

Oak Bluffs Community Preservation Committee  
P.O. Box 1327  
Oak Bluffs, MA

02557 – 1327



Joan Hughes, Chairman  
Jevon Rego, Vice Chairman  
Amy Billings  
Marie Doubleday  
Stephen Durkee  
Bo Fehl  
Charles Rock  
Alison Shaw  
James Westervelt  
Margaret Knight, Admin. Assis't

**Oak Bluffs Community Preservation Committee Minutes**

January 11, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Present: Joan Hughes, chair, Jevon Rego, vice-chair, Amy Billings, Steve Durkee, Alison Shaw, Bo Fehl, Charles Rock, James Westervelt

Also Present: Margaret Knight, CPC admin. assistant, Peter Bradford, Maura McGroarty, Brian Hughes

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m.

**Minutes:**

The minutes from CPC meeting on November 30 were approved with corrections; Jim abstained. Minutes from CPC meeting on December 7, 2015 were approved.

**Discussion of 2015 project applications**

It was agreed to discuss the 14 remaining applications (out of 16 original ones) on the basis of their merit without deciding funding numbers at this meeting. Margaret said the Lagoon Pond Well renovation project had been withdrawn; the water district will raise its own funds. Featherstone's outdoor stage project had been voted not-eligible by the CPC at a previous meeting.

**Kuehn's Way Affordable Housing**

Margaret related other towns' vote on this regional project: WT voted \$100K, Vineyard Haven voted \$200K, Edgartown voted \$100K, Chilmark voted \$33K.

Charles questioned maintaining past CPC policy against supporting AH initiatives in other towns in favor of encouraging IHT and others to work in OB. Alison said although she supported that in the past, she found this project interesting. Joan said she liked the approach of a larger regional project like this. She said 1 house on 1 lot doesn't solve the AH problem. She said she'd heard there were still some problems with abutters. Jevon said Philippe had said they had been resolved, and that the project had been downsized from Bridge's original plan, plus the housing cluster was moved away from one problem abutter. Charles expressed concern that CPC funds would be used for up-front costs, citing the failure of Bradley Square with loss of upfront CPC money.

Bo said 16 of the 22 units were going to Tisbury, and the other units divided among the other towns left OB with .04 units. Joan said that with the loss of an OB resident to a unit created in another town, OB was subsidizing AH in another town, and that the CPC had wanted units built in OB. Charles said there would be a managerial problem in the future in ensuring a unit stays designated for an OB resident.

Joan said this grant would be for upfront costs, but that Philippe is good at getting state/federal money. She said she is hoping some of the larger OB tracts of land can be used for AH developments, and that OB can't fairly ask other towns for help when it has not supported their regional projects. Steve said in recent years there is more thought of looking at AH as an island-wide issue. Alison said the larger the project, the more innovative it is. Jevon said he'd rather see AH developed in OB, but with the success of regional projects he is more in agreement with island-wide AH, and that OB may be going to other towns for funds in the future. He said IHT has a great track record with getting projects done. He said he'd like to support this project at least to some extent.

Jim said he thought there was a problem with town funds being used for buying land in another town. Maura questioned buying land in another town for AH. It was decided to ask Stuart or Michael. Peter said Philippe presented the project to the AHC as having already bought the land. Bo read from the application showing that the OB funds would go toward the cost of the land. He said Tisbury is only paying 43% of the total but getting 73% of the units. He said the other towns were putting in 57% of the money but only yielding 27% of the units. Margaret said Tisbury was planning to give the other \$100K of the total request of \$300K next year. Bo said he'd included the full amount in his calculations. Joan said many things would benefit from being seen as island-wide. Steve said it would send a positive message about this project which partners IHT and Land Bank, has a green area, and is still close to downtown. There was some discussion of how the dollar requests were made to each town as the 50/50 formula was not used.

There was discussion of the idea that it doesn't make sense to think of losing an OB resident if someone gets a unit in a OB-supported project in another town. Alison said she wouldn't have voted differently on past regional AH projects in other towns but likes this one. Others agreed about this project. Amy said it was smart; Jevon said it would make a dent in the problem.

#### Rental Assistance:

There was general support for this, and mention that the request is down because there is a better market for summer rentals.

