CITY OF WATERTOWN
Community Preservation Committee

Mark Kraczkiewicz, Chair
Jon Bockian, Vice Chair
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Allen Gallagher
Abigail Hammett
Jamie O'Connell
Elodia Thomas
Matthew Walter

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 7:00PM, held remotely via Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Mark Kraczkiewicz, Chair; Jon Bockian, Vice Chair; Bob DiRico; Allen Gallagher; Elodia Thomas; Matt Walter; and Abigail Hammett.
Absent: Dennis J. Duff and Jamie O'Connell

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Michael Lara, Watertown Housing Authority; Jackie Sullivan, Watertown Housing Authority; John Mucciarone, ZED; Stephanie Horowitz, ZED; Joe Bednar, Cambridge Housing Authority; Virginia Connolly, Beaverbrook STEP; Jessica Belcher, Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS); Renee St. Germain, DDS; Larry Field, Community Development and Planning; Michael Albano, Department of Public Works; Nicole Gardner, City Council; Adam Schultz; Jimmy Mello; Sara Allen; Dawn Slaven; Katherine Salata; Jacky van Leeuwen; Josh Rosmarin; Cynthia Gallagher; and Bruce Coltin.

1. **Call to Order**

   Mark Kraczkiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

2. **Watertown Housing Authority Presentation**

   A. **103 Nichols Ave. Project Update**

   Michael Lara introduced his team who described the project's progress since their last presentation. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

   John Mucciarone displayed the site plan and building floor plans. He reviewed the design revisions and rationale for changes. John also mentioned another round of environmental study was performed as part of project due diligence and there was a meeting planned with the Department of Planning Department. ZED collaborated with Beaverbrook STEP and DDS on the design revisions.

   Joe Bednar explained that funding options were limited for the project because the site had been designated for the 689 program, which no longer had funds available. He noted one source, managed by Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC), was the Facilities Consolidation Fund (FCF). CEDAC acknowledged the site constraints and agreed to make the 2nd floor program and support space eligible for FCF funding. CEDAC has made no formal commitment yet.

Joe added due to the public bidding process, they won't have final construction costs until that process is complete. He further stated the property could not support a small mortgage. They are seeking just over $900,000 from FCF and just over $1million in CPA funding.

John Mucciarone summarized the timeline emphasizing they would apply for CPA funds in October and FCF funds in November.

Question/Comment	Answer
Mark Kraczkiewicz asked if there would be some relief from public bidding requirements to lower construction costs.	Michael Lara replied that the property was eligible for procurement relief by the contractor being allowed to hire their own subcontractors and no need for them to publicly bid, yielding a 20-30% cost savings
Matt Walter asked for a clarification about prevailing wage being required.	Joe Bednar said they had consulted with their attorneys and the project was subject to prevailing wage.
Jon Bockian was concerned that there would be 7 months between when the cost estimate is made and the project is bid, though there was only a 7% contingency.	Michael Lara answered that he wanted to keep the request to CPC within the amount in the community housing reserve.
1. Elodia Thomas thought the house was attractive and asked if the plan could be flipped so that the bedrooms are not along the driveway. 2. She asked about equity in bedroom size between 1st and 2nd floor as well as whether they had reviewed information she had supplied to Michael about the Stilz elevator.	1.John Mucciarone said he did explore moving the parking but found that infeasible and was directed by zoning to put it to the west. Due to the angle on the other side of the house the current layout is simplified and balances form. 2.Virginia Connolly replied they investigated off-site parking. She added DDS requires 120-140sf for bedrooms and the first-floor bedrooms are laid out efficiently. An elevator on the second requires a second means of egress that can't be mechanical.
Abigail Hammett agreed about the relationship between the bedrooms and the parking. She would like to see the patio space near the kitchen. Abigail asked about the 5-bedroom vs. 7-bedroom scheme.	Michael Lara replied DDS limits a new construction group home to a maximum of five bedrooms. Virginia added 5 bedrooms was a good number for operations.
1. Mark asked for more details about the environmental studies. 2. He asked whether they were still building on a slab and would be venting.	1.Michael said they were completed and results from the reports were pending. John described the studies, that included ground water monitoring from 4 wells, sampling of existing soil to understand disposal requirements, and

