

Shutesbury Community Preservation Committee

Meeting Minutes of March 12, 2020

Attending: Rita Farrell, Allen Hanson, Elaine Puleo, Chris Donta, Michael DeChiara

Absent: Margie Tighe-Saporito, Linda Avis-Scott

Guest : Doug Slaughter

Public: (during the public hearing section) Glen Stockton

1. Discussion of request of Regional High School track

- a. Reorientation of the track potential
- b. Artificial surface for interior field potential

Note: Still considering both a and b BEFORE the design phase

- c. Amount requested would not cover the full design project
- d. Time frame – it's a multi-year process meaning this will cover only the first half of design phase and then the rest of the design and full construction would be in the Regional budget and/or come back to CPA for more funds
- e. Have already researched that it is legal to use CPA funds as long as didn't use for artificial turf and building a stadium.
- f. Sense of the other towns' CPA use potential: Amherst is positive, Pelham also fairly positive, Leverett committee is relatively open to it - not as sure that it will go to town meeting.

2. Open Public Hearing at 6:30 of the Community Preservation Committee – opened by

Rita as she read the charge (see attached).

- a. Starting with the Amherst Regional School track:

- i. See attached budget
- ii. How is the budget created?

Response by Dough Slaughter:

The apportionment of Capital costs for regional schools is defined by a prescribed state formula using EQV (Equalized Valuations). The apportionment for a given community is its percentage of the total EQV of the member Towns. In the attached Excel sheet is a link to the state's description of EQV and the values used to calculate the amounts apportioned in each of the CPA requests to member Towns. The state recalculates the EQV values every two years. The numbers for 2018 are the most recent values available. (New ones for 2020 should be out in early May.)

The Regional School District is an "independent legal entity with statutory governance structures, and rights and obligations for their member

towns. Members pay an annual assessment to the regional district based on state requirements, the district's regional agreement, and town budget deliberations." (quoted text is from a DESE document regarding the history of Regional School

districts <http://www.doe.mass.edu/finance/regional/>) So the Regional School District owns the land but the member Towns control the Regional School District through its governance structures and therefore have the ultimate say in its use.

b. 2nd request from Jeff Lacey:

"Summit Park" at Shutesbury's highest point. This would contain not only "High Point Rock" but also a fine picnic spot with long sunrise views to the east over Quabbin Valley Mount Wachusett. There are three ownerships that may be involved, and that would have to be researched and owners approached. I think this would be a fine asset for the Town to own and provide for residents, especially considering the paucity of public recreation areas in Town.

This needs a sponsor and more research into who owns the land and what are the boundaries with respect to the cell tower land.

- c. Inquiry from Pioneer Valley Habit for Humanity to have money for the construction of the home. We gave \$28,000 for the acquisition of the land in 2020 budget. The question is: could they come back to the CPA? The general consensus of the committee is that we would definitely consider it.
- d. Creation of a walking path from the elementary school up to town hall.

Can CPA funds be used to engage an expert to determine the potential of both the Summit Park land and the walking path? Rita will check on whether we could put more money in the administration section of CPA fund so as to be able to fund the feasibility study.

- e. A community garden. It is eligible – the recreation committee is interested in working on this. Rita is checking in with Pelham about the community garden off of Meeting House Rd.

Closing the Public Hearing at 7:01

- 3. Approve meeting minutes of September 23, 2019 (revised)
- 4. Adjourned at 7:07