MINUTES
OF
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
February 3, 2020
Sand Hill School Community Center, 16 Dewey Avenue, Sandwich

Present: Steve Hayes (SH), Daryl Crossman (DC); Ken Hughes (KH); Rick Anderson (RA); Jack Sidar (JS); Robert King (RK); Richard Claytor (RC); Leanne Drake, CPC Coordinator

Guests: Heather Harper, Assistant Town Manager; Ralph Vitacco, Director of Planning and Development; Tao Woolfe, Sandwich Enterprise; Mark Snyder, Finance Committee

Absent Committee Members: William Daley (WD); Tobin Wirt (TW)

Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm by Chair Robert King.

Public Comment: Laura Wing introduces herself to the board and states that she has a number of questions. She begins by explaining that she is not questioning the quality of the work that the Strafford Group will do, she is concerned with the size of the development. She questions how the rental units will be managed when a tenant leaves. Ms. Wing would like to discuss the proposed phasing of the project and the phasing of the money. Those are her basic comments and questions. (RK) details the history of this effort. The Selectmen primarily held public outreach workshops in order to gain an insight into what the public wanted. The Planning Board crafted new zoning bylaws, based on the workshops, to allow a wide range of uses. In virtually every meeting this proposed use was most lauded by the public. However the town voters will decide. (RK) explains that he feels that it is time to spend money on affordable housing. The Terrapin Ridge project that is currently under construction received money back in 2009 for the purpose of creating affordable housing. It is time to spend some money on community housing. (RK) states that the Chair of the Finance Committee stated perfectly. Mr. Snyder reminded (RK) that he is the chair; (RK) corrects himself and states that a member of the Finance Committee stated perfectly that this really was a no brainer trifecta. Ms. Wing states that she disagrees that it is a no brainer; it is a larger project that will have a significant impact on the center of town. She questions the number of units and the impact on the neighborhood. She was hoping for a mixed use structure. She believes that the RFPs were impacted by the demolition costs and asks if this is true. (SH) states that the RFP included a preference for mixed use but nobody came up with anything. (RK) lists all the uses that are allowed. We marketed it the best we could. Ms. Wing asks if they were put off then by the cost of demolition. Mr. Vitacco responds that it would have been a factor that every interested party would consider. If the property was just mixed use/commercial the developer wouldn’t have the opportunity to apply for CPA funds. A lot of factors come into it. Ms. Wing states that she has one other question, why is the first phase amount we receive from the purchasers so small compared to the overall cost. A discussion ensues regarding the bonding and the phasing of the payments. (RK) discusses the cost of demolition and that two million dollars for the developer compared to 6-8 million for the town is a win. Ms. Wing questions whether there is a tax break on demolition. Mr. Vitacco details the demolition cost for the town. Constructions costs are constructions costs. They get a break for with their financing vehicles for affordable housing. (RK) discusses how town’s get to 10% affordable housing. (RK) asks how much CPC funding typically goes to affordable housing. $1.8 million was given to Terrapin Ridge. This is what CPC funding is for, it’s reserved for only these three uses. Ms. Wing states why not buy sand for the beach. (SH) responds that we have. Ms. Wing states that she has one more question regarding the phase implementation. It is not set up to only do phase one. What if we decide we only want to do phase one? Mr. Vitacco asks the Chair if he would like him to begin the presentation. (RC) mentions that we still need to do the minutes.
Staff Items:

a. Minutes of January 6, 2020 – Motion (RC) second (RA); approved 7-0-0

New Business/Pending Applications: None

Old Business:

