were so high, they were going to put it back out to bid again and that numbers shown in their application were more of an estimate and not the final cost. The Committee asked about shade trees for the parking lot. Smith indicated that shade trees would be inbetween the Field Gallery and the parking lot. Tree sizes were specified in the bids. It was also indicated that annual maintenance is not covered by the CPA, or in the bids they were receiving. It was noted that Town properties are required to go with the lowest bid. Eaton thanked Smith for addressing the Committee’s questions and for the presentation. Beatrice Phear took over the meeting.

Cathlin Baker made the presentation for the West Tisbury Congregational Church application. Baker introduced the other members of the team, Ann Billings, Ana Bertkau and Marjorie Peirce. The funding application is for an accessibility plan and kitchen plan to be drawn up by Hutker Architects. The reason for this plan is to bring the facility and its accessibility needs up to full effectiveness. Located in the Town Center, there is lots of activity in the kitchen and the meeting room, and the building is not keeping up with the amount of traffic. The need to have a handicapped accessible entrance closer to the handicapped parking space is also part of this design plan. It was restated by the Chairman that this type of project meets the eligibility requirements for CPA funding.

Chairman Phear asked why the architectural plan is so expensive ($45,000). Baker responded that a lot of the work is programming the many aspects of the project. She listed: refining the project itself, determining needs, reviewing building condition, producing preliminary renderings, code work, construction schedule and phasing, how to do the work while using the facility. There would be three different phases and the project would be complicated. Specs and construction drawings for contractors are included in the price, and Hutker Architects will be shepherding the bid process, as well as helping to manage this project. Hutker has had experience on the Island with historic buildings, as well as experience with the complicated nature of a public use building and phasing of projects.

The church felt that Hutker Architects seemed to understand the challenges of this type of project. Mashek McLean had been asked to bid and their price was comparable, but did not include all that Hutker’s did, South Mountain had also been asked to bid and they said they could not do it. The Committee asked if the septic was being looked at because the footprint of the building cannot change. It was indicated that the septic work was being subbed out. The Committee asked if the church would be coming back for more funding from the CPA. Baker responded that they may come back, but that the Church would be conducting a fund raising campaign in the church and the community. Within the Church, $100,000 had already been secured, and Baker felt confident that they would meet their goals. The Committee thanked Reverend Baker and her team for the presentation and information.

The Aidylberg III project was presented by Dorothy Young, Executive Director of the Island Elderly Housing Administrator, Island Elderly Housing Board Chairman Simone DeSorcy and Pierre Villaincourt, Finance Director of IEH were also present. Ms. Young reported that Island Elderly Housing currently held 165 units for residents from all over the Island and currently, there are 12 corporations that make up Island Elderly Housing. Waiting lists for rooms within the IEH system currently had 100 names per list. Assets were being donated to IEH and a building lot had also been donated which would be used for the proposed five unit building. With these donations, the IEH decided to continue to do what they do best, and that was provide low income elderly housing. For the five new units, the cost would be $1.6 million. Young indicated that this was an Island-wide regional project, and that there would be not be federal funds involved. IEH has the land, the architects, and they have already secured financing through the banks.

The Committee asked if they would be contracting out the construction. IEH would be overseeing and subcontracting as necessary. The cost includes demolition of the house and sheds. The CPC indicated a permanent affordable deed restriction would be required by the CPA. It was further reported that the proposed five units would not need a resident manager and that all the systems and employees were already in place. The five units would each be approximately 550 square feet, with a common space, laundry and mail, for a total of 3,000 square feet. One of the apartments would be ADA compliant, the others would be reasonably compliant. David Vigneault, Dukes County Regional Housing Authority Executive Director, expressed support for this project indicating that the need being filled by IEH was an important regional effort, and that they are doing admirable work. Simone DeSorcy invited the CPC to call her if anyone would like a tour of the proposed project and existing properties. Currently, the IEH is the largest residential landlord on the Island. The Committee thanked the representatives from Island Elderly Housing for the presentation.

Karen Tewhey, representing the Harbor Homes project, introduced herself to the Committee. She is currently the Homeless Prevention consultant for the County and the representative for the new ‘Harbor Homes’ project initiative. Harbor Homes is not a corporation at this time, but had been conceived through the Martha’s Vineyard Homeless Prevention network. This network is made up of Island clergy, the MV Commission, Island Housing Trust, the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, the Council on Aging and other interested community groups. The project has received seven grants. The Housing Assistance Corporation gave the County discretionary funds for the homeless in the first year. Tewhey addressed the question of “Why now?” She indicated that that after a two year needs assessment, there were approximately 100 people on the Island that faced homeless potential and the vacancy rate on the Island is zero. The income of these people is 30% or below the median average income and they do not qualify for the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority, they don’t make enough money. Section 8 vouchers are not useable on the Island, because there is nothing available to rent. The HUD grant received was defaulted on, the grant was for five homeless people, there was nothing available to rent, and the monies went to the Cape. Then Harbor Homes started working with Island Housing Trust. The regional application to the CPC’s on the Island were to buy a property for this proposed project, and Tewhey indicated that the County would not be purchasing a property for this project.