#### Towanticut Corner AH:

Marie was not present to speak about this. Peter Bradford said the AHC requested money from the AH Trust for title research and perc test on the Towanticut lot. He said he wanted to do title and perc on all the properties but there hasn't been a chance to discuss it as there hasn't been an AHC meeting. He said he agreed with the CPC's request for an actual design and clearer budget. Jevon asked about tabling the request. Joan said the application was written as a two part request and that she could see adding some money to the request for title work. Peter said \$4K was voted to do the title and perc work on Towanticut. Peter suggested postponing the discussion to the next meeting as Marie might be there and the AHC might have met. He said the AHC included only him, Marie, and Kathy, as Walter had resigned. Peter thought the AHC should look at all their properties rather than just one, but wanted to discuss his ideas with the AHC.

Amy asked about earmarking funds for AH if they get a proposal together by ATM. Joan said it would have to be on the warrant, but there is the possibility of a STM for making a grant. Peter said the AHC needed to get a consensus but he thought the Towanticut property should be a homeowner-build project with the land subsidized, rather than a \$550K house that they could only sell for \$250K. Alison suggested selling off the lots and putting the money in a coffer to do something bigger. Peter said if the island planning boards make a housing production plan for each town, it would give some guidance. He said there are only 1 or 2 larger resident homesite lots (with the town holding title to a few more) that would be viable for larger housing projects. Jevon re-emphasized that the CPC is interested in supporting smart AH development in the town. Joan said they could keep money in reserve for AH if a grant is not made this round.

#### Historic Records Restoration:

Charles said it would be hard to deny this request because of past CPC support for similar projects. Jevon said it falls within the scope of what the CPC should be doing. Joan said she trusts David Bailey to do it well. In response to Steve's question about the records' availability to the public, Margaret said she thought they would be available digitally.

Bo said he thought a town-wide plan should be developed about how to deal with records in the future, that someone should be in charge of historic records. Alison said the CPA requests come from different departments; Jevon said this is the first request from the assessors. Joan said each department operates separately. She said she couldn't see not giving this to Dave, but could recommend that the departments get together and make a plan for future record preservation. Jevon said this should be a budgeted cost that goes through all the departments. Bo said maybe the librarians should take it on.

#### Historic Lantern Replacement:

Charles questioned whether there would be more continuity with using the elliptical fixtures rather than the ball fixtures, which are only in Ocean and Nashawena parks. Alison said the globes are more distinctive, and are more historically accurate, that they are in the original pictures included with the application. She said the harbor and downtown are separate so there is not a need to follow the style of lanterns in those areas. She said the scale and number of lanterns is wrong now, which is why she is increasing the number of lanterns and lowering them. She said Sea View Ave. has 170 feet between lanterns now, while the harbor has 37-40 feet between them, and North Water Street has 70 feet between lanterns. She said more closely-spaced lanterns provide visual continuity, and the shorter lanterns are closer to eye level in a series so are friendlier. She said the length of Sea View Ave. will be tied together by the lanterns. Now they are at 14' height with 170' between. Alison said she got an estimate from Granite City Electric, and that these lanterns came in at much lower cost. She said she wants to re-measure to figure out exactly how many lanterns are needed and how far apart they should be, but that the new estimate can stay within the amount already requested. Alison said she will be meeting with Friends of Oak Bluffs about them contributing. Alison said because of the trenching for the new electric service, the lanterns can be put anywhere, not just where they are now.

In response to Jevon's question about the lighting in the North Bluff project, Joan said the MVC is requesting down-lighting on the boardwalk similar to what's on the SSA and fish piers. She said the lights along the street are not part of that project, so they don't have to be down-lighting. She said they will be at a different elevation and can alternate with where the lights are placed along the boardwalk. Alison said the globe lanterns fit in more with other lantern styles. She said the continuation of the globes will re-enforce that the North Bluff is a

continuation of Sea View Ave. Alison said Richie had said they could be installed along Sea View in fall 2016, but that he would work with the N. Bluff project for timing with replacing those lanterns. In answer to Maura's question as to why the lanterns are not planned for in front of Inkwell, Alison said the telephone poles starting there have lights on them already, and that she'd like to see the lanterns extend to the end of the seawall if the poles get put underground. She said there are no globes lights down there now. Amy said the road turns into state-owned. Joan said there is a water drainage problem there now that the state needs to deal with as well.

