

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
RECORD OF MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS
JANUARY 11, 2007**

The Community Preservation Committee of the Town of Weymouth held a public meeting on Thursday, January 11, 2007, at 7:00PM at McCulloch Building, Whipple Center Conference Room, 182 Green Street, Weymouth, MA.

Present: Walter Flynn, Chairman
Arthur Mathews, Vice-Chairman
Adrienne Gowen, Clerk
Brian O'Halloran
Christopher Hannan
Lawrence Lambros
Stephen Ford
Tom Curtis

Not Present: James Cunningham

Also Present: James Clarke, Director of Planning & Community Development
Liz Cicchese, Weymouth Cemetery Commission
Deb Sullivan, Weymouth Cemetery Commission

Recording Secretary: Christine Callbeck

At 7:00PM Chairman Flynn called the meeting to order and noted that James Cunningham was not present.

Cemetery Commission - Presentation of Funding Request

Chairman Flynn welcomed the ladies of the Cemetery Commission and advised them that their proposal is the CPC's first proposal. Ms. Sullivan began the proposal stating that the Cemetery Committee estimates that they have a needs assessment of approximately \$5,000 - \$10,000, to have the land at both Reed Cemetery and Elmwood Cemetery evaluated. Ms. Sullivan gave a slide show presentation which showed the current state of the Reed and Elmwood Cemeteries. Mr. Hannan asked outside of the eight cemeteries in the Weymouth Cemetery Commission, how many others are there. Ms. Sullivan stated that there are five privately owned cemeteries. Chairman Flynn asked if any of the other five cemeteries are of historical significance. Ms. Sullivan stated that all 13 cemeteries have historical significance dating back to 1840. Ms. Cicchese stated that town owned cemeteries are made of land given to the town as unusable farm land.

Reed Cemetery, Front Street, Weymouth, MA

Reed Cemetery contains the remains of 12 Revolutionary War soldiers, 2 Civil War soldiers, and 2 Spanish/American War soldiers.

Ms. Sullivan gave a slide show presentation showing the damage to the grounds, grave markers, brush is overgrown. Ms. Sullivan stated that some graves are hidden under the grass, graves covered in brush, poison ivy, partial stone wall is buried. Ms. Sullivan further stated that some trees need to be removed, there are many sink holes, and stones have fallen off their bases. Ms. Sullivan stated that the grounds are currently maintained by the Damon family. The Damon family mows the entire cemetery every two weeks in the summer months. Ms. Sullivan stated that, per the new regulations, the items that the Damon family has placed at their family's site are inappropriate and must be removed. Mr. Lambros asked is there a plot where deeds are actually available. Ms. Sullivan stated, yes, there are plots available per a plot plan done in the early 1900's.

Mr. Mathews asked if the Cemetery Committee has ever considered selling a couple of lots to pay for maintenance. Mr. Mathews further stated that in his prior experience on town council situations such as this have come up before and after 3 or 4 years it will come up again for the same overgrowth issue. Mr. Mathews stated a fund to pay for maintenance might be the answer to this issue. Ms. Sullivan stated that the Cemetery Commission looked into selling a few lots and taking the money and putting it into exactly that kind of fund to maintain the land. Ms. Sullivan further stated that she was told that the lots are town owned land and so the money must go to the town. Mr. Mathews stated that he wonders if there might be some way around that rule. Mr. Mathews further stated, for example, the high school parking lot is not town owned but they charge students \$25 per year for a parking space and that money goes into a revolving fund to pay to have the parking lot maintained and it also pays for crossing guard fees. Mr. Mathews stated that this might be an issue to bring to Mr. Wilson. Chairman Flynn stated he had an objection to adding modern amenities and technology to a historic cemetery, while at the same time it is being preserved and stabilized as a historic cemetery. Mr. Hannon questioned the regulations regarding entering cemeteries and making repairs. Ms. Sullivan stated that their intentions are to fill in the sink holes properly so that the public can walk around and enjoy the cemetery. Mr. Lambros stated that there are standards for restoration.

Elmwood Cemetery, Union Street, Weymouth, MA

Elmwood Cemetery contains the remains of 9 Revolutionary War soldiers, 1 Mexican/American War soldier, and 21 Civil War soldiers.

Ms. Sullivan stated that there are 373 known burials. The Cemetery Committee is still cataloging the older section and probing for more stones. Ms. Sullivan stated that recently two Eagle Scouts have done some maintenance. Chairman Flynn stated that now that the Cemetery Committee has a proposal submitted and pending approval or rejection of the CPC, Chairman Flynn would suggest that if the Cemetery Committee is approached regarding the offer of free maintenance, they should decline the offer. Mr. Lambros asked if the Cemetery Committee has thought of soliciting some of the Veterans Groups who might have an interest in participating in some of the funding of a project such as this.

Ms. Sullivan stated that 1756 is the date of the first known grave. The slide show presentation continued to show the damage to the grounds, grave markers, brush is overgrown, trees need to be

removed, fences repaired, stones repaired, landscaping work, missing gate replaced, sink holes filled in for safety. Ms. Sullivan stated that the Cemetery Committee has a partial plot plan of the Elmwood Cemetery. Ms. Sullivan further stated that the woman who maintained the plot plans got sick and went into hospital in the 1960's, gave the forms to someone at Town Hall to hold onto until she returned. The woman subsequently passed away. The records disappeared. Chairman Flynn suggested an amnesty program to recover historical records. Chairman Flynn further stated that as a town entity the CPC should make a proposal to Mayor Madden, to have an amnesty program regarding the records associated with Elmwood Cemetery.

