

Minutes from the Community Preservation Committee meeting held on 10/19/22

Meeting called to order at 5:10 pm.

Members present: Randy Thunfors, Sue Coxon, Jared Gelormino, JP Boscarino, Peter Metz

Minutes from 10/6/22 accepted.

JG updated the committee on the advertising efforts for the CPA program and discussion took place. The text for the ad was emailed prior to the meeting and received positive feedback from the group. The ad has been sent to the Local Yokel for the Nov issue. A press release will also be in the Berkshire Eagle, as well as the Berkshire Edge. JG also reached out to the Berkshire Natural Resources Counsel to see if they have any potential projects and to help get the word out for the program.

The deadline for applications will be 11/30/22. JB and PM thought that the application deadline should possibly be extended since the advertising will likely not occur until mid-November. Discussion ensued and the group decided to leave this topic open for further discussion at the next meeting based on the # of applications received.

The next topic of discussion was centered around affordable housing and brought up by RT. A long discussion followed, and several key points were touched on. The first that this topic was recognized by a recent town poll to be important to a large percentage of residents in West Stockbridge (appx 65%). There was also a significant response (appx. 35%) opposed to the idea in the same poll. The group discussed that the label of "affordable housing" can come with some negative views and that perhaps other language may be received better such as Senior Housing or Workforce Housing. RF brought to attention a recent article about a development project in New Marlborough with an Affordable Housing Committee and a group called Construct. It was agreed that we should inquire with a representative of Construct for a possible meeting to learn more about that program, and possibilities for West Stockbridge. SC had brought up the idea of discussing with the Town possible lease or purchase options of possible pre-identified locations where affordable housing could potentially be developed. RT and the group thought it was premature at this point to discuss that with the town.

The discussion then transitioned into getting the word out and encouraging all types of projects to be submitted by the application deadline for review. PM suggested that while the affordable housing projects are well intended and needed that it may be better to start the CPC with smaller, less ambitious projects. Being that our group is new and still learning the program this may be an easier way to get started. JB agreed with this idea.

Other potential project ideas that were touched on included trails and greenspace, hiking trails, and the rail trail.

We closed the meeting with the goal of all members to get out and spread the word about the program.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 11/14 at 4:00 pm at the Town Hall. There will be a Zoom option as well for those who cannot meet in person.

Meeting adjourned at 5:57 pm.

Minutes submitted by JP Boscarino, Secretary