

**TOWN OF HARWICH
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

Approved February 13, 2025

**Community Preservation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2025**

*Recording and Taping Notification: As required by law the Town may audio or video record this meeting.
Any person intending to either audio or video record this open session is required to inform the chair.*

I Call to Order

Harwich Community Preservation Committee Meeting called to order with a quorum of committee members present by Chair Dave Nixon at 6:00 PM, on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the Harwich Town Hall, Donn B. Griffin Room. Present for quorum: Chair Dave Nixon, Vice Chair Kathy Green, Marcy Vigneau, Bob Doane, Emily Brutti, John Ketchum, and Art Bodin.
Absent: Mary Maslowski

II Welcome Guests

A. No Public Comment

III Approval of Minutes

A. CPC Meeting – December 12, 2024 – postponed

IV New Business

A. WIFF

Chair Nixon reported that at their last BOS meeting, the Board of Selectmen decided to postpone their discussion on WIFF until after the Annual Town Meeting in May, if then. So, the CPC will wait and see.

B. Discussion - on the 2024/2025 CPA Funding Requests

Project applications can be found on: <https://www.harwich-ma.gov/1153/2024-2025-CPA-Funding-Requests-for-FY2026>

CH 1 CDP Lower Cape Housing Institute Funding Request \$ 10,000

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

Committee members comments made were:

It's a good program. It's a good source of information.

A few committee members have attended the program, but felt the lack of Harwich attendees is concerning. The CPC has spoken to the CDP on this disappointment but are not sure how to improve the issue. It was offered maybe the CPC could speak directly with the Harwich Housing Coordinator for her ideas.

The Project Manager, CDP's Director of Housing Advocacy Amanda Bebrin, sent an email to Dave requesting the CPC offer their input.

It was decided that Art and Marcy will meet with Amanda and see what she is asking of the CPC.

CH 2 Affordable Housing Trust Funding Request \$750,000

A couple of CPC members agreed they could support the Trust's request for funding.

Another CPC member agreed they could support the project at \$500,000, not at \$750,000. It was offered the project's funding request for the past couple of years has been \$500,000. The committee member explained they preferred to wait to see how the new Rental Assistance Program takes off this year, rather than upping the funding. It is not clear how many participants the program is looking to assist this year.

It is not clear if the funding could be drafted with strings, to fund the Trust at \$500,000 and the Rental Assistance Program at \$250,000. The Rental Assistance Program is new and was started with CPA funds the Trust has received, not declaring it was for the program.

It was suggested we see what CPC funds are really available for spending on this year's round of projects before going forward.

CH 3 FORWARD at the Rock - Phase 2 Project \$120,000

Chair Nixon read into the meeting's minutes the 1.9.25 update email received from FORWARD Executive Director Dave Kaplan:

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"Also, can you let the committee members know that the following funding included in our Harwich application have had changes in status:

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- The Barnstable County Commissioners voted on November 26 to award our \$326,850 request
- The Falmouth CPC on November 21st unanimously to award our \$100,000 funding request
- The Eastham CPC last night voted unanimously to award our \$50,000 funding request
- We have received a mortgage lender commitment for \$750,000"

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

A committee member questioned what the after costs of this housing project would be. Would the CPC be expected to continue financial support? In response, another committee member offered they have a proven track record in their established FORWARD facility, and they don't ask towns to pay for the ongoing costs.

Committee members comments made were:

Impressed with their presentation.

So many questions were answered.

Familiar and impressed with the facility.

They know what is needed.

Depending on the CPC funds available to spend, the funding amount may need to be reduced.

HP 1 North Harwich Gravestone Preservation Project \$ 37,015

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

Committee members comments made were:

Robbin Kelley has a proven track record in completing CPC funded projects.

Overages are always returned to the CPC accounts.

She is very passionate.

OS 1 Cape Cod Rail Trail Land Preservation Project \$500,000

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

One committee member didn't hear the presentation. (It was before he joined the committee.) It was suggested he view the online video of the Oct. 24, 2024 CPC meeting.

Committee members comments made were:

The Harwich Conservation Trust has done a lot of good work.

The Harwich Real Estate and Open Space Committee supports this project. This is a very visible parcel of land that needs to be preserved.

This land is an important part of the Herring River Watershed. This would secure this land in the hands of the HCT stewardship.

There is an environmental and recreational benefit of this land protection.

Rec 2 Herring River Boardwalk Design and Permitting Project \$168,000

A few CPC members agreed they could support the project.

A committee member offered an update for the Bell's Neck has been completed, identifying this area needs attention. At high tide, this area has issues with a secure walkway. Something is needed to address the problem without future degrading of the land.