1. Wing School Residences – SCG Development Partners – Community Housing

(RK) asks if there is any other public comment. Mr. Snyder discusses the phasing and states that the third phase is not necessarily planned out. In order for it to make financial sense they have to do two phases. (RA) explains that the third is contingent on sewer. Mr. Vitacco agrees and states if they wanted to do phase three they would have put in a new septic system. Mr. Vitacco introduces himself to the board as the Town Planner and states that last time he was here there were a number of questions and issues he would like to address tonight. The parking situation has been figured out; all the town parking will remain in the town’s ownership. The next issue pertains to the opinion of the Finance Committee. They gave their endorsement in the hope that the CPC would do the same. The next question was how this would be financed. Leanne sent out a budget that is in your packet. The Treasurer Bill Jennings mentioned at the Finance Committee meeting that in all likelihood two million dollars would be bonded and the $600,000 would come out of the existing fund. We are seeking approval to bond the full amount but hoping to only bond two million dollars. (RK) adds we are in a position to carry that bond in 2022. Mr. Vitacco continues with the issues brought up at the previous meeting. The committee wanted to know if other towns contributed funding for the school transformations in Yarmouth and Borne. Mr. Vitacco explains that these projects were structured differently as there was no demolition only preservation. No CPA monies were appropriated and the developer relied on the historic preservation tax credits. Mr. Vitacco provides a brief overview of the lot and thanks the board for their time. (RC) questions the wastewater flow analysis. The existing wastewater system can accommodate the first two phases? Mr. Vitacco states that is correct. (RC) asks if anyone has done a little more analysis of the phase three component with an onsite system. Mr. Vitacco explains that the assumption is that when the town sewers they will link into it. The current system can handle 15,000 gallons a day, phase one and two needs approx. 13,000 gallons a day. Phase three exceeds the capacity. (RC) explains that his firm worked on the school capacity previously and they had a really hard time getting the capacity beyond that number. It’s important to note to get phase three it’s unlikely you would be able to do it with a septic system. The soils are not conducive. Mr. Vitacco states that when they get to phases three the town and SCG will have to discuss. There are multiple options that will have to be considered. Their hope is to do all three phases. Put the property back on the tax rolls. Ms. Wing asks what the tax revenue would be for two phases. Mr. Vitacco states that it’s about 40,000 each phases. (RK) discusses the old Costco project and states that they were going to pay $100,000 in taxes. It is also important to note that the school was gifted to the Town. The Town paid no money for the property or the school it was gifted by the Wing family. It’s an important this to remember in terms of return on investment. (DC) would like to make it clear that he was one of the members that have an issue. This is not a no brainer, it need careful thought. (DC) let the board know that he has been trying to contact the Boston CPC office but unfortunately has not been able to reach anyone. In terms of affordable housing it needs to be done the town needs affordable housing. But to be clear I do not approve using CPC money to tear things down. I do not like using the examples of the two other schools on the Cape because they restored them. (RK) asks if they are
worth restoring. He states that he was the only person at Town Meeting that stood up and said the sale of the building should be contingent on the preservation of the 1927 building. (RK) says he understands what (DC) is saying but you have to look at the big picture and that the end result is exactly what we want. And that would easily cost $2.6M. (DC) states that is not how the proposal is written. It says that $1.9M will be used for the demolition. The other concern is that this money will have to be bonded not only are we losing that money but we will also have to pay out the bond. (RK) asks if he is referring to the interest; (DC) says. A discussion regarding bonding and payments ensues. (RK) states that we could do nothing and lose this deal and have to keep paying to maintain it. Ms. Wing says we should tear it down and make it a park. (RK) jokes that we could tear it down for seven million dollars, make it a park and then spend how much to restore the 1927 building? Mr. Vitacco explains that they have had counsel look at the proposal and it does qualify for CPA funding. How do you define community preservation; is a community defined by preserving the buildings or is a community preserved by finding housing where people can leave. That’s a philosophical question. (RK) states that they gave funded a comparable project. If you go to Terrapin Ridge the land had to be clear cut. We don’t say you can’t use any of the CPC money to clear the land or install the septic treatment. It’s all a package. If you have to tear down the building in order to create affordable housing the end result is still affordable housing. (SH) agrees. A discussion ensues on this point. (DC) disagrees with the points made by (RK) and (SH). (DC) states that the fact we don’t have the money and have to bond the project is worrying. (SH) explains that the committee has done this numerous times. (RK) states that this was the case with the skate park also. Even if we gave $2.6M to them and they tear down the school and the rest of the project fell apart, we would still be way ahead of the game having all that removed for only $2.6M. Mr. Vitacco explains that the lot will be subdivided into three and that if one of the phases does not go through the town will retain the property. (RK) clarifies that this would be clean property. A discussion ensues regarding worst case scenario. (RK) states that in a sense there is really no way we can lose, once that old part of the school is town down. Ms. Wing disagrees and asks for further clarification on the phasing. (RC) states that if we do have wastewater service it opens up a lot of opportunities for uses where phase three may be built. Part of the limitation here is definitely the uncertainty of the flow. (RK) recognizes Mr. Snyder. Mr. Snyder explains that initially he was opposed to this project however this developer is the only one who is willing to spend $50M on affordable housing in our community. They can’t guarantee that they will all be from Sandwich but they can guarantee that the majority will be from our County. The other concern is that it will change the character of the neighborhood but it was a school there 700 students attended. That’s 3-4 buses a day plus parent pick up. Most residents will only have one car at most if they even drive and will support local businesses. It’s not going to generate much traffic, a lot less than the school. We are preserving the building that means a lot to a lot of people and creating affordable housing for seniors. It’s a good fit. (SH) asked what the vote was at the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Snyder responds that it was all in favor with one abstention. Ms. Wing clarifies that she abstained. (DC) states he is glad they fixed the parking lot issues. A discussion ensues regarding this. (RK) recognizes Charlie Holden. Mr. Holden gives his support to the project. At the end of the day we get what we want as a town and avoid the liability of the deteriorating structures. Ms. Wing asks if this project goes ahead will the town have met its obligation for affordable housing. (RK) states that it would help, we need 10%. (SH) clarifies that you need 10% to get rid of 40B. A discussion ensues regarding 40Bs and affordable housing. (DC) asks for the proposed construction schedule for phases. Mr. Vitacco responds that the first phase is slated for October 2022 an each phase after that is scheduled for 1 1/2 years. (RC) questions that community/central space in the 1927 building. Mr. Vitacco explains that there will be 10 units, shared community space and resident services. (DC) asks if the mechanicals in the Wing School will be replaced. Mr. Vitacco assumes they will as the current ones are close to failing. (RC)
questions why this project is not circling historic preservation as well as community housing. The consensus of the board is to keep it under community housing. Ken Hughes makes a motion that is seconded by (SH). (RK) asks if there is any discussion. (DC) states that he still has reservations regarding the use of the money but he will be voting in favor tonight.

Motion: I, Ken Hughes, move to approve the request for $2,650,000 made by SCG Development Partners for the purpose of creating the Henry T. Wing Residences, (SH) seconded; all approve 7-0-0

Rich Claytor motions to adjourn, (RA) seconds; all approve 7-0-0.
Meeting adjourned at 6:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Leanne Drake, CPC Coordinator