Chairman Phear said a technicality seemed to exist here, that it was the chicken versus the egg. There was no corporation that existed; there was no tax number. Is this application premature? Tewhey responded that the County is the applicant and has two staff people in place, and would run the program with future tenants/clients assisting; the United Way would be paying another employee through a grant to the County. The ultimate overseer might be the Island Housing Trust (a letter of support from IHT had been distributed). The Committee agreed that once the project was incorporated, the CPC could fund it. The question of why wasn’t the project incorporated was asked. Tewhey responded that if Harbor Homes was incorporated, the County couldn’t help them, but--the project needed a building. If they were incorporated, it could jeopardize the program as it is presently set up.

Members of the audience expressed support for this project, saying it filled a gap in services for members of the population that were not being served. Reverend Baker said the clergy on the Island has been running the program and that it does need to be incorporated. The County Manager had sent a letter (distributed to the CPC) which said that the County would collect funds to purchase the property, but would not be the property purchaser. David Vigneault indicated that the shelter program had been running two to three years, and that they had hired Tewhey who could help clear up any muddle. CPC members thought it was a great project however, logistics were the concern. John Rau indicated that the CPC needs an entity to fund, get the incorporation completed before the December 12 CPC meeting—include who runs the program, who builds it, keep the process moving so that it might be included in the 2019 warrant articles. It was also noted that the Finance Committee would need all of this settled and decided before it met the first week of February.

Philippe Jordi added that Harbor Homes could not do this without County support, and the County had stepped up. The Committee asked could IHT own the property in perpetuity, Harbor Homes uses it, should IHT purchase the property? Risa Terney from the MV Center for Living said that renting a property from the County like the MV Center for Living does, works well. The County will work with you. Harbor Homes also needs to get their 501c3 status for the ability to accept donations.

The Committee thanked Karen Tewhey for the additional information and asked that she stay in contact with the Committee and work to get the incorporation of Harbor Homes in place prior to the December 12 CPC meeting.

Cynthia Mitchell presented the Mill Brook Watershed Plan project submitted by the West Tisbury Board of Selectmen. Bea Phear asked about the two years of money requested in one year ($80,000 in FY 19). Mitchell indicated they would be applying for $40,000 in FY 19 and $40,000 in FY 20. Phear thanked Mitchell for the explanation and congratulated the Selectmen on beginning implementation of this project. Mitchell indicated by February there would be a much more detailed budget, and that this was a good opportunity for using the Open Space category of CPA funds. John Brannen, representing the Conservation Committee, shared that they were very supportive of the project. The Committee thanked Dr. Mitchell for the information and for her time presenting the project.

Philippe Jordi asked to speak. He began with a brief report on the Accessory Apartment program funded by the West Tisbury CPC a few years back. The website has been launched and could be viewed here: [AAPWT.org](http://AAPWT.org) Messages can be sent right to Rhonda Conley, the Affordable Housing Trust Administrative Assistant, it looked to be a very good program which can help the Island with its housing needs.

He continued with a report on the Greenwood Avenue project. All permits had been secured, Request for Proposal’s had been sent out and site visits were ongoing. They did not have to go through the 40B process and had worked with abutters individually, which had proved successful.

The Scott’s Grove project has had the renters move in. He shared that the Island Housing Trust was very pleased with this project, and thanked the CPC. It was a good model for other affordable housing projects.

Jordi offered more explanation on the application for the ‘Hanover Workforce Housing’ project, which was ineligible for CPC funding. Jordi had wanted to explore and understand a potential new model for housing, so the Island Housing Trust purchased the Hanover House. The structure would have 12 unrelated people living together (workforce), with ensuite bathrooms, and sharing kitchen and dining facilities. IHT talked to the hospital who committed to housing their employees with a master lease of the Hanover House, which provided a subsidy for the property.

Chairman Phear indicated that West Tisbury Town Counsel had concluded that the master lease violates the Anti-Aid Amendment because that the property would not be open to the public, and that Town Counsel had reviewed the draft warrant article Jordi had presented and was not supportive.

The Committee asked why didn’t the hospital just purchase the building. The simplicity of it would have been the hospital did all the screening of employees and therefore, potential renters, and it would have been the hospital’s money being used for purchasing an asset, benefitting their employees.

Jordi thanked the Committee for the time and for the continued support of affordable housing on Martha’s Vineyard. The Committee thanked him for his continued efforts to improve the housing situation on the Island.

Chairman Phear asked if there were any more comments or questions from the public. Hearing none, the Public Hearing was closed.

Old Business:

The minutes from the October 31, 2018 meeting were reviewed and on a motion made by John Brannen, seconded by John Rau, they were approved unanimously, with Cheryl Lowe and Doug Ruskin abstaining.

Bea Phear reported that she would be meeting with the Personnel Board on Thursday, November 15, to ask them to consider an increase in compensation for the Administrative Assistant.

On a motion made by Cheryl Lowe, seconded by Leslie Eaton, the Committee approved unanimously to adjourn at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi J. Dietterich

Administrative Assistant