



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Southwick

454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY, SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

Community Preservation Committee

Telephone (413) 569-6056 - Fax (413) 569-5284

Town Web Site: www.southwickma.org

Minutes

March 10, 2021

6:00 PM Zoom Meeting (recorded)

ATTENDANCE: Chris Pratt, Acting Chair
Jeanne Reed-Waldon
John Whalley III
Beth Thomas
Deborah Herath
Bryan Walker *
Ruth Preston
Dave Spina *
Dennis Clark -unpaid consultant
Susan Corey CPC Secretary

Absent: Joanne Horacek

*** not present for entire meeting**

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Project petitioners Select Board: Russ Fox, Doug Moglin and Joe Dee Dee, Karen DeMaio and Terry Mish, Finance Board, Marcus Phelps, Jim Putnam and Lee Hamberg Historic Committee.

6:00 p.m. Community Preservation Committee Meeting

REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Written Minutes

(Not verbatim-comments can be heard on the studio tape www.southwick.org)

- C. Pratt opened the meeting at 6:00 P.M.
- C. Pratt requested a review of the minutes of the February meeting which were available at that date. No vote taken.

New Business :

- C. Pratt requested that the first of the new projects be presented.
- R. Fox gave an overview of the 2 projects they are looking to complete an analysis of repairs needed on the 2 historic structures in town the Fire Station and Town Hall.

#1 R. Fox representing the The Select Board, petitioner, explained in 2019 they had Tighe & Bond study the Fire Station roof and now they have to do an analysis of the repairs that were going to be needed. They wish to retain Russo Barr Associates to determine the extent of the structural issues and create a detailed report of the problems and repairs that will be needed. They were asking for \$5000.00.

- D. Clark shared his screen showing the application and proposal and structure.
- C. Pratt asked about the historical designation and said the Historical Committee would like to see this under historical designation.
- R. Fox stated the \$5000.00 was to do the analysis of the slate roof and cupola repairs. He stated the historical importance of the structures and that Tighe & Bond had cited the structural issues but it is now time to move forward. He added that obtaining an analysis from Russo & Barr was the first step, taking core sampling of the masonry, gutters and making recommendations also for the cupola.
- B. Thomas would lie a copy of the request.

A MOTION was made by J. Whalley to approve study in the amount of \$5000.00 and B. Thomas second the motion. A roll call vote was taken the vote-unanimous.

B. Thomas yes
J. R. Waldron yes
J. Whalley yes
C. Pratt yes
D. Herath yes

#2 The Select Board's second project proposal \$85,000.00 for analysis of the Town Hall roof repair, (Consolidate School) was explained, again by R. Fox, Selectman

- R. Fox introduced Mr. Jim Putnam, retired Town Moderator and member of the Finance Committee, to explain his opinion of the project and share some background on his knowledge of the historic significance of the current Town Hall, Old Consolidated School, relating to the history of the town. He referenced his knowledge of the buildings conversion in 1981 and his experience on the Finance Committee and then cited the historical article in the Southwoods News Paper and an antidote from a prior selectwoman, Mrs. Vivian Brown indicating the historic importance and long standing interest in preservation of the building. He said he was strongly in support of this project now as a member of the Historical Commission.
- R. Fox stated the \$85,000.00 was to secure the services of Russo Barr Assoc. to make a complete analysis of the roof and the structural issues with the Town Hall, make recommendations as to the repairs, follow through on bids and handle the issues that might develop on this project.

- R. Fox explained the voters in the past were supportive of the conversion of the old school to become the town hall in the early 90's and the importance of maintaining its structural integrity was important to the town's voters and the taxpayers have made a commitment to maintaining this building. He asked for serious consideration.
- C. Pratt asked if the \$85,000.00 was just for the study of the roof.
- R. Fox stated that was just an estimate.
- J. Whalley asked if that was just for the study and nothing to fix it.
- R. Fox responded that it was correct and is only an estimate.
- B. Thomas asked for clarification that it was \$5,000.00 for the Police Station and \$85,000.00 for the Town Hall.
- R. Fox said it is a similar amount that was spent on the Fire Station analysis, the recommendations, bid process and the follow through handling all issues that come up.
- D. Herath inquired how do we know what is historical if it is not in the registry of historical records?
- R. Fox asked for information from L. Hamberg not yet available and said it is in the historical records.
- B. Thomas responded that the sheet she saw had the school registered on the states list, MACRA, but not the (fire) Police Dept. and asked if there was more information on that on our local list.
- D. Herath was more looking at the procedure that he felt more information needed to be gathered about what qualified as historical.
- C. Pratt asked to defer to Lee Hamburg on this issue of the building's historical status and the fact the building was historic, but not necessarily the roof.
- L. Hamberg stated the rood in itself is not historic because it has been redone since the building was constructed and additions had been put onto the building. The building was deemed historical, but not the roof because the renovation was not in keeping with the original materials or design.
- J. Reed Waldron expressed concern about asking for money to pay for a study and was not sure how that would qualify under the historical aspect.\
- R. Fox stated the town had previously deemed the building historical and has gone to great lengths to preserve it and the CPC has helped in the replacement of windows, auditorium upgrades and money has been used on projects for the Town Hall.
- J. Reed Waldron then asked if it would be better to ask for money for the repairs rather than the study.
- R. Fox said at this point they needed the study completed before they could move on and because of the funds already committed to preserve this building this was going to be necessary.
- D. Horath asked if the CPC could not appropriate the money it would then have to go to the taxpayers to approve the money.
- R. Fox stated the roof repair would likely be about \$30,000,000.00 and would need to do a possible debt exclusion like was done to revamp the schools with a note or bond issue and we need to find creative ways to address some of our issues. We are looking at some additional debt exclusions of or an override to 2 ½ and the detailed report needs to be done prior to that before the funds are needed and it is time sensitive.

