

PLYMOUTH SELECT BOARD: JUNE 20, 2023, 6 PM Draft 2

GREAT HALL, TOWN HALL

In- person/virtual hybrid via Zoom webinar

OPEN SESSION: Board and Committee Appointments

Community Preservation Committee (1 Full Seat): (3 year term).

Joan Bartlett (Incumbent)

Betty Cavacco

Speaker One: Joan Bartlett: Mrs. Bartlett began by thanking the board for hearing her today. She stated that she had served on the CPC for 18 years. She briefly described her contributions while serving on the board. She had created 2 publications. One publication described the accomplishments of the CPC from 2002 until 2023, the other publication documented the reclaimed material from the old town hall. Plymouth was one of the earliest towns to enlist in the Community Preservation Act. The CPC had preserved over 2000 acres of open space, saves historic structures and added to affordable housing. She really enjoys being on the CPC and would appreciate being re-appointed to it.

Speaker Two: Betty Cavacco: Mrs. Cavacco introduced herself as former Select Board member and newly elected Town Meeting Representative. She is interested in joining the CPC because she feels it is stagnant. She feels they have many unresolved problems. She feels the relationship of the CPC and the Town Staff should be more cohesive. She feels that there are communications problems between the CPC and the Town Manager and Town Staff.

Questions of Select Board to Mrs. Cavacco:

John Mahoney: would you be open to applicants coming before the committee? Mrs. Cavacco replied, yes. Would she be open to Town Staff attending the meetings? Yes.

Should people participate remotely? Response: Yes, the meetings should be hybrid. The meetings need to be open to the public. (They are now, although, not always hybrid).

Mahoney to Cavacco: would you be open to applicants to the CPC to come before the entire committee? Cavacco: Yes, I would be 150% for having applicants come before the CPC. In fact, Cavacco felt that town staff should always have a place on the CPC agenda. Mrs. Cavacco voiced concern that the CPC had recently violated the procurement law 30 B.

Charlie Bletzer: Stated this was not a popularity contest. He wants the best candidate that can help the CPC. We need affordable housing.

Harry Helm: If we look at specific projects, how would you have handled the Simes House. Can we do better? Mrs. Cavacco replied yes. She said that if she had been a member of the CPC when the Simes House came up for purchase by the town, she would have voted no. She said she had wanted to buy the house for \$175,000. She questioned where all the money went that was invested in the Simes House. She thinks that the installation of a commercial kitchen might have provided a revenue stream for the Simes House. Maybe the town needs to take a loss and sell it or develop it into affordable housing.

Kevin Canty: Feels affordable housing is critical . If we have more affordable housing we can avoid more 40 B developments. He feels there should be more CPC articles on affordable housing. He asked Mrs. Cavacco where would you rank affordable housing? She said she would make it a top priority. Mrs. Cavacco questioned, can some open space be used for affordable housing? Are there buildings that can be converted to affordable housing?

Canty to Mrs. Cavacco: Presently the CPC does not have applicants present their applications before the committee. Would you advocate for this process? Yes. Canty: Also, the CPC has missed deadlines for example, the 12/22/22 deadline for the Spring 2023 Town Meeting. The committee voted not to accept the Select Board's offer of a waiver to allow their articles on the Spring warrant. For the first time since the CPA's inception, the CPC had no articles on the Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Canty found it bizarre that as of July 1, 2023 the CPC will not have a budget. Question: would you make it a priority to meet the warrant deadlines? Answer: Yes. Mrs. Cavacco said CPC should be ready long before the warrant deadline. Some articles could be ready six months in advance.

John Mahoney went on to describe his experience as *Bizarro* when he returned as liaison to the CPC last summer after a 2 year hiatus off the Select Board. He wanted to expand on the use of Mr. Canty's word bizarre. He went on describe what the word Bizarro " It can mean strange or inverted to the opposite of what it should be." He recalled at the CPC meeting of November 17, 2022 when the chair stated that the Town Manager could not attend the CPC meeting unless the committee allowed it which he said is just wrong. At another meeting, April 13, 2023 John recalled the chair saying it was illegal for David Gould to attend the next meeting. John said he wanted to have Mr. Gould, Director of Marine and Environmental Affairs, attend the next CPC meeting to discuss 50 acres of open space that was up for sale. John said there were 6 members of the committee present. He made a motion to invite Mr. Gould. His motion was seconded by Planning Board member, Birgitta Kuehn. The vote was 4 in favor and 2 apposed. John pointed out that Mrs. Bartlett was one of the no's. He feels the" CPC is not respecting the First Amendment, it is not democratic, not transparent and in complete violation of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law." He was voting for Mrs. Cavacco because we need democracy and to support the First Amendment.

Kevin Canty went on to thank Mrs. Bartlett for her 18 years on the committee. The Select Board gets to choose 4 members to this CPC. This is the Select Board's only power of oversight. He will vote for Mrs. Cavacco. There need to be changes made to the CPC to function more efficiently and to make it a priority of having affordable housing articles to forward to Town Meeting.

Mr. Quintal asked who was the representative from the Plymouth Housing Authority? John Mahoney replied, Russell Shirley, Chair. Mr. Quintal said he remembered when Joan Pimental was on the Housing Authority Committee and how skillful she had been in getting State and Federal Funds for projects.

Joan Bartlett came back to the podium. She said she found the process quite embarrassing and it was not a personality contest. She spoke directly to John Mahoney and reminded him how rude he had been at many meetings of the CPC over the last year and it was very difficult for the members of the committee.

Mr. Quintal, Chair of the Select Board called for the vote:

4 In favor of Betty Cavacco: Bletzer, Canty, Helm, Mahoney

1 in favor of Joan Bartlett: Mr. Quintal

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Davis, Observer Corps Plymouth Area League of Women Voters

Rep. Precinct 4

**RECOMMEND LISTENING TO RECORDING OF THIS MEETING ON PACTV UNDER PLYMOUTH
GOVERNMENT**

Just fast forward to this section of the meeting