

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
October 14, 2009**

Present: Jane Howard – Chairman, Janet Bernardo, John Comando, Bruce Eisenhut, Paul Siegenthaler, Jack Cogswell, Brian Nadler, Sheila Pransky, *Mark Gluesing (arrived at 8:55 PM)*

Absent: Patricia Carey, Staff Liaison

Town Staff: Nicole DiCicco, Recording Secretary

Guests: Dan Matthews, Chairman- Board of Selectman
Gerald Wasserman, Board of Selectmen
Scott Brightman, Allegra Lowitt, Steve Goldberg, Jill Finkelstein, Ted Thomas

The meeting convened at 7:35 PM in the Newman School Conference Room.

Approval of Minutes: In the September 30, 2009 minutes, Mr. Siegenthaler asked that the word “one” be added to the sentence “The Committee discussed the existing easement, the option of purchasing just one parcel, and access to Town parcels with or without the purchase of land.” **Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2009 meeting as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bernardo and the motion was approved.**

Chairman’s Comments: Ms. Howard made the Committee aware of two new letters received earlier in the day. One is from a neighbor of the parcels up for sale, and the other from the individual looking to purchase Lot 1 on Carol Road. There was also discussion to prepare for the upcoming Board of Selectmen Summit with the Community Preservation Committee and several other boards, including the Finance Committee. It was established that Board of Selectmen Chairman Dan Matthews would create a loose agenda to guide the meeting discussion.

Discussion and Vote: Proposal from Board of Selectmen to Purchase Two Parcels of Land: Mr. Matthews broke the discussion into four topics: Town negotiation, bonding, purchasing only one of the two parcels, and the long range Town plan. The prospective buyer of Lot 1 proposed donating the wetlands portion of the land to the Town. Mr. Matthews noted that any negotiation would have to wait until the private purchase had been made. The Board of Selectmen has recommended bonding, as it fits into the Town’s financing plan, and it keeps funding in the open space “bucket” for future purchases. Mr. Matthews explained how the locations of both plots were beneficial to the Town, to create a larger buffer between the Recycling and Transfer Station and any

future projects at the RTS, including possible installation of wind turbines. Lot 2 is adjacent to a larger parcel owned by the Volante family, which is highly desirable. The Town's trail plan would benefit for the purchases, too. The purchases meet goals within the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Ms. Bernardo noted the Conservation Commission's goal to give the town more access to Open Space. The purchase of just Lot 1 or the donation of the wetlands portion would not provide additional access, but the purchase of both parcels would create a buffer to the wetlands. Lot 2 has a pond which could be a destination point on the trail system. Mr. Siegenthaler visited both parcels and felt that a home on Lot 2 would be complimentary to the street, and he did not envision much value to the purchase of both parcels. Mr. Comando agreed that, though there might be some value to the trails plan, that the open space funding might be better utilized for purchasing other parcels with more value to the Town. Mr. Eisenhut felt there was more value to Lot 1 with the easement, but not as much value to Lot 2. The members each shared their opinions and remaining questions on the proposal, with the majority stating their support.

Mr. Cogswell made a motion to recommend that the Article 10, the purchase of Lot 1, go forward to Special Town Meeting to be approved for bonding with Community Preservation Funds. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bernardo. Ms. Howard opened the discussion to others attending the meeting. Scott Brightman felt that the opposition to building on this land was simply neighbors that preferred conservation land to construction. Neighborhood residents Steve Goldberg and Allegra Lowitt were under the belief that the open space had already been protected and did not feel it should be converted to residential properties. Selectman Jerry Wasserman stated that the Town needs to look to purchase properties that do not just include wetlands. **The Chairman called for the vote, and there were 6 votes in favor of recommending the project and 2 opposed. The motion passed.**

Mr. Cogswell made a motion to recommend that the Article 11, the purchase of Lot 2, go forward to Special Town Meeting to be approved for bonding with Community Preservation Funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nadler. Ms. Bernardo clarified that the Conservation Commission did not originally recommend purchase of these parcels to the Board of Selectmen, when the parcels came under review for the creation of buildable lots, primarily as they did not feel that there was any funding for the purchases. Given the opportunity for the Community Preservation Committee to bond, the Conservation Commission recommends purchasing both parcels. Mr. Eisenhut believes that Lot 2 is buildable and has less conservation value. **The Chairman called for the vote, and there were 5 votes in favor of recommending the project and 3 opposed. The motion passed.**

Discussion and Vote: Article 16:

Mr. Nadler made a motion to amend Article 16, to amend Community Preservation Fund Reserves. The motion was seconded by Mr. Siegenthaler. The motion was passed unanimously as amended.

Other Business: Mr. Nadler brought up the letter from the Greendale Avenue Group regarding an open space purchase of the greenway between Route 128/ Interstate 95 and Greendale Ave. and suggested Ms. Howard contact them and formally invite them to submit an application for Community Preservation Committee funding. The group all agreed that they should make them aware of their ability to apply to be proponents for aid in their attempt to purchase public open space.

Adjournment: Mr. Cogswell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM. Ms. Bernardo seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DiCicco, Recording Secretary