

Community Preservation Committee

Minutes

Meeting: April 9, 2013

Place: Rockport Police Department

Next Meeting: May 14, 2013 7:00pm at police station.

Attending: Mary Francis, MaryAnn Lash, Mel Michaels, Stephen DeMarco, Ruth George, and Bethany Brosnan, Julie McMahon, Paul Sena

Guests: Fresnel Lens, Straitsmouth Light – Bill Whiting, Sid Wedmore, Paul St. Germaine

Town Owned Art - Bryan McMullen, Karen Sena-Berger,

Garden Club – (Knotweed Project) - Nan Blue, Laura Hallowell, Holly Yasaitis, Shannon Mason (Millbrook Meadow Committee)

Mary Francis, Chair, opened the meeting and opened the floor to anyone who would like to make a comment on any issues.

STRAITSMOUTH LIGHT APPLICATION -

Mary requested that Paul St. Germaine explain the request for funding of the project to the new committee members. He explained that they are looking to stabilize the lighthouse tower as a first phase as it would be too costly to completely restore the tower all at once. To date their committee has received \$129,000 in public contributions. He also explained that a minimal shoring of the windows should be considered during the first phase. Their projected completion date would be in 2014; with the \$25,000 they would hopefully get from the CPC. Mary spoke regarding the landing set-up. Paul indicated that a mooring has been installed and that the island is now easier to access and a dock is not needed. An old winch post will be used as well and trails have been cut to further access the lighthouse. Mel Michaels asked if the committee plans to come back in future years for funding. Paul said no, and that any other work should be covered through Capital Funding. Further discussion ensued regarding access to the island and public use of the island.

FRESNEL LENS RESTORATION-

Paul St. Germaine spoke regarding the two phases, the first of which will begin in May 2013. He explained that a special gallery would be created for the Lens. The second phase will begin sometime in 2014 and will involve moving the lens outside to the museum. The total requested is roughly \$46,000 for the completion of phase two; which will include repair of the lens and erecting of a specialized presentation base to showcase the lens above the floor. He indicated that there is a great deal of support from the public; there are 70 donors so far some of who do not live on Cape Ann. There is only

one other lens existing in MA and that is a museum on Cape Cod. This lens is a historical piece for Cape Ann and will also offer a sightseeing location for visitors to Cape Ann. CPC is being asked for only 8% of the overall cost. Paul also thanked Stephen DeMarco for his letter of endorsement. Mary Francis spoke regarding the brochure that explains the significance of the light and suggested that it should be made available to the general public. She further expanded regarding the value of promotional support of the project. Patty Edgerton asked whether or not the original time line is still on schedule. Paul indicated that yes, indeed it was. Cape Ann museum is hosting a special program regarding the lighthouse the May. Julie McMahan spoke with regard to the Gloucester CPC schedule. Paul indicated that he was not sure but would look into their schedule. He is sure funding would not be available from them until next year.

TOWN OWNED ART

Karen Sena-Berger spoke regarding the bidding process. Currently, there are six vendors bidding to restore the artwork. The valued, historic pieces are located in, Town Hall, Rockport High School, library, and the Rockport Firehouse. There is a total of 20 pieces, some of the pieces were given to the Town in 1936 and have not been touched since that time. Most of the pieces have been damaged by their environment and smoking. The pieces in school have been there since 1939, and several need frame restoration. The Town Hall and Firehouse pieces are from 1936 and the frames are original, period pieces. Harvard Restorers was brought in for the piece in 1936 and are experts on restoring historical pieces. Many of the frames from the 1930's were not originally done in gold but a base metal and need to be restored. Many pieces were donated as they are and after time they have appreciated and warrant being framed in gold. Patty Edgerton asked where the pieces would go after they are restored. Karen indicated that most of them will either go back to the Firehouse or Town Hall, but the firehouse is more secure. When the entire collection is complete, they will be available for view by the public. Further discussion ensued regarding the bidding on the sculptures. Karen would like to do a little more investigation regarding pricing before any decision is made. Bryan McMullen spoke regarding bidding on the bronze pieces. Mary Francis indicated that they should be requesting the top amount of their estimates at this point. Mel Michaels spoke regarding the continued storage and care of this artwork after they have been restored. Paul Sena spoke regarding the heating/air conditioning status at the firehouse. Karen indicated that age itself has damaged the artwork along with the environment of some of the pieces, but the current custodians have been made aware of the value of the pieces. Mel Michaels further asked if any additional money would be needed to keep these pieces in a healthier environment. Karen indicated that it would be beneficial to have the entire collection re-appraised. Bryan indicated that the most egregious problems have been addressed. Mel Michaels also asked questions regarding the cost of restoring one of the original frames. Bryan addressed the question and explained that due to the value of the painting, it behooves the town to restore the frame with gold which is much more durable. Karen spoke regarding the value of the total collection and what is involved. Further discussion ensued regarding which pieces made more sense to restore. Julie McMahan asked whether or not the verbal bids on the sculpture pieces could be accepted. Karen explained that due to the municipal bidding rule, the town couldn't work with verbal bids. Mary Francis thanked the guests for their time and encouraged getting the