	geotechnical study of soils to understand construction needs. He pointed out nothing above Department of Environmental Protection minimums was flagged during drilling. 2.John responded yes, and a vapor barrier and passive venting are the minimum standard required to prevent radon build-up.
1. Elodia asked Beaverbrook STEP about meeting the 70% local preference and whether families would need to be using Beaverbrook services to get placed. 2. Elodia asked about accessibility on the 2nd floor and aging in place. 3. Elodia raised carrying a small mortgage.	1.Virgina replied DDS is an integral part of the referral process. She stated that Beaverbrook supports 68 people from Watertown and there are 26 locations that are fully accessible. The intent has always been to maximize accessibility, which is difficult in Watertown with the many 2 and 3 story buildings. Virginia would check with John about moving bedrooms to the east. 2.Virginia noted a ramp was infeasible as a second means of egress from the second floor because it would take up too much green and recreation space in the rear. The location gives many options for staff and residents to use the MBTA. Renee St. Germain responded the DDS regulates against battery-operated mechanicals as a 2nd means of egress and that single family homes have different regulations than assisted living facilities. 3.Michael noted that decreasing from 7 to 5 bedrooms with only a $450 reimbursement for rent made a mortgage infeasible
Abigail thought there was an opportunity to use permeable pavers to extend the outdoor space through flex parking, having only two spaces, though permeable pavers are not ADA compliant.	John said they are required to have 3 spaces. Virgina pointed out the overnight staffing was dependent on the skills of the residents.

Elodia noted that solar panels were shown on the roof of the building presented. Solar panels were detailed in the previous iteration of the 7-bedroom home.	
Dawn Slaven, (a neighbor around the corner) said she was glad something was happening on the lot and asked if solar panels would be considered and who would be responsible for groundskeeping.	John replied the house is designed to be solar ready and hoped the high-performance home would offset the electric costs. The housing authority would be responsible.

3. **Acceptance of Minutes**

   A. 2023-4-18 CPC Minutes

Mark Kraczkiewicz requested changes to the minutes that were emailed to the CPC.

Elodia Thomas emailed Lanae with the following amendment:
She then read Jon's motion.
"Motion: Jon moved to recommend to the city council funding of the proposal by the Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery for the Restoration of the Scots Fence in the amount of $200,000 subject to the standard CPC conditions for that kind of such project. And the further condition that the CPA funds will not be released unless funding of the entire construction cost has been secured in cash or firm pledges within one year of council approval." Jon Bockian added that when amendments are made to the original motions it should be noted that the friendly amendment was accepted.

Motion: Elodia Thomas moved to accept the minutes with the proposed amendments, and Matt Walter seconded the motion.

Vote: Mark Kraczkiewicz, Matt Walter, Elodia Thomas, Allen Gallagher, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. Bob DiRico and Abigail Hammett were absent on 4/18/24.

4. **FY 2025 CPA Budget Allocation**

Motion: Jon Bockian moved that the Community Preservation Committee request the City Council to appropriate and transfer FY 2025 CPA funds which total $3,650,000 to the following: 5% totaling $182,500 for the administrative expenses of the Community Preservation Committee; 10% to the community housing reserve totaling $365,000; 10% to the historical preservation reserve totaling, $365,000; 10% to the open space/recreation reserve totaling, $365,000; and 65% to the undesignated fund balance totaling, **$2,372,500.** Elodia Thomas seconded the motion.

Vote: Elodia Thomas, Abigail Hammett, Mark Kraczkiewicz, Bob DiRico, Matt Walter and Allen Gallagher voted in favor.