A few members thought this was a fantastic project. But the majority of CPC members agreed they costs of this project were really high.

Many questioned if this was the cost just to permit and design the boardwalk, how much was the boardwalk itself going to cost?

Rec 3 Brooks Infield Replacement Project \$143,000

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

Many committee members pointed out that Brooks Field is used more and more each year.

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One committee member expressed their concern with only Harwich residents paying for the field restoration, when it is open to all for use. But agreed Harwich needs to keep things in good shape.

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Another committee member offered they were surprised the cost of the project will only cover the infield. But because of safety concerns, they would support the project.

- *A committee member offered that at the end of January, the Town will be starting conversations on the care of Town owned properties.*

Follow up:

- *It was noted the Rec Department needs to provide their priority list of projects.*

Rec 4 Sand Pond Restroom Additional Funding Request \$ 33,000

The majority of CPC members agreed they could support the project.

The members really just want this project completed.

Committee members comments made were:

This is an example of costs spiraling out of control.

It was offered that the new septic has been paid out of the prior fundings. The rest of the CPC funds are in the account. This is a very expensive restroom.

Rec 5 Veterans Memorial Field Complex Shade Structure Project \$ 90,000

One committee member offered the project idea is a good one, but after the presentation's lack of follow up answers, they are concern for the execution.

The majority of CPC members questioned this project. Many considered this project is too expensive and they are not sure if it is practical. The cost to install the sails is too high. The sails are expensive, and they will need to be replace in 10 years. Most of the members are concerned with the project's short life of providing shade.

They have asked for more options. They might be happier with a different shade structure that could last longer, even if the cost was higher than this project; willing to spend more for a permanent structure.

In contrast, it was offered the cost of building is now very high. There is a disconnect from cost and product.

Shade would be nice for the kids but...

It was offered the sails will kill the grass underneath, meaning the picnic tables will be in the dirt, which isn't desirable.

Another option suggested to this proposed project that would be much less expensive: ten picnic tables with ten umbrellas.

Rec 6 Cape Cod Regional Tech High School at 374 Main St. Project \$987,000

Discussion postponed until the next CPC meeting. More information is coming in.

V Old Business

A. Possible Update: CPC Financials

- Waiting on the CPC Financials from Renee Davis. Hope to have them at the next CPC meeting so we know how much we have for funding projects.
- We need to know when the Warrant Articles are needed.
- We may have the additional information available on Rec #6 – Cape Cod Regional Tech High School at 374 Main St. Project.
- We have added meeting, Jan. 23, 2025, to the schedule, but not all members agreed we needed to meet on Jan. 23rd if the three prior points are not available.
- It was decided that Dave will make another request for:
 - Rec #6 – Documentation
 - Request financials from Renee.
- Dave will make the final call if we meet Jan. 23rd or wait for Feb. 13, 2025.

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B. Possible Update: Social Media/Facebook

- Emily has been working on some exciting new ideas. She has been speaking with Cyndi Williams of the Harwich Chamber of Commerce.
- The Chamber of Commerce has offered to host one of the Chamber's monthly networking events at a completed CPC funded project location. This will showcase the good works the CPA funding has done for Harwich. The CPC could distribute materials and provide content at the event.
- February is too soon, and the March and April events have already been planned. So, self-promotion before the Annual Town Meeting wouldn't be possible this year. So, we will look to the future.
- Locations suggested: South Harwich Meeting House, The Crowell Barn, or The Old Fire House.
- Emily would like our feedback; expect a letter soon to gather committee feedback.

C. Possible Update: Website

- John will be adding Kathy's updates to the site very soon.
- He will need to get the updated application in the next few months to put on the CPC webpage.

VI Other

- We will wait until after winter to do anything with the CPC street banners around town. It is too windy and cold right now.
- The continued discussion on Grant Agreement Revisions will wait until the meeting following voting on the projects.
- Follow up on the missing the Skinequit Pond Remediation Project's Update Status Report. Multiple email requests have been made for the report. No response. Following the Dec. 5th CPC meeting, another email was sent to the BOS Chair Julie Kavanaugh. We hope to have the report soon.

VII Next meeting's Agenda points

- Possible continued discussion on the CPC financials
- Priorities list of projects from the Rec Dept.
- Continued discussion and follow ups on presented projects
- Continued discussion on new ideas for social media

VIII Adjournment

A motion was made by John Ketchum, seconded by Marcy Vigneau, to adjourn.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon – Aye; Vice Chair Kathy Green – Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Bob Doane – Aye; Emily Brutti – Aye; Art Bodin - Aye.

Motion passed.

Adjourned at 7:18 PM.