Mr. Mathews stated that as our first CPC proposal, Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Cicchese gave a great presentation. Mr. Mathews further questioned out of the eight town owned cemeteries in Weymouth, why not have all cemeteries assessed instead of just these two. Ms. Cicchese replied that it was suggested that the Cemetery Commission take "baby steps" in their restoration and preservation proposal. Ms. Cicchese further stated that she would like to see the Cemetery Commission receive the funds appropriate to get the work assessed and then completed on the two cemeteries and then come back to the CPC with another proposal to do another two cemeteries.

Mr. Mathews asked, has the Cemetery Commission looked in to an RFQ or RFP? Ms. Cicchese stated that Bob O'Connor is walking the Cemetery Commission through the process. Mr. Mathews suggested include everything and be as specific as possible. Mr. Mathews asked the Cemetery Commission if they had thought of soliciting a landscaping company to do work with sign stating "maintenance by XXXXX landscaping company." Mr. Mathews further stated, it would work similar to the adopt-an-island program. Mr. Mathews asked Jim Clarke, will the town have to pay for the legal posting of the RFP.

Mr. Clarke stated that it would have to be put into the central register and could, additionally, be posted on the town's web site.

Chairman Flynn stated the CPC recommends that the Cemetery Commission obtain an RFQ or RFP for individually Reed Cemetery, individually Elmwood Cemetery, and jointly Reed and Elmwood Cemetery. Chairman Flynn asked that the request for proposal be as comprehensive as possible. Chairman Flynn further stated the Cemetery Committee should then come before the CPC and submit a formal proposal. Chairman Flynn further stated that if the cost can be born by the Town of Weymouth, then so be it; but, if not, come back to the CPC as a separate proposal for the funds to support the proposal. Chairman Flynn asked Mr. Clarke if it is possible to have Mr. Wilson attend the next CPC meeting. Mr. Clarke will find out and contact Chairman Flynn with the answer. Chairman Flynn thanked Ms. Cicchese and Ms. Sullivan for their presentation.

Other Business

Mr. Clarke announced that the CPC has received its second application from the Weymouth-Braintree Regional Recreation-Conservation District. Mr. Clarke stated that this is a land purchase request. Mr. Clarke further stated that some of the requests that the CPC receives for land

purchases are not going to be quite so straight forward. Mr. Clarke stated that the CPC needs to have a discussion on how to handle each issue. Mr. Clarke further stated that some people are not going to want to have this information public, for good reason. In order to do the best for the Town of Weymouth we need to get as good a deal as we can, and in all likelihood the CPC is going to have to go into Executive Sessions to deal with issues like that. Mr. Clarke suggested to Chairman Flynn that at the next meeting on January 25, 2007, one of the items on the agenda be a discussion of the procedures that CPC needs to have in place for when CPC is discussing land purchases. Mr. Clarke further stated that he has asked the Town Solicitor, George Lane to attend, so that he can fill you in on the open meeting law and the process that you need to go into and out of Executive Sessions, what is appropriate for Executive Sessions and what is not. Mr. Clarke stated that he feels it is important and useful for this committee, particularly since in the last few days some of these issues have come to a head. Mr. Clarke stated that he feels that the committee needs to have this discussion, so that members can ask questions and make sure that they are comfortable with the process that has been put together. Mr. Clarke stated that the Weymouth-Braintree proposal that is in, although it is public because they have submitted the application and it is being talking about at an Open Session, at some point there might be some compelling reason to go into Executive Session. Because the CPC might be discussing strategy as far as how CPC approaches the purchase and what CPC thinks is the best price to ask, counteroffers, and other things the committee needs to know is not public information, not for discussion among anybody else until the deal is done, or the issue is resolved.

Mr. Clarke asked Chairman Flynn if the CPC could solidify the date of February 8, 2007 as public hearing date. Chairman Flynn replied that February 8, 2007 is the public hearing date for fiscal year budget '08. Chairman Flynn further stated that all members should be thinking of the budget and how you would address recommendations for the budget.

Mr. Mathews asked Mr. Clarke, if CPC agrees to give Weymouth-Braintree Regional Recreation-Conservation District funding to purchase the land they are interested in, would that land be Town of Weymouth land? Mr. Clarke stated that he will defer that question to the Town Solicitor, George Lane at the next meeting.

Chairman Flynn stated that at the last meeting he stated that if anyone should have anything they wish to have included in the needs assessment document, they should e-mail it to him. Chairman Flynn further stated that no such documents were received, so what was sent to all members via e-mail is the last issue of the needs assessments. Mr. Hannan stated that two of his statements that were voted on to include were not on the list. Chairman Flynn stated that he did not include Mr. Hannan's two statements because they were not pertaining to town owned land. Mr. Clarke stated that he agrees with Mr. Hannan that the two statements were community needs not town needs. Mr. Hannan stated all of the listed needs are both private and public. Chairman Flynn stated that it was an editorial mistake and that Mr. Hannan's two statements will be included in the needs assessment.

Mr. Mathews made a MOTION to ACCEPT as corrected the CPC Community Needs Assessment. Mr. Hannan SECONDED the motion. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Mr. Mathews asked Mr. Clarke, is the Weymouth-Braintree Recreation issue a time-sensitive issue? Mr. Clarke stated he has not spoken with the Weymouth-Braintree people as yet. Mr. Clarke further stated that he will find out the answer and speak with Chairman Flynn.

Adjournment

At 9:15PM, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Mr. Mathews to adjourn and was SECONDED by Mr. Hannan. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Approved: _____
Walter Flynn, Chairman

Dated: _____