

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
Minutes  
February 10, 2022, 4:30 p.m.**

An online Public Hearing of the Community Preservation Committee was held via Zoom beginning at 4.30pm on February 10, 2022. Real-time public access was provided by Orleans Channel 18 on the Town website and cable television.

In attendance for the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) were: Chair Walter North, Vice Chair Barry Alper, Clerk Sue Christie, Charles Ellis, Joan Francolini, Stephanie Gaskill, Kevin Galligan and John Lipman. Chet Crabtree was absent.

1. Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 4.30pm
2. Public Hearing: Gather information on the community preservation needs, possibilities and resources of the Town of Orleans.

CPC administrator Ms. Fountain read a letter from the Town of Orleans RAC in support of the Putnam Farm grant application. She also read an email from Orleans residents Bill and Anne Cummins in support of the Putnam Farm application. Both letters are attached to the minutes.

Stuart Saginor from the Community Preservation Coalition spoke about bonding by the CPC. He referred to Section 5 of the CPA which allows for the "appropriation of money" in any year from CPC to fund the Affordable Housing Trust Board. He emphasized that the intent of this section was not to authorize bonding for the housing trust. He said that providing a bond for general use put control in the hands of a few and could limit the CPC's ability to plan in the future. He also noted it could be difficult to have AHTB set the term of the bond which could be short or long (resulting in higher/lower costs accordingly). He said the intention of the CPA was to support a specific project to be funded with bonding.

Ms. Claudia Trend shared two stories about the Garden Walkway at the Orleans Senior Center that supported recreation and community activities that occur there.

Ms. Sandy Chernik also spoke about the Garden at the Senior Center as a "safe, healing space" with excellent exercise equipment. She said it is a "less threatening" walking environment for seniors than the rail trail. It is a venue for events for underserved communities and cited the LGBTQ group as one of the users of the space. She said she believed the CPC's support of the grant application would demonstrate support for seniors in Orleans.

Ms. Anita Rogers reviewed the many activities and uses of the Garden Walkway and the benefit of rehabilitating the space for outdoor activities, social events, fitness programs, reflection, meditation, and remembrance. She stated that 56% of the Orleans population are over the age of 60.

Ms. Joanna Kelley spoke in favor of the rehabilitation of the Old Firehouse at 44 Main Street. She detailed the many activities and events that occur at the site and at Parish Park. She described it as a busy location hosting 85 to 135 people per week, 13-15 groups and being open 8am to 8pm. She described the population who used the building as “cooperative and diverse.” She said the site could be “an anchor destination for Orleans” and urged support for the grant application.

Mr. McClennen spoke about the CPC Plan and the planning process. He described how the most recent plan was developed in cooperation with Town committees and adopted in 2020. He referred to the section of the plan addressing affordable housing and the desire to provide 100 units in 10 years spread throughout the town of Orleans. He discussed the assumptions in the goal about the need to subsidize affordable housing units and how those subsidies could cost well over \$10,000,000 (i.e., 100 units @ \$100K subsidy each).

Mr. Ellis read a report based on a recent meeting of the Historical Commission. The Commission voted on February 9, 2022 that the proposed plans for the rehabilitation of the Old Firehouse did adhere to the Department of the Interiors standards for Historic Properties. The report is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Galligan advised the CPC that he reviewed the various grant applications with the Select Board last week and the Board supported all the projects under consideration for FY23. In particular, he said the Select Board indicated that bonding was a disciplined approach to addressing the needs of affordable housing.

Ms. Francolini explained how Mr. Saginor had been asked to attend the Public Hearing as the result of her attempting to view the Bonding 101 session, and the subsequent Q&A, online. She said she felt it important that he communicate his knowledge directly to the committee.

Mr. Alper reviewed the development of the CPC plan emphasizing that Town committees provided input for the recent update which occurred in 2020.

3. Consider Town Counsel’s recommendations for each proposal. Mr. North reviewed Town Counsel’s conditions or recommendations for FY23 grant applications. He noted the Cedar Pond Parcels project would require a Conservation Restriction. Preservation Restrictions were required for most of the historic projects. The Town-initiated Master Plan project would not require a grant agreement. Only private entities are issued grant agreements for CPC projects. The project at the Senior Center Garden Walkway should comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. There was consensus that all the applicants would be able to comply to the recommendations by legal counsel.
4. Review and recommend applications for FY23 for the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. North suggested the Committee break the discussion of grant recommends into two parts. The first part would be the bulk recommendation of the applications identified as “modest, suitable and attractive.” The more complex applications for the AHTB funding, HAC funding of 107 Main St and the Old Firehouse rehabilitation would be addressed separately.

