

## OTHER CITIZEN COMMITTEES

### Community Preservation Committee

#### ***Special Town Meeting Fall 2014***

The Fall 2014 Special Town Meeting voted to continue the 3% Community Preservation Fund surcharge for FY16 and also approved the following adjustments to FY15 CPC expenditures:

- Bicycle Master Plan \$40,000 from Available Funds
- Bedford Housing Authority Window Replacement Project \$88,272 from

Affordable Housing Reserves

- MEP Project \$500,000

#### ***Annual Town Meeting March 2015***

The 2015 Annual Town Meeting approved an additional amendment to the FY15 budget for the Affordable Housing Reserves. The prior appropriation of \$350,000 was reduced to \$243,000 as the 10% percent requirement for FY15 had already been met.

### Depot Park Advisory Committee

**Joseph R. Piantedosi, Chair**

#### **PURPOSE**

The committee's job is to oversee the operation and finances of the Depot Park complex, seek sources of funding for future improvements, and recommend policies for use of the Depot Park Revolving Fund and the rental and usage of the buildings. Ex-officio members are Facilities Director Taissir Alani, Town Manager Richard Reed, and DPW Director Roy Sorenson. William Moonan is the Selectman liaison. Ten meetings were held during the year.

#### **FY 15 HIGHLIGHTS**

- **The Depot Building exterior restoration and Accessibility Improvement Project**  
The Committee successfully convinced Town Meeting voters to award additional CPA funds to the project so that Phase II could be accomplished alongside Phase I. This reduced the project's impact to the building tenants and saved the Town money in construction costs.

- The Massachusetts Historical Commission awarded the Town an additional \$53,000 to supplement its original \$60,000 contribution towards the restoration project.
- The Committee has helped provide oversight to the Depot restoration project, including interior renovations for a first floor handicap-accessible restroom, and interior work to accommodate new tenants. Work was scheduled for completion by September 30, 2014 but was delayed to 2015 due to a decision by the Massachusetts Historical Commission that required the Town to substitute the specified double paned windows with single pane windows and interior storm windows at additional cost. The architect did not consult with the Committee on this decision, which strongly disapproved of the substitution of materials. The Depot Building project was substantially completed by the end of the fiscal year.
- The Facilities Department installed new energy efficient LED lighting to the exterior

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of the Depot Building and upgraded the building's electrical system and HVAC systems in the four tenant units with energy efficient heat pumps.

- The Committee was successful in finding tenants for the two vacant Depot rental units. As of January 2015 the building was fully occupied. Unit 1 was rented to Colasante Hair Studio and Unit 4 to Scott's Stone Carving Classes. Also, leases were renewed with the Unit 2 and Unit 3 tenants.
- The Committee applied for and was awarded a second \$495 Cultural Council grant to restore the second antique railroad baggage cart that was donated to the Friends of Bedford Depot Park. The funding paid for all of the materials; the Bedford Public Works Department provided the labor to restore the cart, which was completed and put on display in front of the Depot Building in July 2015.
- The Committee worked with several sign vendors and solicited proposals for a new freestanding sign in front of the Depot Building with tenant names displayed, plus signage on Loomis Street for the Depot Building and an interior directory sign.
- Meetings were held with the 54 Loomis Street developer to coordinate improvements the developer plans to request easements from the eastern side of the Depot. These improvements are to include new landscaping and public amenities.
- January 2015 marked the 20 year anniversary for the Friends of Depot Park and the long process that began to create Depot Park.

#### **Revolving Fund**

Depot Park's revenues and operating expenses are transacted through a revolving account that is managed by the Facilities Director with input and oversight from the Committee. The account's balance as of June 30, 2015, was \$58,901.39. For FY2015, operating expenses totaled \$30,187.15 and revenues were \$31,427.02.

#### **Railroad Car**

Rail Diesel Car 6211 was open for the public to visit on weekends during the bikeway season when the Freight House was open. It is available for rent as a venue for meetings, events and festivities. A total of \$762.50 was received in rental income from the car during FY2015.

#### **Depot Building**

The Depot had two partial tenant vacancies during this period. Current tenants are Babe Ruth Baseball, the Glass Cooperative, Scott's Stone Carving Classes and Colasante Hair Studio. Total rent, including maintenance and utility charges, collected from these tenants in FY15 amounted to \$25,712.31. This amount reflects credits that two tenants received during the peak months of construction where the rental units were not usable.

#### **Freight House Building**

Under a nonexclusive license from Bedford, the Friends of Bedford Depot Park organization continued to operate a welcome center and museum inside the Freight House, primarily on weekends during the bikeway season. Proceeds from the sale of snacks and beverages are given to the Revolving Fund. During calendar year 2014, the Friends raised \$4,252.21 in support of the Depot Park complex.

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#### **Public Restrooms**

Restrooms at the rear of the Freight House building were open from sunrise to sunset, spring through fall, as a courtesy to bikeway and Depot Park users. The total labor expense for restroom custodial services in FY15 was \$4,013.44. The Friends of Bedford Depot Park received a donation which might reoccur annually to keep the restrooms open on weekdays a little earlier in the spring and later in the fall.

#### **FY16 PROJECTIONS**

We intend that the Depot Park complex continue to be financially self-supporting, be kept well maintained and attractive, and remains a resource that the public will enjoy. High priorities include completion of the

exterior restoration project, including installation of new signal masts, additional exterior painting to cover the galvanized gutters and downspouts (completed during the summer of 2015), completing interior punch list items, repainting the exterior of the Freight House building (completed during the summer of 2015), and repairing the Freight House decking and railings. The current four Depot tenant leases will all expire on December 31, 2016 so we anticipate working on an RFP to be advertised for future Depot rentals. Also the Committee will continue to work closely with the developer at 54 Loomis Street to update the easement documents and monitor the improvement work in the Depot easement area to minimize adverse impacts to Depot Park.

### Land Acquisition Committee

**Donald Cullis, *Chair***

#### **PURPOSE**

The Land Acquisition Committee is an ad hoc, volunteer committee appointed by the Selectmen. Its purpose is to plan and carry out land acquisition projects for the preservation of natural resources, open space, and future municipal use within the Town, including recreational opportunities. The Committee researches open lands within the Town, contacts property owners, and recommends appraisals, acquisitions and other land protection options to the Selectmen and/or Conservation Commission. The Committee is comprised of four at-large citizen members, and one member each from the Recreation Committee, the Conservation Commission, and the Selectmen. The Town's Conservation

Administrator assists the committee.

Within its long-standing commitment to the preservation of natural resources and open space, the Committee follows guiding principles set forth in the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plans and Comprehensive Plan. These include the protection of wildlife habitat areas, development of public awareness regarding conservation and recreation areas, preservation of historic cultural properties and sites, preservation of large tracts of undeveloped land, and enhancement of recreational opportunities and trail interconnections.

#### **FY15 HIGHLIGHTS**

In FY15, the Land Acquisition Committee continued its efforts to contact residents of