



Town of Abington

500 GLINIEWICZ WAY
ABINGTON, MA 02351

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
781-982-2100

Minutes
March 28, 2016
Buckley Room
7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Jerry Kelliher, Jim Tormey, Cliff Jacob, Russ Forsythe, Kathy Creighton
Absent: Mike Noonan, Joe Feeney

Request for Certificate of Compliance, ACC#8, Mass. Electric dba National Grid, for switch replacement, 1090 Plymouth Street. Report had been sent in by TRC on their compliance. Motion to issue the Certificate of Compliance made by Russ, seconded by Cliff, unanimous.

Request for Determination, Keolis Commuter Services, vegetation management activities along Rights-of-Way. Kyle Fair, Fair, Dermody Consulting Engineers, gave presentation. They are looking to renew the delineation. They delineate by how the right-of-way intersects with the individual sensitive areas. Explained the spraying system and markings. They have reduced the spray pattern from 10' to 8' from the center line. Chemicals used are basically the main ingredients in RoundUp. They provide yearly updates on chemicals used. They will notify the board when the actual application will take place. Usually it's done in June and July.

Motion to close the hearing made by Cliff, seconded by Jim, unanimous. Motion to issue negative determination #5 made by Cliff, seconded by Jim, unanimous.

Meeting with Jack Buckley re Community Preservation Act. Jack gave brief overview of the CPA and had provided a handout (attached) outlining the key points. This will be up to the Town whether this goes forward. Was requesting support from the Commission on Question #1 on the ballot.

Motion to support the Community Preservation Act made by Jim, seconded by Russ, unanimous.

Representative to the Southfield Working Group. Kathy excused herself since she has worked at the Air Base. Cliff volunteered to serve on the Working Group. Motion to approve Cliff to serve on the Southfield Working Group made by Jim, seconded by Kathy, unanimous.

Correspondence:

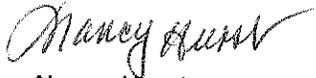
Southfield Village Center Apartments Development Plan Application - Jim suggested the Commission discuss this at the next meeting.

Letter re Community Development Block Grant

Minutes - February 22, 2016 - motion to approve made by Jim, seconded by Russ, 3 ayes, 2 abstentions (Cliff, Kathy).

Motion to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. made by Russ, seconded by Jim, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Hurst".

Nancy Hurst

On Saturday, April 30, 2016 at our annual town election we have the opportunity to move Abington forward and join 160 other communities in Massachusetts, including 18 of 27 in Plymouth County, and adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA). It is noteworthy that NO community has ever voted to rescind their acceptance of the Act.

CPA is a state law that enables cities and towns in Massachusetts to create a dedicated fund for open space, historic preservation, community housing and outdoor recreation projects.

CPA funds are generated from two sources: first, in Abington a surcharge of 1.5 % would be added to the tax bill, after a \$100,000 exemption; second, an annual disbursement from the statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund. The Trust Fund's revenues are derived from fees collected at the Registry of Deeds (and recently from state budget surplus funds). Unfortunately, Abington residents have been paying fees at the Registry that are then distributed to other communities because we have not yet adopted the Act. It is important to note that Governor Baker recognizes the importance of the CPA and in his budget has asked for additional dollars to be added to the Trust Fund.

If Abington had adopted the Act in the past, this year Abington would have generated approximately \$301,000 locally and would have received a match of \$89,400 (29.7%) from the CPA trust fund. Never has the match been less than 26.64%. It would seem a good return on one's investment. In Plymouth County 18 of 27 communities believe it's a pretty good deal.

Some projects funded by CPA funds in local communities include:

Bridgewater – restoration and historic rehabilitation of the First Parish Church; hiring of Housing Coordinator; recreational needs assessment;

Carver – recreational field rehabilitation; upgrades and improvement for Community Playground; reclaim foreclosed abandoned properties and resell as affordable housing; community garden; create a pocket park adjacent to route 58;

Hanson – purchase of 115 acres of open space; create an outdoor recreation area at Whitman/Hanson High School to include beach volleyball, street hockey, basketball courts and a fitness trail;

Middleboro – fund a portion of affordable housing; open space acreage; energy efficient improvements in senior citizen housing;

West Bridgewater – rehabilitation of balconies and installation of generators at senior citizen housing; stone work at War Memorial Park.

These are just some examples of projects funded by CPA funds that in most, if not all, cases would not have been done.

In Hanover, Norwell, Scituate and the other communities in Plymouth County that have adopted the CPA the lists are even more extensive.

The local surcharge is computed as follows:

1. Take the assessed value of the property, let's say \$300,000 because the great majority of residences (both condos and homes) are assessed for under \$300,000; deduct the \$100,000 exemption and multiply the \$200,000

remaining by the current tax rate - \$17.93 per thousand. This results in a number of \$3586.00.

2. The number \$3586.00 is then multiplied by the 1.5% surcharge which results in a number of \$53.79. This number is the annual amount of the surcharge or \$13.45 a quarter.
3. The great majority of taxpayers would be paying even less.
4. And remember the match on our dollars this year would have been 29.7%.

And this money generated by the combination of local dollars and the trust fund match will be spent, or set aside for future spending, as follows:

1. 10% for open space and recreation
2. 10% for historic resources
3. 10% for community housing

The remaining 70% of the revenues may be spent or reserved for future projects in any of these three areas. CPA funds may never be directed to the general town fund.

The money will be allocated by a Town Meeting vote and voters will choose where the money is spent. A Community Preservation Committee (CPC) is established by the Act. The CPC is a five to nine member committee and must have a representative from the Planning Board, Historical Commission, Park/Rec Committee, Conservation Commission and the Housing Authority. The CPC will recommend, on an annual basis, to Town Meeting projects to be funded and Town Meeting will vote.

In the past, projects such as the Griffin Dairy purchase, Island Grove restoration project, enhancement of the town playgrounds and parks, certain projects under the jurisdiction of the Housing Authority and many others could have been undertaken and financed by Community Preservation Funds.

In the future, projects to construct additional ball fields, tennis courts, the Island Grove Bridge, additional senior housing, rehabilitation of the current housing, purchase of open space, enhancement of the existing rail trail are all projects worth contemplating, all worthy of consideration and all could be funded by Community Preservation Funds.

On April 30th we have the opportunity to adopt the Community Preservation Act, take advantage of the funds available, as so many of our neighbors have done, and make Abington a better community with projects that will enhance our community.

For more information on the Community Preservation Act; projects undertaken by communities, fund distribution, communities that have adopted the Act and a wealth of information you can visit –

communitypreservation.org

It's a great and very informative web site!!

And don't forget this year you have to vote at Emerald Hall (the former VFW) on Central Street!!!!