Ms. Francolini moved to approve said grant applications, debt service and administrative costs. Mr. Alper seconded the motion and read out the names of each project (listed herein) and the amount requested, and included debt service of \$370,402 and administrative fees of \$25,000 to leave a remaining balance of undesignated CPC funds of \$987,124 for FY23.

Project 3: Cape Housing Institute Municipal Officials Training  
Type: Community Housing  
Applicant: Community Development Partnership  
Amount: \$7,500

Project 4: Open Space Cedar Pond Parcels  
Type: Open Space  
Applicant: Orleans Open Space Committee  
Amount: \$10,000

Project 5: Putnam Farm Restoration  
Type: Open Space/Recreation  
Applicant: Conservation Committee  
Amount: \$71,250

Project 6: CHO Historic Collections Project  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: CHO  
Amount: \$56,000

Project 7: Historic Commission – Historic District Documentation  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: Historical Commission  
Amount: \$11,000

Project 8: Historic Survey Plan  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: Historical Commission  
Amount: \$7,500

Project 9: Northwest Schoolhouse Roof  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: Odd Fellows 132  
Amount: \$3,320

Project 10: Federated Church Historic Weathervane/Steeple Renovation  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: Federated Church  
Amount: \$13,475

Project 11: French Cable Museum – Remediate Wiring, Restore Windows, and Archive Historic Material from 1880 to 1959.  
Type: Historic Resources  
Applicant: French Cable Station Museum  
Amount: \$35,670

Project 13: Shared Use Path to Overland Way

Type: Recreation  
Applicant: Bike & Pedestrian Committee  
Amount: \$105,000

Project 14: Recreation Master Plan/Design Services for Eldredge Park Region  
Type: Recreation  
Applicant: Orleans Recreation Advisory Committee  
Amount: \$52,000

Project 15: Hardwired Safety Signal  
Type: Recreation  
Applicant: Bike & Pedestrian Committee/Traffic & Safety Committee  
Amount: \$55,000

Project 16: Senior Center Garden Walkway Rehabilitation  
Type: Recreation  
Applicant: Council on Aging  
Amount: \$24,000

**A vote by roll call was taken with all members voting AYE. The motion passed: 8-0-0.**

A discussion about holding a sum in reserve each year occurred. Although the past practice of having a reserve was applauded as a conservative precedent, the committee came to a consensus that there was likely to be a suitable reserve resulting from the large State “match” of \$594,000 and unutilized funds returning to the budget at the end of FY22. The committee said they would accept this naturally occurring balance as a reserve rather than plan for a specific sum to be set aside from currently available funds.

The grant application for the Old Firehouse rehabilitation was discussed at length. Committee members raised concerns about the plans, size of the current budget and the lack of specificity around the project and ongoing issues around a community center in the Town. It was noted that considerable work and expense has been spent on the project during the last 10 years and there is a timeline with milestones for the project going forward. Some committee members felt there were too many unknowns about the project or a sense of being rushed. It was noted that the Select Board supports the project. The applicant is working with the Historical Commission on the project and continues to work with the designers toward further developed plans. The future debt service for the bond will come from the historic reserves portion of the 3% surtax in future CPC budgets. Several members suggested they were supportive of the project but felt more details were needed. Others felt hesitant while some felt fully supportive noting the heavy use of the existing space for activities.

It was decided and agreed to defer a discussion until the “final plans” were finished at the end of February or early March. Mr. McClennen will advise when those plans are available, and the CPC can review them and make a final decision immediately after those plans are presented to the Select Board. A meeting will be scheduled to consider the Old Firehouse grant application and view plans in early March.

The Committee then turned the discussion to how best to use CPC funds to meet the needs of affordable housing. This included a review of both the grant application from HAC for 107 Main Street and the application for either a \$5million bond or \$500,000 for AHTB general funding (for non-specific needs or future projects). Committee members debated a variety of options, including alternative ways to distribute the remaining CPC funds (\$987,124 for FY23) to best support affordable housing in Orleans. Many options for sharing funds were discussed. Suggestions ranged from giving \$987,000 to AHTB to use as needed and issuing a \$1million bond for the project at 107 Main Street, to giving the \$987,000 to HAC and raising a \$5million bond for AHTB. Ways of giving some money to HAC and notionally agreeing to support the project in future years was considered. It was agreed future CPC funds cannot be committed this year.

