

TOWN OF HARWICH

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Approved 9.11.25

Harwich Community Preservation Committee Public Information Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes Thursday, June 12, 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, June 12, 2025, at the Harwich Town Hall, Donn B. Griffin Room. Present for quorum: Chair Dave Nixon, Vice Chair Kathy Green, Mary Maslowski, Marcy Vigneau, John Ketchum, Art Bodin, and Emily Brutti.

II. WELCOME GUESTS

Bob Doane has retired from the Harwich Community Preservation Committee. Chair Nixon thanked Bob for his many years of service to the CPC and the Town of Harwich.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING

Chair Nixon read into the record: The Harwich Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will hold a Public Information Hearing on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at 6:00 PM in the Donn B. Griffin Room, Town Hall, 732 Main Street, Harwich, MA 02645 pursuant to M.G.L. Ch.44B, Community Preservation Act ("Act"), Section 5(b)(1): "As part of its study, the committee shall hold one or more public informational hearing on the needs, possibilities and resources of the city or town regarding community preservation possibilities and resources, notice of which shall be posted publicly and published for each of two weeks preceding a hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town."

Learn about the Act and discuss possible projects consistent with the Act and review the submittal guidelines. The information is available online at <http://www.harwich-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee>

If you have an idea for a project that would meet the requirements of the Community Preservation Act, then please bring that idea forward.

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by Kathy Green to open the Public Information Hearing.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Dave Nixon – Aye; Vice Chair Kathy Green – Aye; Mary Maslowski – Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Emily Brutti – Aye; Art Boden – Aye.

Motion passed unanimously.

Public Information Hearing opened:

Harwich Conservation Trust Board President Tom Evans thanked the CPC and the people of Harwich for supporting the HCT projects. Many may not be aware of what the CPC does. It's a lot of time and hard work. There was great collaboration between the HCT and the Harwich Fire Association on their recent project. By both organizations receiving grants and working together, they were able to leverage their resources and create something special. It was a great partnership. It gives the town access to recreation and preservation.

Mary Maslowski asked what the HCT wanted from the CPC going forward. Any future plans for recreation and preservation focused projects being considered?

Harwich Conservation Trust Executive Director Mike Lach spoke to a watershed conservation idea.

Handout. Open CPC Project Update Status Report on the 2020 Article #34 Rental Assistance Project was presented by Harwich Housing Authority Executive Director Tracy Cannon. She offered that there are 8 families participating in the Rental Assistance Program. The numbers of this voucher program are maxed out right now. No new applications are being accepted because the town has a new rental assistance program.

Of the originally funded \$200,000, there is a balance of \$89,000 on account, with \$61,000 encumbered. At the end of the program, funds can be rescinded to the CPC accounts. The final payment is set for April 2028. Note: There can be changes to the current encumbered numbers. For example, if a family moves off the program (options that will make changes include if a family moves away from Harwich, or if their income increases disqualifies their participation) the numbers would change.

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The in-depth case management of the participants was discussed. At the end the three-year program term, what planning instruction was offered? How are they going to manage their budgets without the assistance? Like other towns, Harwich has subcontracted out their rental assistance programs.

It was offered that the stipend may be higher in the Trust's program. The State level has evolved. Now the State sets the numbers by Zip code. Harwich has high rents. A higher stipend would be more in line with what is needed in town. The HHA had to "beat the bushes" for participants in this last rental assistance program. The program started when there was a waiting list from their prior funded program. The problem is what qualifies in the numbers in rent and incomes. The rents are too high, and the affordable inventory is too low, to help a higher number of applicants. The HHA also does the Massachusetts Renal Voucher program, which is different from this program. Tracy understands that Massachusetts is one of the lowest States taking federal funds in this area.

A motion was made by Kathy Green, seconded by Mary Maslowski, to close the Public Information Hearing.

VOTE: Chair Dave Nixon - Aye; Vice-Chair Kathy Green - Aye; Mary Maslowski – Aye; Emily Brutti - Aye; John Ketchum - Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; and Art Boden – Aye.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Public Information Hearing Closed at 6:27 PM, returned to the Regular CPC meeting.

IV. REGULAR CPC MEETING

A. Approval of Meeting Minutes: May 8, 2025

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by Marcy Vigneau, to approve the May 8, 2025 CPC Meeting minutes.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon – Aye; Vice Chair Kathy Green – Aye; Mary Maslowski – Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Emily Brutti – Aye; Art Boden – Aye.

Motion passed unanimously.

