

TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE

5:30 P.M. Tuesday
October 26, 2010

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Leo Smith, Vice Chairman Leslie Lewis, Roland Patten, Richard Freitas, Leandra MacDonald, Susan Stanbury, Sue Chollet and Bertha Harris.

Also Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director, and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Welcome and Opening Comments:

Chair Smith welcomed the members to the meeting. He noted the first item on the agenda is the review and approval of Minutes. A few minor changes were discussed and a motion was made/seconded (Patten/MacDonald) to approve the Minutes as written with all in favor.

Open Space Committee:

Ed Henault introduced himself as the Chair of the Open Space Committee. He went on to give a brief history of the Committee, how it is an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen and how its creation came out of the Master Plan. He noted "we saw other towns raising money to buy land with bonds but we do it through the CIP." He noted "we have not spent much over the last three years, and we haven't spent anything this year but we are committed to a \$5,000.00 expenditure so I am here to ask for that amount of money to keep us where we are."

"Where are you?" asked a member with Mr. Henault replying \$446,772.00 and adding "this is pretty close to our goal of \$500,000.00." Ms. MacDonald asked if asking for \$5,000.00 might create a problem as it does not meet CIP standards. A brief discussion followed with the members acknowledging the committee has no budget and no other venue in which to request the monies.

Ms. MacDonald asked about the percentage of conservation land in Peterborough with Mr. Henault replying "about 5000 acres, or 20%." The members had a brief discussion about the percentage formula, town-owned land, the typical cost of land per acre and what was and was not conservation land.

Mr. Henault was done at 5:40 p.m.

Water Resources Committee:

Members of the Water Resources Committee (WRC) Richard Freeman, Beth Alpaugh-Cote, Jim Orr, and Randy Brown were in attendance. Chair Smith recognized Richard Freeman as the Chair of the Committee and noted "you came here last year, are you here to give an update?" Mr.

Freeman replied “yes.” He noted the members all had the PowerPoint handout and asked if anyone had any questions. “It is pretty self-explanatory” he said.

Mr. Freeman also noted the members had been provided with a copy of the proposal from the state DES Geologist “which is slightly higher (cost) due to the increased cost of sample testing.” He noted the proposal went from \$29,700.00 to \$32,000.00 adding “we are here for the same reason we were last year, to get a handle on what is underground in Peterborough.” He went to say “we want to know what the quality is, and by doing what Hollis and Dublin did, get around 100 homes from different areas of town to get their wells sampled.” Mr. Freeman added “it is a win-win situation” noting the homeowner gets a well water quality report and in exchange the town builds a database on water quality.

Mr. Freeman spoke briefly on wells and public health. Pointing out a DES memo of why DES recommends well testing he noted “we highlighted the important data in the memo.” He noted “40% of New Hampshire is on private wells” adding “I can pretty much say this is what we will have forever.” Mr. Freeman noted the Water Resources Committee was also an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen, with a charge from the Master Plan to “keep an eye on the water supply and the quality of the water supply for the future.” He added “unless you know what you’ve got you cannot do good planning for the future.”

A brief discussion about the work done in Hollis and Dublin, New Hampshire followed and the fact that while the water supply may be potable it may not be totally safe.

Ms. MacDonald asked about moving forward with having a test done when a new well comes on line. “Isn’t that our opportunity?” she asked. The brief discussion that followed included several thoughts on educating the people buying homes (new or not) as well as the real estate agents and the importance of well testing in property transfers. Mr. Freeman noted “treading a fine line between getting homeowners to do it on their own for their own good health and saying *you have to do it.*” Ms. MacDonald asked about having an information sheet about the testing process when a Building Permit is issued and discussion followed. One member asked about the cost of the well inspection with Mr. Freeman replying “it is about \$100.00 to run the base level test.” Mrs. Harris interjected “that is not much if it keeps people from getting sick.” A brief discussion about the contaminations (including radon, arsenic and magnesium) followed.

Mr. Freeman also noted “things do change” adding he has had his well tested three times in 13 years with different results.

Mr. Orr told the members about the booth they manned at the Greenerboro Festival in the spring and the number of stories they heard from citizens “about doing tests and finding all sorts of things” as well the cost of removing or filtering the contaminations. “We suspect there are other stories like that in the community” he said. It was noted that the WRC is “putting the town at some risk for liability if we don’t at least recommend the well testing.”

