



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

CITY OF WATERTOWN

Community Preservation Committee

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 7PM held in hybrid format in the Lower Hearing Room of City Hall.

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

Joined Remotely: Matt Walter

Others Joining Remotely: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Joseph Bednar, Cambridge Housing Authority; Margie Wayne; Joyce Kelly; Jamie Gordon; and Jacky van Leeuwen.

1. Call to Order

Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:02PM and noted it was being held in a hybrid format per the Governor's order, suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Laws.

2. Acceptance of Minutes

A. 2025-3-20-Draft-CPC-Minutes

Motion: Allen Gallagher moved to accept the 2025-3-20 CPC Minutes as written and Dennis J. Duff seconded the motion.

Vote: Dennis Duff, Abigail Hammett, Elodia Thomas, Bob DiRico, Mark Krackiewicz, Matt Walter, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. Jamie O'Connell was absent.

3. Committee Discussion:

A. 103 Nichols Ave. Group Home Application - Phase II

The Committee discussion was launched based on the analysis of the 103 Nichols Avenue Group Home application by Christine Rogers, (the housing consultant hired by the CPC). Her analysis is attached to these minutes.

During the discussion of the 103 Nichols Application CPC Members decided to draft a list of questions to be answered by the applicant in writing.

Lanae commented on Christine Rogers' request for updated support letters. Lanae notified the Committee that she had advised the Watertown Housing Authority (WHA) to apply as soon as possible to give the CPC time to review their application rather than seek updated letters of support. Lanae reasoned it was unlikely entities who had provided support letters would withdraw their support.

Mark was concerned about several items, including the financing uncertainty related to non-CPA funding sources, particularly the status of \$500,000 in state funding (through the Session Law Act of 2024, Chapter 150, Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act) and \$950,000 from the state Facilities Consolidation Fund (FCF), administered by Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC). He emphasized the state bond bill funding was not an appropriation, but merely an authorization. Mark also noted the project manual lacked crucial details about the heat pump's heating and ventilation capacity and operational parameters. He further questioned whether the proposed rent subsidies increasing from \$450 to \$1,500 per month would be available and how affordability would be ensured. Mark also wanted clarity around the multiple contingences (for example, construction, bidding, and soft cost contingencies). Finally, Mark wanted an explanation from Fuss & O'Neill about differences in sampling methods and test results between previous and recent environmental studies.

Abigail Hammett questioned why overall costs had escalated so much and wanted to know if the architectural and engineering fees were fixed-fee as opposed to an hourly contract. She also noted the discrepancy between the request of \$1.5M (that does not include the \$175,000 in development funds) and the construction draw of \$1.378M. Abigail was concerned about the costs of construction administration and how the team would plan for the impacts of tariffs and market volatility, given the cost of \$550,000 per bed and \$800,000 per square foot. [Note: When the project costs increased from about \$309,000 per bed and \$460,000 per square foot] Abigail was also uncertain about who would manage the delivery of the project since there was no project manager line item.

Concerning design, Abigail would like to see better rated insulation than baseline and an increase in the patio size. She questioned whether the patio pavers were accessible and if the overhang at the entrance area was necessary.

Jamie O'Connell would like Fuss and O'Neill to appear at the presentation to provide details about the sampling methods and test results. She also asked if there is an issue with exposed soil.

Dennis J. Duff asked who would be responsible for cost overruns. And Elodia Thomas commented that the design didn't mesh with the neighborhood. She questioned why the costs had ballooned while the number of bedrooms decreased. Elodia also found the maintenance budget to be excessive for a new 5-bedroom home. She asked why a portion of the Willow Park project wasn't used given the amenities there.

Abigail noted that a small community of people living together as a family was a value of a group home setting. Jamie added that the projects were on two very different timelines.

Lanae pointed out the cost increases were troubling, given there was no acquisition fee, and the second kitchen was eliminated. She added, according to the construction draw, CPA would also be funding hard and soft costs for the first 6 months of the project, though the application requested what appeared to be hard construction costs. It was difficult to be sure because the budget lacked detail.

Bob asked if \$1.5M was approved for the project, what exactly that amount would be used for because the budget didn't specify the line items of the CPA request. He also pointed out the stormwater retention requirements could add to the cost.

B. Mark Krackiewicz's and Jon Bockian's Resignation

Mark stated that he and Jon met with the city manager and handed in their resignations. Mark felt it was time for new perspectives and energy on the CPC. He said the city manager thought he could find new candidates by June. Elodia was concerned with continuity through the fiscal year and application cycle.

Lanae stated she had spoken with JoAnna Hand in the city manager's office and JoAnna said the Residents Advisory Board had some candidates who could hopefully be onboarded by the beginning of the new application cycle.

C. Old Business Agenda Item Parameters

Bob notified the Committee that he found a stone for acknowledgement of CPA funding for Irving Park and the engraver will probably have it done soon, which was a good segway to item 3C on the agenda.

Lanae wanted to know how the old business agenda item would work and asked if she would be tracking old business or would CPC members send her agenda items. Lanae would like CPC members to assist with tracking the dropped or unresolved agenda items.

Elodia added the CPC may want to add a new business item so members could make suggestions for future meetings.

4. Coordinator Update

A. Draft 2025 Community Survey

Lanae circulated a draft community survey which was an update of a previous survey. CPC members decided that the survey was not the best way to inform the public about the CPA in Watertown and since the CPC doesn't initiate projects the survey may mislead and disappoint participants when their project ideas don't come to fruition.

Committee members discussed ways to get community members engaged, such as creating visuals like a video to foster imaginative thinking about possible CPA projects. Abigail suggested involving young people.

Jamie proposed creating a story map of CPA projects on ESRI. Lanae mentioned she didn't have a license to use the platform and would investigate if she could obtain access.

B. Public Service Announcement

Lanae announced that she would be recording a public service announcement about the CPA in Watertown and the upcoming public hearing.

5. Adjourn

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Jon Bockian seconded the motion.

Vote: Jon Bockian, Bob DiRico, Dennis J. Duff, Jamie O'Connell, Matt Walter, Mark Krackiewicz, Elodia Thomas, Abigail Hammett, and Allen Gallagher voted in favor.

Adjournment: 8:31 PM

Attachments:

1. [103 Nichols Ave - Housing Consultant Analysis](#)
2. [Mark Krackiewicz and Jon Bockian Resignation Letter](#)
3. [Draft 2025 Community Survey](#)