

Minutes – West Tisbury CPC Public Hearing – January 14, 2009

Approved 1-28-09

Present: Sean Conley, Al DeVito, Lesley Eaton, Glenn Hearn, Ginny Jones, Bruce Keep, Susan Phelps, Peter Rodegast; Tony Nevin, Admin. Asst. Absent: Dale Julier.

At 7:00, Sean opened the advertised public hearing with about 20 members of the public in attendance, and asked the CPC members to introduce themselves. Sean then invited presentation and discussion of projects eligible for CPA funding as presented in a brief summary of eligible projects that was distributed to all attendees (list appended). Jonathan Revere videotaped the meeting for MVTV.

Representatives of the First Congregational Church of West Tisbury presented a request for \$46,800 to fund engineering and architectural studies that would serve as a basis for planning historic restoration to preserve the church as a living, fully accessible historic resource for the town. Questions from the public addressed the extent to which bringing the kitchen up to health and safety codes, and other project components, could be considered historic preservation. Also, a concern was expressed over the use of public funds for a private religious institution.

Glenn Hearn presented a request for \$45,000 for a fence and sidewalk in front of Town Hall that would contribute to restoration of the historic neighborhood. Questions were raised about costs of the work and maintenance of the fence. Bea Phear reported that the Town Hall renovation committee supported the sidewalk but not the fence; however, the fence may be a necessary component of the historic restoration.

Glenn Hearn presented a request for \$10,000 to organize cemetery records, using an intern to perform data entry with software that has been installed on town computers and to prepare maps. Questions were raised about data entry time, software, and related project costs.

Pat Manning provided an overview of Island Affordable Housing Fund's programs and then presented a request for \$150,000 to support green building practices in new and renovated affordable homes (funds have been requested from Edgartown as well, but Edgartown declined). CPA funds would be disbursed as projects are completed for permanently deeded affordable homes for people with incomes below 100% of the area median income; most would be on land leased from the Island Housing Trust but others with deeds ensuring permanent affordability might also be eligible. Questions were raised about eligibility of private homes and whether to cap expenditures per house.

Philippe Jordi presented a request for \$170,000 to make two homes in the IHT project at 250 State Road available to families with incomes below 100% AMI. As a result, West Tisbury residents would receive preference for 6 houses (rather than 4). Philippe noted that one home would be built by Habitat for Humanity, which has a separate selection process. Questions were raised about whether construction work was being put out to bid, whether public procurement laws were applicable to the project, and how "preferences" would be defined and implemented.

Dick Mezger presented a request for \$400,000 to support the construction of four permanently deeded affordable homes in the Bridge Commons project. The land would be owned by the IHT with ground leases to buyers. Residents of West Tisbury with incomes less than 100% AMI would have preference for these four homes. The houses would be prefabricated and could be set up rapidly once the basic infrastructure and town water are in place, although the installation of a water line from Snake Hollow Road may be problematic. Also, IAHF support (including

West Tisbury CPA funds) is needed before Bridge can apply for state funds. Questions were raised about the advisability of supporting affordable housing in a different town where it does not count toward West Tisbury's 10% goal, and the issue of preferences as above. It was noted that because of economies of scale, the per-unit cost of Bridge housing will be substantially less than that at 250 State Road.

David Vigneault presented a request from DCRHA for \$42,000 to support an ongoing rental subsidy program, and described its growth and effectiveness over the past few years. Attendees were enthusiastic about the program and suggested that the request be increased to \$60,000 or more.

Pat Manning recapped the GoGreen fund and stated that it had a lower priority than rental subsidies. He then presented a request for \$50,000 for the Helm loan fund, which is designed to assist qualified buyers of affordable homes to meet down payment requirements for mortgage loans. IAHF is seeking \$400,000 from private sources and \$400,000 from town CPA funds, where the latter are separately allocated to eligible buyers of permanently deeded affordable homes such as those being constructed at 250 State Road, with incomes below 100% AMI. Attendees noted that the fund has a substantial balance, and Pat stated that in tight economic times, the Helm fund may be the least pressing of the ways to support community housing.

General discussion of overall CPA funding priorities and constraints ensued. Attendees urged the CPC to hold some funds in reserve for future opportunities, especially for open space, rather than spending all available dollars to support as many housing projects as possible.

The hearing adjourned at 10:00 pm. The next CPC meeting will be on January 28, 2009, at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Nevin, Admin. Asst.

List of attendees signing in at public hearing, 1/14/09

Ebba Hierta, Bea Phear, Prudy Burt, Barbara Day, Brenda Lehman, Skipper Manter, Richard Knabel, Joanie Ames, Philippe Jordi, Pat Manning, Jonathan Revere, Dan Waters, Beth Kramer, Joe Doeblner, Cathlin Baker, Marian Irving, Catherine DeVito, Chuck Hodgkinson, Barbara Shriber, Isaac Russell, Dick Mezger, Eric Hammarlund, David Vigneault

Applicants: 7

Selectmen: 2

General public: 14