

Meeting Minutes
Stoughton Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
Meeting held in the SRA Office, 7 Pearl Street
Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Members Present: Chairperson Mark Zamanian and Member Rich Terry; Program Administrator (PA) Barry Kassler

Members Attending Remotely: Vice-Chair Dwight MacKerron, Treasurer Michael Barrett, Members John Morton and John Linehan [at 8:56]

Members Absent: Laurice Rubel, Donald Brady and Bunmi Olotu

Others Present: For Hebrew Senior Life: Deb Morse, VP for Real Estate; Kim Brooks, COO of Senior Living; Ricky Ochilo, Director of Asset Management; Barry Crimmins, Attorney. Also present was Recreation Director Matt Cauchon

Others Attending Remotely: Kevin Weldon of SMAC

Preliminary Items:

Mr. Zamanian read the Governor's Order authorizing remote meetings, explained that Governor Healey extended the order through March 31, 2025, and gave the remote link information for the meeting. Mr. Zamanian led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 1. Call to Order: MOTION: Mr. Terry moved to open the meeting at 7:04 pm; seconded by Mr. Barrett and so voted unanimously, 5-0: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye.**
- 2. Chairperson's Report:** Mr. Zamanian reported that two town boardmembers have had deaths in their families since our last meeting, including Ms. Rubel of this committee, whose brother passed away. The committee agreed to send a card and flowers to her from the CPC.
- 3. Administrator's Report:** Mr. Kassler reported that he had received an email from a company called Ecopreneur, which was co-founded by a former Stoughton resident and coordinates volunteers with projects. Mr. Kassler referred them to the School Department.
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** None. Mr. Zamanian reported that Town Accountant Bill Rowe has recently retired.
- 5. Public Comments:** None.

New Business:

6. Pre-Application from Hebrew Senior Life (HSL): Presenting on behalf of HSL was their attorney, Barry Crimmins. He noted that he serves on the Stoughton Housing Authority (SHA), and has previously served on the CPC. He stated that his client intends on having an item on the next Annual Town Meeting (ATM) warrant for CPA funding in support of the project, which would be built on property currently owned by HSL at the corner of Canton and Simpson Streets, consisting of a large vacant parcel – the former Lipsky Farm.

Kim Brooks, HSL Chief Operating Officer for Senior Living, noted that HSL is over 100 years old, and serves over 4,000 adults in the Greater Boston area. Their residences range from Independent Living to Long-Term Care to Assisted Living. Stoughton would be Independent Living. The organization also sponsors research into aging-related issues and provides training for over 600 medical professionals. HSL is currently focusing its growth on Senior Housing and related support services, due to the growing need. HSL is non-sectarian, and serves people of every faith. It is based in Roslindale, and its nearby locations include Canton, Dedham and Randolph.

Deborah Morse, HSL Vice President for Real Estate, noted that she met with Stoughton Housing Authority (SHA) Executive Director Colleen Doherty at the outset of the process, and was told that there are over 3,600 seniors on its waiting list for affordable housing. HSL will ask the Commonwealth to approve setting aside up to 70% of the project for current Stoughton residents. The project's goal is to create about 200 units of affordable senior housing on land owned by HSL. Initial site work, including wetlands and land surveying, has already been done, and they will have a Chapter 21E evaluation done to check for contaminants. The project layout is currently being designed, and will be in keeping with Stoughton's character. The largest existing buildings in Stoughton are the library and the high school, and the project will bear that scale in mind. They also will respect the open space on site.

Ms. Morse reported that HSL has been successful in leveraging funding for similar projects. They are anticipating leveraging \$40 in State and private funding for every \$1 contributed by Stoughton. The intent is to put this CPA request on the next Annual Town Meeting warrant in May 2024. HSL needs to submit a pre-application to the Commonwealth by October 2024. The project will need local funding and zoning approval. She and her team have been working with [Development Services Director] Marc Tisdelle and [Town Planner] Bill Roth, in addition to meeting with [CPC Program Administrator] Barry Kassler, and plan to meet with the Police and Fire Departments, as well as the Conservation Commission.

The project will be split into two phases. Phase I will include about 105 units at a cost of approximately \$54 million, and will include much of the infrastructure. HSL will be asking the CPC for \$1.3 million for Phase I. The request for CPA funding for Phase II is

expected to be between \$700,000 and \$1 million, meaning the total requested for the project will likely be about \$2 million. The second phase cost is also \$54 million in today's dollars, but that is expected to increase due to cost escalation. The plan is to include most of the project's infrastructure in Phase I.