5. **Chair Update**

Mark reported on a meeting with the Watertown Affordable Housing Trust (WHAT) Chair, Cliff Cook and Larry Field on May 23, 2024. Jon Bockian and Lanae Handy were also in attendance. He stated the WAHT had looked at properties which they divided into two tiers. They contacted property owners in tier one and there was no interest. Two properties from tier two seemed promising and they hired an architect to prepare schematics. Now only one site is being considered. That site would need to support 30-40 units to obtain state funding and needs a substantial local commitment from the CPC and/or the WAHT. WAHT prefers family housing as opposed to senior housing. Also, the Trust can put a presentation from the Willow Park team to both bodies on their 6/18/24 meeting agenda.

Abigail asked how the WAHT classified the two tiers. Mark responded the WAHT looked at zoning and lot size. Larry Field added they looked at suitability based on zoning and lot size for both tiers and the first tier was thought to have property owners most interested in selling their property.

Elodia asked if Christine would be available to consult with CPC. Lanae said she mentioned that the committee might want to hire Christine again to review the Housing Authority application at the last meeting. She will check on her availability.

6. **Coordinator Update**

Lanae gave her report divided into financial, project updates, and meeting space information sections.

Financial – She pointed out Tom had not been reporting the actual amounts in the category and undesignated reserved but rather carrying over projected figures. Lanae will work with Auditor to reconcile this and noted it was fortunate that more funds were available than requested so far. She also explained two notes to the financial statement. First, the most recently approved projects were not accounted for because they were not in the system yet. Second, Tom projected a 17.5% state match though Stuart Saginor forecasted about a 14.4% match, which could amount to as much as a $100,000 difference.

Lanae also reported on the expenditures from the administrative budget. This statement is attached to these minutes.

When the reconciliation is complete, Lanae will post a simplified financial statement to the website and send a copy to the CPC.

Projects – Lanae reported on the financial tracking of the Old Burying Ground and Common Street cemeteries masterplan project, which is attached to these minutes. She noted 103 Nichols had not submitted any invoices yet and the Commander's Mansion project remained within the budget.

The landscape architects Ray Dunetz and Tom Elmore agreed to report on the cemeteries and Commander's Mansion projects at the CPA public hearing. Lanae is getting grant agreements executed and will send copies to the committee.

Meeting Space – Lanae said they would defer discussion of the hybrid vs. remote only meetings because Dennis was unavailable to report on his investigation into the Lower Hearing Room space. She inquired about the technical capacity of the space and found it could only support hybrid meetings with the assistance of WCA-TV. She emphasized the cable station is sometimes short-staffed and may be unavailable to support meetings.

Though the committee had voted on the budget allocation, Elodia asked if it made sense to transfer $1 million into the open space/outdoor recreation to replenish it for anticipated Walker Pond expenditures. Mark didn't see the need because of the funds in the undesignated reserve.

7. **Committee Discussion:**

   A. **Annual Public Hearing Planning**

      Mark mentioned Lanae emailed a save the date message. He summarized the agenda for the public hearing presentation. Ray Dunetz and Tom Elmore would make brief presentations. Mark would report on the finances, projects completed, active projects and what is coming down the pipeline similar to last year's presentation.

      Lanae listed the advertising planned for the hearing and Elodia suggested putting something on the electronic board in Watertown Square if it's available.

      Lanae asked statutory members to ask their boards and commissions about the needs and their priorities for CPA funding.

   B. **Continued Discussion – Hybrid or Remote Only Meetings**

      Dennis Duff was absent and asked, via email, for this item to be deferred until he could report back.

8. **Adjournment**

   Motion: Elodia Thomas moved to adjourn, and Jon Bockian seconded the motion.

   Vote: Bob DiRico, Mark Kraczkiewicz, Abigail Hammett, Jon Bockian, Allen Gallagher and Matt Walter voted in favor.

   Adjournment: 8:28 PM

   Attachments:

   1. Watertown Housing Authority Presentation
   2. CPC Administrative Budget as of 5/9/24
   3. Cemeteries Masterplans Financial Tracking