

## **Klimm wants CPC focus on town buildings**

### **Opposes using such funds for private buildings**

By Edward F. Maroney

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"Saints preserve us!" may become the rallying cry of Barnstable's historic churches if the council adopts the philosophy of Town Manager John Klimm and denies them Community Preservation Act funds.

Saints, in the form of private donors and foundations, would be the alternative to tapping the money dedicated to land acquisition, historic preservation and affordable housing.

"We have a request from Councilor (Ann) Canedy for funds for the Unitarian Church (in Barnstable village)," Klimm told several councilors Tuesday. "I personally have an issue using tax dollars for that, though it's a wonderful church."

Klimm said his objection is to using the funds for such purposes when there are so many town-owned buildings in need of attention, such as the Trayser Museum.

Lindsey Counsell, chairman of the Community Preservation Committee, says he understands Klimm's position even though his board voted unanimously to endorse a \$20,000 request from the church. It's the committee's first such recommendation.

"John has been very thoughtful on this," Counsell said in an interview Thursday. "It's a difficult question as there are many needs for town buildings."

Counsell said he appreciates Klimm's willingness to pass such requests along to the council for a full debate even though he is personally opposed. "There'll be a lively council debate on the matter," he said.

With about \$2 million a year to spend, the CPC is a popular target for a variety of applications. The money comes from a 3 percent tax of the transfer of real estate and a state matching program.

Counsell said many other communities – including Dennis – have dedicated CPA funds to historic churches. "It gets pretty complicated," he admitted. "I rely on our great legal department to guide me."

The Unitarian Church's original request of nearly a quarter of a million dollars was scaled back to a phased request of \$30,000, according to Counsell, before the \$20,000 was OK'd. CPA funds will go toward restoring windows and the church library if the council agrees.

"I don't mean to be heavy-handed," Klimm said Tuesday. "I would rather public buildings be given higher priority."

(See Councilor Ann Canedy's column on page B:1 for more about the Unitarian Church's request)

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