Ricky Ochilo, HSL Director of Asset Management, spoke regarding HSL's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability, and noted that the project will include "Green Design" using "Passive House" standards.

Mr. Zamanian asked for questions and comments from the CPC. Mr. Morton asked if the housing would be Independent Living or Assisted Living, or both. Ms. Brooks replied that it would be Independent Living with some Assisted Living services available. There may be communal dining options available, but it will be an Independent Living community. Mr. Morton asked about the cost of entry. Ms. Morse replied that there will be no cost of entry. Rent will be based on income, and is expected to range from \$0 to about \$1,600 per month. Mr. Morton asked about the size of the units. Ms. Morse stated that the typical one-bedroom unit would be about 600 square feet (sf), with handicap units at about 640 sf. Mr. Morton asked if HSL would provide transportation for residents of their facility. Ms. Brooks stated that transportation may be provided for medical appointments and shopping, as is provided at some other HSL facilities.

Mr. Zamanian asked how proceeds from a resident's sale of their home would impact the income calculations affecting the cost of their unit. Ms. Morse noted that State regulations allow some of that income to be excluded; she will check and get us a more complete answer. She also noted that each resident's finances would be subject to annual review, which Mr. Crimmins noted SHA's residents also undergo. Mr. Zamanian asked if two-bedroom units are contemplated. Ms. Morse said it was being considered, as there are people with live-in caregivers who would require a separate bedroom, for example.

Mr. MacKerron commented regarding the history of the site, and was concerned about past industrial uses, and noted that the Town would need assurance that contaminants are no longer an issue there. Otherwise, he is encouraged to see this proposal.

Mr. Barrett noted that the CPC has long sought to be able to fund an affordable housing project, and expressed his support.

Mr. Zamanian asked about coordinating with local Emergency Services, including ambulance transport. Ms. Brooks said there will be a full-time coordinator on staff; there will also be a Fitness Director. Mr. Zamanian asked for HSL to bring forward information regarding the extent of property tax breaks it is requesting so that the Town can see its total dollar investment in the project, when added to the request from the CPA Fund. He noted that the CPC has attempted to put forward affordable housing projects in the past, none of which were able to be brought to fruition, for various reasons beyond the committee's control. He is therefore excited to see this proposal,

and asked the applicant to meet with abutters and report back on the level of support encountered.

Mr. Terry asked if there would be 24-hour First Responders on site. Ms. Brooks replied that while there are no plans for 24-hour emergency services coverage, there would be 24-hour non-medical staffing available on-site to address any emergency. Mr. Terry expressed his concern regarding the increased burden to the Town on its emergency services. Mr. Crimmins stated that the layout will be designed to be fully accessible to fire equipment.

Mr. Zamanian asked if the project would be built under Chapter 40B. It will be. He noted that the public will need to understand that it is a “friendly” 40B project, which is very different from an adversarial 40B. He asked that an explanation be included in the full application.

Mr. Kassler asked Mr. Ochilo to explain more about the “Passive House” program he referred to. Mr. Ochilo described the concept in greater detail, covering such features as solar power, increased insulation, and other climate-sensitive and energy efficient measures.

Mr. Terry moved to accept the pre-application from HSL; seconded by Mr. MacKerron and so voted, 5-0: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye.

Mr. Crimmins asked if the project will require an appraisal. Mr. Kassler said he did not believe so because the Town is not acquiring property, but will check and confirm. Mr. Zamanian stated that a deed restriction for affordability would be required. Mr. Crimmins stated that we will receive a full application by October 25. Mr. Zamanian noted that the committee’s review would likely take two meetings.

7. Discussion on Active Recreation CR for Glen Echo: Recreation Director Matt Cauchon led the discussion. Mr. Kassler gave the background on the reason for the necessity for a separate Conservation Restriction (“CR”) for the Active Recreation area at Glen Echo. There is already an Open Space CR on the rest of Glen Echo, which specifically excludes the six-acre Active Recreation area. He explained that we need to have a potential use before we create a CR, and we need to have a CR drawn up before we look for an organization to hold that CR.

The plan is to have a disc golf course on the Active Recreation area at Glen Echo. Mr. Cauchon passed around a disc golf course pamphlet, which he will provide as a pdf. He noted that, much as regular golf uses different golf clubs, disc golf uses different size discs. He added that the sport is low-maintenance, and that the equipment needed to set up the course consists of tee boxes at the start and cages at the end of each hole. The tee boxes are simple gravel squares, and the cages are baskets made of chains. He estimated that chains for the cages would cost about \$4,000 for a nine-hole course.