Mrs. Harris asked about artesian wells and the depth in general of wells asking “do you expect to find contamination in a 200 or 300 foot well?” The committee members all replied “yes” and a brief discussion about contaminates and well water flow changes followed.

Mr. Freeman briefly noted the drilling cards he had obtained from a local well driller. "There are over 5000 of them" he said and although things are more scientific now, "the cards give information about what they found at what depths. There are a lot of variables here."

Ms. Chollet asked about the testing process and if radon and arsenic were routinely tested for. Mr. Freeman explained the process and the standard analysis measures DES uses. He noted "you can pick and choose what elements you may want to test for" adding "and you don't have to go to Concord, you can go to Keene or Milford" he said.

Mr. Patten asked about the next step. He noted "someone buys a house and gets the test done. The results show the water is contaminated, what do you do (or what will you do) as a Committee to support that person and get them some sort of assistance?" Mr. Freeman replied "I don't think we would get into that really." Mr. Patten continued with "they will need answers as to what to do, where do they go for advice?" A brief discussion about the identification of contaminants and responsibilities of that identification followed. Mr. Freeman noted the importance of an educational or informational packet of some kind but reiterated his feeling of not getting the committee personally involved. Mr. Patten asked "will you assist people in finding resolution to the problem?" with Mr. Freeman replying "we would refer them back to DES." Mr. Orr agreed noting (as far as assistance in resolution goes) "we have not seen that in our charter from the Board of Selectmen."

A brief discussion about the quality of Peterborough's water followed with Mr. Patten noting "our water is better than what is in some of the bottled waters out there." Mr. Brown agreed interjecting "right, when it goes into the pipe, but when it comes out in your house, you have no idea."

"Congratulations" said Gil Duval in the audience "for telling the truth." Mr. Duval went on to speak briefly about the municipal versus well water systems. Mr. Patten reiterated the need to deal with issues discovered through well testing. "There has to be an educational process to go along with the program that assists people with their problem" he said.

Ms. Stanbury noted "if you get the database than you will have more information to educate the public." Mr. Duval noted he was looking at the Board and said "I am looking at Big Brother." Mr. Duval spoke briefly about changes that can occur in well systems, from water flow to the opening of different veins causing contamination.

Mr. Freeman concluded by noting "we know we have an education problem" adding "the whole subject is an education problem."

Before leaving, the committee members asked the Board if they had noticed anything different on their water bill. Many of the members noted that noticed the quantity used was in gallons, not cubic feet (the method by which water is measured). Mr. Freeman noted when you read your usage in cubic feet; you don't get a real concept of what you use."

The Water Resources Committee and Mr. Freeman were done at 6:20 p.m.

Office of Community Development:

Carol Ogilvie noted the OCD was “back to ask for \$15,000.00 to go into the Capital Reserve Fund for the maintenance and updating of the GIS System.” She added “we have not asked for the last two years because of budget issues.”

Ms. Ogilvie noted there was \$30,000.00 in the fund currently “but we will be spending \$20,000.00 of that on new aerial photography.” She told the members “we had a fly-over done in 2007” and that ideally it was thought to have an update every 5-7 years. She noted that the USGS had done a fly-over of the entire state this spring. She explained the quality of the resolution and how that could be increased to twice as detailed by buying up, “so that is what we are doing.”

Ms. Ogilvie noted that by purchasing this material “the update slated for FY 2012 is no longer needed.” She explained the decision to defer the planametrics “and live with what we’ve got until the next fly-over scheduled for FY 2015.” One member asked what planametrics was with Ms. Ogilvie replying “it is the various data layers showing houses, pavement, pools, stone walls, and such” she said.

Chair Smith interjected “we have made a big investment in this area.” Ms. MacDonald noted “and the information is used a lot by a lot of the departments. We have much better data than we did 10-15 years ago.”

Pam Brenner arrived to say hello to the committee. She noted she was looking for volunteers to hand count some ballots next Tuesday in order to check the electronic ballot system. Ms. Brenner noted some complaints about “undue influences” in the electronic voting method. Mr. Patten replied “electronic voting cannot be hacked, it is impossible.” CIP Committee members Chollet, Lewis, Stanbury, and MacDonald volunteered to assist in the manual counting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton,
Administrative Assistant

Approved November 2, 2010