It was noted that the Town of Orleans needs to find ways to fund affordable housing that does not rely on CPC monies. Committee members expressed recognition of the extreme need for affordable housing and an ardent desire to support AHTB. Two members of the committee felt supportive of either a \$5million bond or a grant of \$500,000 to the AHTB. Several other members felt bonding would tie up too much of future CPC funds in debt servicing for housing while also expressing support for affordable housing.

Mr. Alper moved to grant \$987,000 to AHTB to use as they see fit. Ms. Francolini seconded the motion. More discussion followed and it was determined that there was a need to see if such a distribution of funds would meet HAC's requirements for their future grant applications. Mr. Alper withdrew his motion.

Discussion turned to the matter of issuing a \$5,000,000 bond for AHTB. Opinion was divided on the issue. Ms. Francolini urged further consultation with the Community Preservation Coalition on bonding. Mr. North supported the bond and noted the Orleans Town Counsel endorsed the bonding as legal. Mr. Galligan stated he had confidence in the legal opinion granted.

**Ms. Gaskill moved to reject the request for a \$5,000,000 bond by the Affordable Housing Trust Board. Mr. Ellis seconded the motion.**

Mr. Galligan said bonding is "appropriate" and supports the needs of the community. Mr. Alper reminded the committee that CPC did not control the terms of the bond which could be 20 years but could be less. Mr. Ellis reiterated his concern that bonding would take too much away from future CPC projects and that interest rates were uncertain. Mr. North said he felt it was a mistake not to give "our allies" who support affordable housing the "tools they need to do their job." Some members insisted that they staunchly supported affordable housing and the committee had demonstrated this through its consideration.

**A vote for the motion was taken by roll call. Ms. Francolini, Mr. Lipman, Ms. Gaskill, Mr. Ellis, Ms. Christie, and Mr. Alper voted AYE. Mr. Galligan and Mr. North voted NO. The motion passed: 6-2-0.**

5. Approve minutes of Feb 3, 2022

**Mr. Galligan voted to approve the minutes of February 3, 2022. Mr. Lipton seconded the motion. Vote by roll call with all present voting AYE. Motion passed: 8-0-0.**

6. Adjourn

**Ms. Christie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Alper seconded the motion. All voted AYE. Motion passed: 8-0-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 6.44pm.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Fountain*

*ADDENDA:*

*1. Letter of support for Putnam Farm Project:*

January 26, 2022

To: The Community Preservation Committee

On December 20, 2021, the Recreation Advisory Committee voted unanimously to support the application submitted to the Community Preservation Committee by the Conservation Commission for \$72,000 to fund improvements at Putnam Farm, including digging a water well and connecting to the power grid.

The Recreation Advisory Committee looks forward to seeing more progress at Putnam Farm!

Sincerely,  
Tracy Murphy  
Chair  
Recreation Advisory Committee

*2. Email in support of Putnam Farm Project:*

Received:

Sun, Feb 6,  
2:57 PM (4 days  
ago)

Hi Jennifer,

My wife and I live at 4 Grassy Knoll Way in Orleans and are proud members of the Sea Call Farm gardening group.

We wanted you to know that we strongly support the Putnam grant request for \$71,250 for power and water. Putnam is a special place and will become an even greater asset to the Town of Orleans with infrastructure in place to support additional Putnam plots and future projects on the Putnam property.

Please forward our interest in seeing this grant request approved to the Orleans Community Preservation Committee members.

Thank you.

Bill and Anne Cummins  
4 Grassy Knoll Way  
Orleans, MA 02653  
(978) 799-1916

3. *Report read by CPC member Charles Ellis on behalf of the Historical Commission:*

*The Historical Commission met 2/9/22 on proposed changes to the CPC request for historical preservation funds by the advocates of that project. Based on the changes shown at the meeting the Commission voted 5-0-0 that the revisions to the proposed project as presented during the meeting appear to adhere to Department of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties ((SOI Standards) as a Rehabilitation project based upon and subject to the following:*

- Drawings presented at the meeting.*
- Changes to those drawings described at the meeting.*
- A commitment that any drawings put out to bid follow both the specifics and the spirit of commitment to the SOI standards for Rehabilitation.*
- A willingness for Historical Commission review of ongoing compliance to the (SOI) Standards for Rehabilitation during the execution stage of the proposed grant prior to any authorized payment of related expenses for proposed project completion. This is similar to how the most recent CPC grants for significant historical grants have been managed under the CPC grant documents. (This relates to ongoing project management after approval of the grant)*
- Agreement to the same type of deed restriction utilized in recently approved significant historical grants for rehabilitation under CPC grants.*

*The Commission was clear that this vote was only on compliance with Department of Interior rehabilitation standards and was not a statement positive or negative on the overall cost of the project or the use of bonding.*