Mr. Zamanian and Mr. Kassler pointed out that the underlying zoning needs to be amended in order to allow the proposed use, or any active recreational use, in the six-acre active recreation area; this will be addressed at the upcoming Special Town Meeting in November.

Mr. Cauchon noted that the course would not require staff supervision while being used. It would be designed to be compatible with the landscape, and would not require much disturbance to the existing land. Mr. Morton asked about finding an organization to hold the CR. Mr. Kassler explained that we are discussing the use now in order to be able to establish the parameters of the CR, so that a CR can then be created, so that we can then have something tangible to show any organization which we would be asking to serve as an independent CR holder. Mr. Zamanian stated that we need to work with Town Counsel on this. Mr. Kassler stated that the CR would allow a range of uses which would include what is being proposed, and would prohibit a number of others. He will contact Town Counsel to have him work on drawing up the CR as the next step in the process.

Mr. MacKerron requested that the course be sited away from the parking, which is located within the Active Recreation area and needs to be allowed under the CR. Mr. Morton asked that the play area also not conflict with the picnic area. Mr. Barrett suggested that in addition to disc golf, the Town could offer pickleball, given that there are no nearby neighbors who would be disturbed by the noise from the rackets, which is a contentious issue in other pickleball courts. Mr. Kassler noted that both could be included, and suggested that a plan be drawn up to include both disc golf and pickleball. Mr. Zamanian agreed that both could be included.

Project Updates:

8. Update on the Glen Echo Project: Recreation Director Matt Cauchon reported that all the work on the original passive recreation construction project has been completed, except for two picnic tables which the Town has in its possession, but hasn't installed yet. The LED lighting is in, and the entry gate is now working properly. There is a portable toilet available on site, and the DPW has filled in an old abandoned well. Mr. Kassler reported that there is a small amount of funds left in the passive recreation account for this project, and suggested we leave that money available for now before we close it out. He added that the funding to create an Active Recreation CR will come from the Glen Echo acquisition project account.

Mr. Morton asked about the extent of public usage. Mr. Cauchon replied that he is getting a lot of positive feedback from the public. Mr. Zamanian noted that the site has been crowded every time he has visited. Mr. MacKerron added that the Library has sponsored two hikes which he has led, and that some of the trails lead to a newly installed historical sign. He noted that, along with the Glen Echo Committee, which he

serves on, we need to work on wrapping up the project. He also stated that there needs to be a better way to launch kayaks without stepping into the muddy bottom of the lake. Mr. Cauchon noted that there are Eagle Scouts looking for projects who may be interested in building a dock for that purpose. Mr. MacKerron noted that the Girl Scouts are mapping Glen Echo's trails using GIS, and hope to produce a usable map. Mr. Zamanian suggested that the Glen Echo Committee look into moving both of those projects along.

9. Update on the Halloran Sports Arena: Mr. Cauchon reported that the engineering is complete. They used the same engineer who designed Franklin's project, which is nearly identical to Stoughton's. They have applied for Planning Board approval, and expect to be on an October meeting agenda. The project still needs to go out to bid, but should be able to be constructed in the spring.

10. Update on Vital Records Project: Ms. Carrera, the Town Clerk, is not present, so this item was tabled to our October meeting.

11. Update on Antique Fire Engine Restoration: Mr. Kassler reported that Mr. Mokrisky has been in communication with him via email. He stated that the restoration is underway, with the engine having been shipped out to the rebuilder, and most of the body disassembled. It is anticipated that the work will take another 18 months.

12. Update on Atkinson Ave Project: Mr. McDonald, the Chair of the Conservation Commission, is not present, so this item was tabled to our October meeting.

13. Update on Capen Reynolds Grant: Mr. Terry reported that there are two parts to the Stanton grant: one for landscape architecture design, which will cost \$25,000 and be fully covered by the Stanton Foundation; and the other for construction costs, of which 90% are eligible for the grant. The latter portion is expected to be worth between \$215,000 and \$225,000 in grant money.

In the dog park, the surface has been changed from wood mulch to stone dust, on the recommendation of the landscape architect. Despite it being counterintuitive, the stone dust is actually better for the dogs. They added a watering fountain with multiple spigots for people and for dogs. The fence was modified to include an opening for a dump truck to deliver the stone dust. The trees to be saved will be clustered so as to provide maximum shade. The Town approved the new design, and it has been submitted to the Stanton Foundation. Our Town Manager has also signed an agreement to follow Stanton's guidelines for the dog park. Mr. Zamanian thanked Mr. Terry for his persistence in keeping the project moving forward.