general public involved.

GARDEN CLUB – Laura Hallowell opened by offering a review of the original application, along with conservation committee information. Frequent cutting of the knotweed has been on going. As a result the invasive weed has continued to respond by growing quickly. Knotweed removal commenced to give other species more space and a chance for survival. At the wetlands an approved weed application was used. Mary Francis asked Laura about the status project and where the funds should come from to continue the project. Laura indicated that the Garden Club and the Millbrook Meadow Committee gave a contribution of \$1,000 collectively. Laura would like to continue the pilot program for another year and indicated that the headlands should only cost \$500 this year for application. Millbrook Meadow Committee agreed that they would like to get rid of the invasive species without using herbicide, and that they met with someone to discuss other options. One of those options would be to send any knotweed harvested to the Franklin Park Zoo, as long as it has not been treated with herbicide. However, this process is extremely labor intensive. Two new areas considered for herbicide use would be (map #22) Headlands back path, Norwood Ave. Extension is 8ft. wide. A more controversial area is on Mill Pond, Millbrook Meadow (backs up to Holbrook Ct. & King St.). The Fire Chief has given permission to burn rather than use herbicide. Laura also indicated that using herbicide in that area would be captured by the soil and would not leach into the water. This area is also critical to the restoration of Millbrook Meadow. Shannon Mason indicated that the Millbrook Meadow Committee concurred that the area behind the pond must be cleaned. Mary Francis asked if the herbicide would be used in the Meadow. Laura and Shannon pointed out that only cutting of the knotweed would be done in the Meadow. Nan Blue spoke also regarding the same area. MaryAnn Lash questioned the use of herbicide and its safety. Laura stated that the Garden Club is hoping that funding could be provided for the same amount of \$2,500 as last year. Mary indicated that since it is still the same project, and that \$2,000 is actually being requested. Patty Edgerton asked if a simpler explanation could be provided for the general public regarding the use of herbicide and its safety. Laura Hallowell provided the following information: **Glyphosat (active ingredient of roundup) and Triclopir (does not kill grasses) both are safe for wildlife. To only approach the invasive by cutting will take at least 10-15 years.** Mel Michaels queried in regard to potency. Stephen DeMarco asked whether or not the Garden Club could piggyback their project with the restoration of Millbrook Meadow? Laura indicated that the Millbrook Meadow Project is not due to start for a year, and that a delay would allow the invasive knotweed to regain its chokehold on the areas in question. Paul Sena also concurred with Laura regarding the removal of invasives and he feels that if the town waits until the Millbrook Meadow project begins, it will be too late. Stephen DeMarco asked how many abutters of the pond agreed with the use of herbicides on their property. Mel Michaels spoke regarding completing the project sooner than later, he proposed that the money be taken out of the CPC Administrative Fund. Mel Michaels made a motion **as a continuation of the knotweed project under the auspices of the Garden Club that funding be taken from the administrative fund to continue the project this year.** Stephen DeMarco seconded. Mary Francis questioned why the Garden Club couldn't pay for this project, as it has substantial funds available. Mel Michaels spoke regarding the projects benefit to the town and indicated that he sees no issue with the town paying for the project.

