



## COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE September 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Members Present:** Wendy Reed, Graham Bacheller, Jack Haley, Tim Cronin, Bob Janes, Gary Bill

**Others Present:** Vanessa Johnson Hall – Essex County Greenbelt Association

### **1. Funding Application for 114 Ash Street (Evergreen Farm), Essex County Greenbelt Association (Greenbelt) and West Newbury Open Space Committee (OSC)**

Vanessa Johnson Hall from Greenbelt was present to discuss the application. The request is for the Town to contribute towards the acquisition of a Conservation Restriction (CR) on a portion of the property. The purchase of the property is being coordinated by Greenbelt with one half being purchased by Mass Department of Fish and Game and the other by a conservation buyer. The conservation buyer will retain ownership and control of approximately 4 acres which contains the existing house and will sell a conservation restriction to the ECGA and the Town on the remaining land. Greenbelt is estimating the cost of the CR will be \$400,000 and is requesting \$175,000 from the CPA and Town. The appraisal for the CR has not been completed and may not be available until just before Town Meeting. The language of the warrant article will be dependent on receipt of the appraisal and is being drafted with input from Town Counsel.

The OSC recommended expenditure of up to \$175,000 for the CR. Janes noted that the prior owner of the property received a grant to establish habitat for Blandings turtles on the property. It is a highly desirable parcel for connectivity of habitat with existing Mass Fish and Game parcels. There are currently no plans for establishing public access or trails to this parcel. Mass Fish and Game land is already open to the public.

Bill moved to approve the Eligibility Application for this project. Cronin seconded the motion. Motion passed (6,0).

### **2. August Ledger**

The August ledger was reviewed and discussed. It was noted it had been corrected for projects that had sunset dates that had passed.

### **3. Minutes of July 20, 2023 and August 17, 2023 Meetings**

Minutes were reviewed and passed unanimously.

### **4. Transition Planning**



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Reed informed the committee that Barbara Gard, the CPC Administrator had resigned. It had been difficult for her to coordinate the limited hours she was working in West Newbury with her other part time jobs. All agreed that her presence at the meetings and behind the scenes would be missed. The current plan for restaffing this position is to combine it with other administrative support positions to make it more sustainable for prospective applicants.

#### **5. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be October 19, 2023, pending receipt of applications to review or other matters to discuss.

Having completed the business before it, the Committee adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent at approximately 7:05 p.m.