14. Update on the SMAC Stoughton Depot Video Project: Kevin Weldon of SMAC reported that he is still waiting for access to the building, and is scheduled to see the interior on Friday. He hopes to have more to report by the end of the month.

Continuing Business:

15. West Street Barn Reconstruction: Mr. MacKerron reported that the Conservation Commission gave its tentative consent for the project to use their portion of the property, which does not include the barn itself. He may propose to use part of the barn as a farm museum.

Mr. Zamanian stated that the intent is to establish an agricultural cooperative, which would open up the property to prospective farmers. There would also be an educational aspect and possibly a community garden. The project is aiming to get onto the next Annual Town Meeting (ATM) warrant, including restoration of the barn and establishing an agricultural use for the land. If the building was not preserved, he said, it would be more costly for the Town to have it demolished.

Mr. Morton noted that the Conservation Commission does not control the barn itself; just the majority of the land. He added that although Conservation could not dictate the use, it could insist on public access. Mr. Zamanian stated that he will work with Mr. Kassler to put together an agricultural project for the barn property, and will look to the Farm Bureau for guidance. He hopes to have a proposal ready to present to Conservation by the end of the year. Mr. Morton added that the Select Board will need to give its consent to the project, as it has jurisdiction over the barn itself. Mr. MacKerron noted that Charlie McNamara's grandson, an aspiring young farmer, has expressed interest in keeping the agricultural use going.

16. Historical Preservation Restriction (HPR) for Stoughton Depot: Mr. MacKerron stated that the Historical Society has agreed in principle to hold the restriction, and that there were no objections to the draft restriction reviewed. Mr. Kassler noted that an HPR may or may not include preservation of the interior of a building, depending on the circumstances. He has asked Mr. MacKerron to consider which interior features of the Depot should be preserved, so that they may be included in the HPR, as he believes that would be appropriate in this case. Mr. Kassler will resend Mr. MacKerron the specific questions he has.

[John Linehan joined the meeting remotely at 8:56 pm.] Mr. Zamanian gave a brief update for Mr. Linehan on the Glen Echo proposed rezoning coming up at TM, and on the proposed plans for active recreation there. He noted that Mr. Kassler had assured him that all of the proposed rezoning at Glen Echo would be within the boundaries of the park. Mr. Zamanian noted that the proposed change to residential zoning would allow the property to be used for active recreation, which would not be the case under its current zoning for business.

Administrative Items:

17. **Approval of Payment of Annual CP Coalition Dues:** MOTION: Mr. Linehan moved to approve the payment for annual dues in the amount of \$3,500; seconded by Mr. Barrett and so voted, 6-0: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. Linehan, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye.

18. **Approval of Minutes of August 2:** Mr. Barrett noted two typographical errors on pages 2 and 5. MOTION: Mr. Terry moved to approve the minutes as amended; seconded by Mr. Barrett and so voted, 6-0: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. Linehan, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye.

19. **Reminder on CPC Term Renewals:** Mr. Morton said he will get sworn in when he returns to Stoughton. Mr. Kassler will follow up with Ms. Olotu.

20. **Other Unanticipated New Business:** None.

21. **Schedule Next Meeting:** The next meeting was scheduled for the first Wednesday in October, on the 4th.

22. **Schedule Annual Public Hearing:** The public hearing was scheduled for the first Wednesday in October, on the 4th, prior to our regular meeting. Mr. Kassler will place the legal ad. Mr. Linehan requested that it be put in the *Town Crier* also. MOTION: Mr. Barrett moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$1,000 to advertise the hearing and other related notices; seconded by Mr. Terry and so voted, 6-0: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. Linehan, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye. Mr. Zamanian reminded all members who have recent or future projects to report on to prepare a summary for the public hearing.

23. **Adjournment:** MOTION: Mr. Linehan moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Barrett and so voted 6-0, at 9:12 pm: Mr. Morton, Aye; Mr. Linehan, Aye; Mr. MacKerron, Aye; Mr. Barrett, Aye; Mr. Terry, Aye; Mr. Zamanian, Aye.

Respectfully submitted,
Barry Kassler
Program Administrator, Community Preservation Committee

Approved on November 1, 2023