Maryann Lash spoke regarding the Garden Club's treasury, which has taken years to accumulate its fund and that the Club manages its money carefully and has increased its scholarships as well. Mary Francis spoke regarding the amount of volunteer labor and that the Garden Club should be more involved in the project overall. Nan Blue spoke regarding Millbrook Meadow being given to the town by the Garden Club, as it could not maintain the property. She further spoke to the large amount of money being asked for by the Millbrook Meadow Committee. Laura Hallowell pointed out that many of the Garden Club members are elderly and cannot physically do the labor needed. Further discussion ensued regarding the contributions for the town and garden club on the project. Paul Sena spoke regarding the DPW not spending much time or funds in the Meadowbrook Meadow, he further inquired as to what the Garden Club brings in from their fund raisers. Mel Michaels moved to vote on the motion to fund the knotweed project. Those in favor of supporting ongoing project from admin 8 yays, 1 abstinence.
Carried.

Mary thanked the Garden Club members for coming in.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE – Stephen DeMarco

Stephen DeMarco addressed the committee regarding the original application for acquiring consulting services to extend the Historic District on Bear Skin Neck. He further explained that in the meantime Massachusetts Historic Commission gave \$10,000 for the project. He explained that many of the properties on the Neck are old historical fish shacks. If the committee goes to Town Meeting and asked to extend the historic district extensive documentation is needed. Fifty properties were inventoried with another 25 to be included. Rockport Historical Commission solicited proposals and had responses from as far as Pennsylvania. Wendy Frontiero responded to the recent proposal. What needs to be done now is outreach to the public at large and residents on Bear Skin Neck. The project would cost roughly \$35,000. JK Mason Trust fund will provide \$5,000, \$10,000 from the State of Massachusetts. Some of the projected expenses are as follows: **Wendy ?? (Consultant) with a request for \$15,000 and \$2,500 to \$4,000 for an outreach consultant.** \$20,000 will take the committee through the complete process up to town meeting. After town meeting they will report back to the state and it will be recorded. Phase two would be to create a new map showing the new district. Capture the entire area of the harbor; White Wharf and Bear Skin Neck. Phase II would be to discuss the possibility of looking over the base of the town for buildings and new districts that could be designated historic. The areas of Granite Street and King Street have some of the oldest homes in town. Numerous properties have been inventoried and filed with the state; no new districts have been designated. Phase III Historical Commission operates on a budget of \$150.00 per year designated by the Selectmen. The primary focus of the Commission is the inventorying of proposed buildings. Maryann Lash spoke regarding the hiring of the consultant and whether or not a member of the committee could not do the same work. Stephen addressed the amount of time and research involved to do a report with such detail. Each member of the Historical Commission already puts in ample time and it behooves the town to hire a professional to do the inventorying. Historical Commission looks at the at-large preservation of historic districts in the town. Mel Michaels spoke regarding the value of the process if the area does not become a

historic district. Stephen spoke regarding the area 100 years ago compared to what we see today. It is that by going through the process you have recorded the historic fabric for future generations. As the buildings evolve, most of the records will be lost. Mass Historical Society mindset is one of salvaging records before its too late. Paul Sena indicated that the town historic records going back 100 years are mostly postcards. He also spoke regarding the town of Rockport being a business that supports several departments and committees. Patty Edgerton spoke regarding the effect that the mega storms have had on Bear Skin Neck, and whether or not any damage done must be restored as is or restored to modern standards. Stephen DeMarco understood that FEMA of Boston indicated that regulations might be relaxed due to it being a historic district.

Mary Francis thanked Stephen for his time and information.

March meeting minutes- motion given by Stephen DeMarco and seconded by Maryann Lash. Minutes were accepted. *Carried.*

Calendar for 2013 Application Review:

May – Millbrook Meadow Park Committee, Tennis Court Committee

A motion to adjourn the meeting was brought by Mel Michaels. Stephen DeMarco seconded. *Carried.*