#### Marine Hospital Window restoration:

Margaret said West Tisbury did not vote money for this project, Vineyard Haven voted the \$39K requested, Edgartown was not asked, and Chilmark did not vote money. Joan said OB was asked for more than any other town. In response to Jevon's question if anyone was strongly in support of funding this project, Amy said she liked what they are trying to achieve but wished it was done. Steve didn't like the "stockpiling" of CPA funds. Alison said it was hard to put so much money away for something so far in the future. Joan said the building will mostly be office space, not exhibit space. She said they have not budgeted money for the exhibits. Alison said the rooms with the best views will be offices. Jevon said there would be a meeting room in the hospital but the exhibition area would be a new building behind. Alison said there may be changes with the new executive director, and that this might be a year to not fund the project. Jevon said there were questions about whether to renovate or replace windows, and that the application budget was not nearly enough for replacement. Joan said everything has to be brought up to energy and stress codes with this project.

#### Tabernacle Benches and Chairs renovation:

Margaret said West Tisbury recommended the full request for \$30K, Chilmark was not asked, Edgartown recommended the full \$40K, and Tisbury recommended \$20K of a \$40k request. Jevon said he was in favor of supporting the project at some amount, and said the Tabernacle would probably be returning with requests for other renovation projects in the future. Alison said she'd like to support it (although \$400 per chair was high), and that the benches were there before the Tabernacle was even there. Joan said the Tabernacle is very important to OB's identity. Others agreed. Charles said the higher request to OB could be justified because of its importance to OB's identity. Alison said the Campground residents are also being asked to contribute.

In response to the question of why Chilmark was not asked, Jevon said they had a policy of only using 10% of their funds for regional projects unless there was a unanimous vote. Joan said much of their money is going toward AH.

Brian Hughes urged the CPC not to use public money for the project to repair the Tabernacle. He said the separation of church and state is an important issue for American democracy, and that public money should not be used to repair the inside of a church. Amy said they didn't see it as a church, but as an historic part of OB, and that the Tabernacle is used for a lot of things. Brian said it has an exemption as a church, and that taxpayers shouldn't be asked to support a church of which they are not a member. He suggested asking town counsel because the interior of a church is very different from the exterior, and that there was a MA court decision about that.

#### Tree Inventory:

Alison said that there was no duplication of efforts between the historic streetscape tree inventory and the parks assessment underway presently regarding trees in the parks, included

in the proposed inventory area. There was then some confusion and discussion about whether the tree study would be duplicated by including the parks. Amy said the park assessment would include all the downtown parks, and that she didn't want to ask for money to duplicate the study of trees. Amy said some people expressed to her they are adamantly against the town spending money for trees on private property. Alison said right now it's just a survey that can be done from the road, and that probably 95% of the trees in the survey area look like town-owned trees but are on private property. Joan said trees could possibly be made available to homeowners; Alison said CPA money could be available because those trees within 20' of public land are part of the visual canopy of the street.

Alison confirmed that the budget does not include money for actual tree replacement and does not include a survey of maintenance needs. She said the study estimate has gone up by a couple of thousand because of including the 20' of private property because that's where the trees along the street are. Alison said the study should help determine whether trees are on public or private property. She said Mark said the property lines are pretty much where the telephone poles are. Alison said the requested funds for mapping and removing dead trees would be in the context of them being replaced.

Jevon said he was in favor of this, and it was for little money. Joan said it's part of the historic view-scape of the street. Alison said the scope was limited so that it would be a trial run, and that it could include the rest of Cottage City and Copeland historic districts in the future. In response to Maura's question of tree replacement outside the historic districts, Jevon said he recalled Stuart talking about CPA funds being used to preserve a historic view over a farm that probably wasn't in a historic district. Joan said Barnes Road is a DCPC which includes historic view-scapes, so that could be eligible.

Executive Session to discuss strategy in connection with pending litigation entitled Hughes et al. v. the Town of Oak Bluffs :

At 8:10 there was a motion made and seconded to close the open meeting and go into executive session, and to not reconvene in open meeting after it. The vote was unanimous in favor of this. The executive session was adjourned at 8:25.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 25 at 7:00 p.m.**