

Technical overview

- The site was created using Wordpress. It is open source software that is often used for blogs but has features suitable for a full CMS – Content Management System. It is free and legal to use as we see fit.
- Administration of the site and content is done through a web interface – anyone can easily maintain the site.
- Content and presentation are separate. The content – is stored in a database. The presentation – meaning the look, feel, colors, layout are controlled by templates that can easily be changed.
- There are literally thousands of plugins available. Plugins provide extra functionality such as calendars, guest books, hooks for social media sites such as FaceBook and Twitter.
- The site complies to web standards and provides niceties such as RSS/Atom feeds.
- It supports the roles of Administrator, Editor, Contributor, and Subscriber
- Posts to the site are automatically re-posted in Facebook and Twitter
- Posts and pages are links to promote the content on Facebook, Twitter, Linked-In, and Google Plus.

Status update

- The site is up and running – <http://middleborocpa.org>
- Twitter feed is @MboroCPA
- Facebook page is http://facebook.com/MiddleboroCPA
- It has an established layout and navigation
- It has some basic content – but could use quite a bit more
- Email issues need to be discussed and implemented. See “Accessibility” in the Major Goals section

Major goals of the CPA Committee web site

1. Accessibility

To make Committee meeting information accessible to the public Including minutes, agendas, and any related docs for all CPA meetings along with ample notice of meeting dates.

I would like to see us post our email addresses including a committee address. If people are uncomfortable about using their regular email address, I can provide dedicated email addresses such as jane@middleborocpa.org and cpc@middleborocpa.org. If you find an additional email address hard to handle, you@middleborocpa.org could simply forward to your regular email address.

2. Inform and educate

To inform/educate the public about CPA and its benefit to Middleboro. There are 3 components here: How CPA actually works, how the CPC works, the projects we have done and how they benefit our town. To keep the content fresh, I am planning on posting regularly about the way CPA is being used in other towns.

3. Application Information

Documents and other relevant information

4. Local attractions

This would be a secondary purpose of the web site. I would like to see us provide information about existing CPA-ish resources such as parks, open space, museums, etc. I've always thought the town web site should have a list of all the great attractions in Middleboro. Since that never happened, I think we should provide it ourselves. It will provide a reason for people to visit the site and build appreciation for the kind of things CPA can do. I could use help from ConCom, Parks, and Historic on this.

Updating the site

Updating the site is point and click. If you can fill in a form on a web page, you could update the site. I would like to be designated as the editor of the site - meaning a person who can add/remove content without a vote of the committee. Major changes to the content would be discussed with the committee but minor additions/changes would be at the discretion of the editor. I would welcome anyone that has an interest in helping with the site content, layout, and/or design.

Building interest

My experience with web sites tells me:

If you build it, they will not necessarily come.

There are a bazillion web sites offering all sorts of interesting content. Attracting visitors - and thus increasing interest and support for our work - will require content that attracts people. I have also found that you need to update the site regularly to keep people coming back. Multimedia helps(pics, video, etc).

With that in mind. Here are a few ideas about keeping the content fresh, interesting, and attracting visitors.

- Regular updates of our own meeting information and frequent posts highlighting the way CPA is being used in other towns similar to this post:

<http://www.middleborocpa.org/2011/10/23/cpa-articles-at-marion-stm/>
- Possibly post audio of our meetings. This would be easy to do.
- Video tours of projects - potential, approved, completed
- The site design as it is calls for a log of pictures. I intend to include photos with every post - relevant or not - of things in Middleboro - parks, historic buildings, scenic vistas, etc. I was thinking of putting up a sidebar asking the public for photos for use on the site. The intent is to make people feel invested, and part of CPA - even in a small way by having one of their pictures on the site.
- Others