

SELECT BOARD/ 3/14/2023

VIA ZOOM (NO IN PERSON BECAUSE OF HIGH WINDS)

PUBLIC COMMENT: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Bill Keohan, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee responding to a request from Town Manager, Derek Brindisi to speak about Fisherman's Shanty located at Plymouth Beach and buildings at Hedges Pond.

Hedges Pond Recreation Area: Mr. Keohan reviewed what has recently taken place at Hedges Pond Recreation Area: February 2, 2023 there was a walk about at the Hedges Pond site to look at the condition of the cabins and Great Hall. Town Departments, two CPC members and members of the public attended. At that time it was pointed out by the Fire Chief, Neil Foley, that the cabins were a hazard and should be demolished. After this tour, at the next CPC meeting, a motion was made to use administrative funds to do a structural study and cost estimate for the rehabilitation of the Great Hall. Bill considers this Stage 2 of the Hedges Pond Recreation Area.

Fisherman's Shanty: Background: The original location of the 3 shanties was in the dunes of Plymouth Beach about where Sandy's Restaurant now stands. About 70 plus years ago they were moved to Plymouth land across from the entrance to Plymouth Beach. Two families owned the shanties and had a lease from the town. The Shanties were used until the late 1980's for storage by fishermen. For a while in the 1990's the Department of Public Works used the shanties. By 2000 the shanties were abandoned. A sign from the town was posted on them for demolition. The families and others protested the destruction. An application was made to the CPC. CPC took the application and used funds to secure the buildings. Two or three years ago one of the shanties burned down. The CPC is still interested in preserving the remaining shanty as it reflects part of our history.

Comfort Station at Stephens Field: Mr. Keohan gave a brief history of the building. It was originally built in 1920. It has been used as a comfort station; it was used by the Plymouth High School Team. By 1979 when the concession/bathroom building was erected the 1917 building was used just for storage. The Stephens Field Planning and Design Committee, appointed in 2013, had sent an article to Town Meeting that included the preservation of the 1917 building. The plan called for restoring the building for storage. Note: At the Historic Commission meeting of March 8, 2023 it was voted 5 to 2 against imposing a demolition delay on this structure.

Mr. Keohane said he understood that all of these structures belong to the town and it is their final decision what happens to them.

Charlie Bletzer, Select Board, said he has been a resident of Plymouth for over sixty years and has been driving by the fisherman's shanties. They have become more and more derelict over the years. He is against restoring the one remaining shanty. It is in a flood zone. What would the shanty be used for and who would maintain it? He reminded listeners that taxpayer's money that would pay for this project and felt this was not a good use of the town's money.

Mr. Bletzer also was also not in favor of restoring the storage shed from Stephens Field. He agreed the 4 cabins at Hedges Pond should be demolished. They are not historic nor needed for the summer camp

there. As far as the Great Hall, even if it is decided to restore it, he has concerns about revenue to maintain it.

Derek Brindisi, Town Manager gave an update on the status of the cabins at Hedges Pond Recreation Area. He wanted the public to be aware of the most recent information on this site. David Gould, Director of Marine and Environmental Affairs, and Barry DiBlasio, Director of Community Resources, had the cabins tested for contaminants. The test results from the 4 cabins found lead and asbestos. The lead has been leeching into the soil. This is a significant Public Health risk. They are still awaiting the results of contaminant testing of the Great Hall. The closest site for the disposal of this contaminated material is a hazardous waste site in New Hampshire.

Betty Cavacco, Select Board, says she is still committed to restoring the Great Hall at Hedges Pond Recreation Area. Ms. Cavacco stated that she finds it disturbing to look toward the ocean and see *hideous* Bert's Restaurant. Can the CPC get involved with this or the town take it by eminent domain? As far as Stephens Field goes, it is time to do the project. Ms. Cavacco heard there had been a motion to remove CPC funding from the Stephens Field Project. Mr. Keohan explained the motion: The motion was made to only remove the funding from the demolition of the storage shed. The rational being that CPC funds are used for preservation and not demolition. Mr. Keohan said that he has reached out to the owners of Bert's several times. This area could be an overlook to the ocean especially adapted for handicapped people.

Mr. Brindisi said he is working with Nick Mayo, Building Inspector to create a nuisance by-law. This by-law would help the town deal with derelict structures like *Bert's Restaurant* at Plymouth Beach and the *Full Sail* at White Horse Beach. He plans to have the by-law ready for Fall Town Meeting.

John Mahoney, Select Board gave a short history of the expansion of Stephens Field. About twenty years ago the land where the AK Finney Building was located came up for sale. Eventually the town bought this parcel of land to expand Stephens Field. He feels it is time to get this project done, and it will be wonderful for the town. Following the summit meeting of CPC and Town Departments held on January 12, 2023, CPC held its own meeting. They had recently learned of the possible demolition of the Great Hall for a pavilion at Hedges Pond Area. This brought the focus of the CPC back to the buildings at this site. He feels it is time for the second summit meeting of the Community Preservation Committee and the Department Heads of the Town to reconvene.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Davis,

LWV of the Plymouth Area Observer Corps.