

APPROVED

**Town of Grantham
Capital Improvements Projects Committee Meeting
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2014**

The meeting of the Capital Improvements Projects (CIP) Committee was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on September 16, 2014 by Chair Peter Guillette. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South.

Members Present: Paula Bresnick; Peter Guillette; Bob MacNeil; Pat MacNeil

Others: Town Administrator Melissa White, Conservation Chair Sheridan Brown

Review of project request from the Conservation Commission:

Commission member, Sheridan Brown explained that they are working with the Open Space Committee (OSC) to compile an index and ranking system for open space. Brown stated their goal is to have a funding mechanism in place to enable them to purchase a parcel of land when it becomes available; that obtaining town meeting vote that gives the Selectmen the bonding authority to do that is what the Commission is seeking.

Brown explained the economic benefits of preserving the rural character of Grantham and stated they would be looking to seek Town Meeting approval in 2016. P. Bresnick asked if any properties had been identified. Brown explained that the Commission is still waiting for the open space index but there are some large parcels in the Dunbar Hill area where significant development could take place. Brown went on to say that granting the bonding authority to the Selectmen would enable the Commission to seek matching grants from agencies like the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), New Hampshire Audubon etc.

R. MacNeil stated that the town meeting votes for land preservation in recent years has failed because the commission hadn't identified a certain parcel of land; that the Land Preservation Capital Reserve Fund has about \$80,000 in it. Brown said that he sees the Land Preservation CRF to be used for purchasing smaller parcels like the 6.5 acres parcel on Route 10 North by Brookside Park they are in the process of purchasing. That parcel plus the land in Brookside Park can be used for recreational purposes such as hiking etc.

R. MacNeil discussed his concern with the tax burden being put on residents. Brown said the Commission understands that which is why the indexing work of the OSC is so crucial.

P. MacNeil asked if the Commission was aware of the problems the Library was having with fundraising for their expansion, if they were going to educate residents about the cost and benefits of land preservation as well as how the grant funding works. Brown said he didn't know what the strategies the Library had for their fundraising, but the Commission believes they have strong support from agencies like LCHIP and Audubon; that they wouldn't be seeking donations from residents.

There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of land preservation.

Adjournment

There being no further business, P. Bresnick moved to adjourn, seconded by R. MacNeil. **By majority vote, the Committee adjourned at 10:50 a.m.** The next CIP Committee meeting will be held on September 18, 2014 at 1pm in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room, 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

Respectfully submitted,

*Melissa White
Town Administrator*

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