- D. Clark stated there were internet issues and L. Hamburg and B. Walker had rejoined the meeting. (pause)
- K. DeMaio asked when the CPC voted to use funds to replace the cemetery fencing if it was replaced exactly as before to be considered historical.
- C. Pratt replied it was wrought iron.
- R. Fox stated not in all aspects of the original. He deferred to L. Hamberg
- L. Hamberg joins in.
- C. Pratt explained we were looking at whether CPC funds could not be allocated to the entire roof, citing the historical value and the fact the roof is now different.
- L. Hamberg explained the current roofs are entirely different and he stated the design is different and they cannot put a preservation restriction on a new feature like that and he felt it wouldn't qualify for CPC funds.
- C. Pratt asked if the request could be broken down differently.
- R. Fox asked for a ruling on what they could deem historical.
- C. Pratt did not see it being deemed historical after looking at the studies of what was allowable for CPA funding because it had to fit under either being in the state register or the town historical record.
- L. Hamberg replied that the Consolidated School was in Southwick's Inventory of Historic Places list.
- C. Pratt expressed concern that the study was for the entire building and asked if the roof was deemed historical including the newer additions.
- L. Hamberg agreed and stated if the plan was just for the old section or ambitious enough to remove the hip roof and restore it to its original design then yes you could use CPC funds, but this is not the plan.
- D. Moglin thought the committee should look at the entire historic nature of the whole structure and not the specific feature because if the roof fails the structure is no longer preserved.
- C. Pratt said yes we can use CPC funding for making the building usable, and this might fall under that but possibly not for the entire building because it is not all historical. He cited the windows and the stage improvements.
- R. Fox responded that without the roof repairs the entire building would be compromised.
- J. Whalley offered the suggestion inquiring if they could get separate quotes for the original building and the rest.
- The roof designs and sections of the building were discussed.
- R. Fox said he could ask Russo Barr to give separate estimates.
- J. Whalley stated it would be easier to vote on.
- C. Pratt suggested they come back with a new proposal.
- L. Hamberg discussed the original roof design with levels, roofs and windows.
- J. Whalley suggested they submit 2 bids.
- L. Hamberg and others discussed the length of time the various sections were to be considered historic, since one addition was done in 1954.
- J. Whalley then requested they obtain 3 quotes.
- C. Pratt suggested they move to disqualify the stated project as proposed until it is rewritten with the 3 quotes.

A MOTION was made by J. Whalley and second by D. Herath to disqualify the current proposal and for the Select Board, petitioner, to obtain 3 separate bids.

A roll call vote was taken - unanimous.

C. Pratt yes
J. Reed Waldron yes
B. Thomas yes
D. Herath yes
B. Walker (lost internet)
R. Preston yes

C. Pratt We will be looking for a new proposal at the next meeting.

- C. Pratt asked if the members reviewed the proposed articles for the Town Meeting.
- D. Clark stated there were some housekeeping issues to move money into each account and additional articles for bonding and the amounts to be determined by the town accountant. These will go to the town council for review.
- C. Pratt mentioned the Lake Alum, questions for protocols and procedures and the 3 projects approved at the February meeting: 1. The North Pond Trails, 2. The Old Library Stained Glass windows, 3. The Housing section of the Master Plan.
- C. Pratt then mentioned that there was a private citizen asking for lots of information and they did not have the staff or a way to currently handle the request. He suggested they investigate a way to handle the situation. They will be investigating ways to cover this and that is partially the reason to have their administrative funding in order.
- J. Whalley asked if we used the 5% this year.
- C. Pratt wants to be sure they get an accounting of when it is withdrawn and the purpose.
- D. Clark stated the request for information funding will come from the person requesting the information and should not come out of the committee funds as per a conversation with Michelle Hill Town Accountant. Once it is determined the amount of time and costs they might narrow down their search or request.
- C. Pratt stated there was no staff currently capable of doing this cumbersome task and he believes the time frame of 10 days was not reasonable and he let the applicant know that.
- J. Reed-Waldron asked if there was a penalty if they could not meet the 10 days and also stated that it clearly states that the charges fall on the person requesting the information.
- C. Pratt stated he had spoken and emailed the party and let him know the cost might be exorbitant, and we did not have an estimate for it and he did not seem to be discouraged by the amount of money it might cost.
- D. Herath asked if they would be willing to change the time frame.
- J. Whalley suggested they pay their unpaid consultant.
- D. Herath asked if the requester was at this time willing to change the time frame.
- C. Pratt replied it wouldn't fall under the 10 days and he understood that.
- S. Corey interjected that there had been a written request sent asking for a 30 day extension.
- J. Reed Waldron asked if anyone knew the reason for the request.
- C. Pratt asked if there was information he would like first and the requestor just replied that he just wanted everything.