B. New Business:

i. Open CPC Projects – Update Status Report Presentation:

Harwich HDHC Historic District Historical Commission

2020 Article #31 (1) Update of Town Historic Areas and Property Inventory Project,

\$34,500. Presented by HDHC Bob Doane.

Handout. The project is updating the 100 Year Historical Building List. Documenting clusters of houses in Harwich Villages. Also documenting other categories in the MACRIS database. When the project is complete, 96 homes will have been researched. Two properties on the list have been demolished since the project began. Two new properties took their spots on the research list. The winning bid was \$33,800. HDHC Bob Doane reported the project is 65% complete right now. They have spent \$21,709, with a balance of \$12,090 on account. They have \$0 in contingency. Mr. Doane estimated the project will be completed in August 2025.

These properties are mostly located in Harwich Port, and a few in Harwich Center.

Note: the buildings on the 100 Year Building List require a waiting period of one year prior to demo. The town has 18 months delay now. This update is of the 2015 inventory list. When the work is complete, the assembled document will go to the State. They will validate it. It will then go to MACRIS. This is a step before the National Register Database. The 2015 list is available digitally. This new document can be digitized and added as an amendment. That is not planned as part of this project though.

This and the original inventory list suffered great delays in completion. Retaining consultants to finish the work is a problem. Work was lost with the system changes in the MACRIS records. The MACRIS entries must be done by hand.

In addition to the street addresses, it was suggested the HDHC think about geocoding the listings, the process of converting human-readable location of the listings into geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude).

Bob was thanked for all the legwork on identifying the properties and then narrowing down the list to be worked on.

ii. Vote to Rescind: ATM 2023 Article #31 Senior Memorial Field Restroom Project, \$150,000

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A motion was made by Kathy Green, seconded by Mary to rescind the 2023 ATM Article #31 Senior Memorial Field Restroom Project, \$150,000.

Discussion: The Senior Softball League has removed their contribution offer. Currently the restroom is not a priority for them. Without their contribution, the budget is not covered.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon – Aye; Vice Chair Kathy Green – Aye; Mary Maslowski – Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Emily Brutti – Aye; Art Boden – Aye.

Motion passed unanimously.

iii. Discussion: Grant Agreements

The grant agreements are a contract that the town should issue, not the CPC. The CPC has to sign the paperwork, not create the document. We would like to iron-out some wrinkles. Dave would like to have a joint session with the Select Board to review the grant agreement points. The CPC doesn't control how the funds are distributed. The grant agreements should be readied and available by July 1, the beginning of the new fiscal year.

The discussion moved to the importance of the Harwich Affordable Housing Trust having a grant agreement. The Trust and the CPC agreed to remove the three-year time limit from their grant agreement, but the CPA funds come with their own spending restrictions. Last year's grant agreement was signed by the Trust, but the Select Board wouldn't sign it. The application is a contract, but the Community Preservation Coalition suggests Housing Trusts have a grant agreement in place. The grant agreement spells out the basics, so we are all on the same page. Since the Harwich Affordable Housing Trust began requesting CPA funds, the Harwich CPC has followed the Yarmouth CPC path of funding their Trust. Now we learned Yarmouth doesn't require their Trust to have a grant agreement.

It was agreed the CPC will request a Joint Session with the Select Board to discuss grant agreements. Dave will request.

iv. Discussion: Suggestions for online application

John has uploaded the new CPC application online. He changed the dates and added text to last year's version. He requested the committee to review it inline. The committee members can try filling out an application and submitting it as a test to work out any bugs. John can remove these tests afterwards.

Also, for the online application, Kathy will create the Update Status Report Form. By creating a uniform format to follow in reporting, project managers can fill out a short form and submit to the CPC. Updates are required bi-annually.

C. Old Business:

i. Follow up: Social Media - Emily Brutti

Emily has worked with the Harwich Chamber of Commerce on upcoming posts on their sites. She will spotlight projects. She will post that the new application is now online. She would like to do an interview with Dave or Kathy, as committee officers.

D. Other:

E. Next meeting's Agenda points:

The next scheduled meeting on July 10th may not be needed depending on the outcome of the grant agreements discussion in the Joint Session with the Select Board. TBD.

F. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mary Maslowski, seconded by John Ketchum, to adjourn.

Vote: Chair Dave Nixon – Aye; Vice Chair Kathy Green – Aye; Mary Maslowski – Aye; Marcy Vigneau – Aye; John Ketchum – Aye; Emily Brutti – Aye; Art Boden – Aye.

Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment 7:27 PM