



Allen Gallagher, Interim
Chair
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Allison Eck
Abigail Hammett
Marissa Mayo
Jamie O'Connell
Amy Plovnick
Matthew Walter

CITY OF WATERTOWN Community Preservation Committee

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 7 PM held in hybrid format in the Lower Hearing Room of City Hall.

Committee Members Present: Allen Gallagher, Interim Chair; Bob DiRico; Dennis J. Duff; Allison Eck; Abigail Hammett; Marissa Mayo; Jamie O'Connell; Amy Plovnick and Matt Walter.

Others Joining: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Jackie Weir, Watertown Housing Authority; Kristin Monti, Watertown Housing Authority; Joe Bednar, Cambridge Housing Authority; John Mucciarone, ZeroEnergy Design; Stephanie Horowitz, ZeroEnergy Design; Chris Nixon; Public Buildings; Councilor Gardner; and James Mello.

Others Joining Remotely: Mark Kraczkiewicz, Cynthia Jafigan, Catherine Salata, and Jacky van Leeuwen.

1. Call to Order

Allen Gallagher called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM and noted it was being held in a hybrid format per the Governor's order suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Law.

Allen introduced Allison Eck, the newest CPC member. Allison shared that she has lived in Watertown for 13 years and works for Harvard Medical School in communications. She is also involved with Watertown Community Conversations and Live Well Watertown.

2. 103 Nichols Ave. Project Presentation - Watertown

Jackie Weir of Watertown Housing Authority (WHA) shared the progress made and sought a funding recommendation from the CPC to move the project forward. She highlighted that the team expected to submit an application to Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC) for the Facilities Consolidation Fund (FCF) and receive notification by the end of 2025. The team

expects FCF funds to be available during construction. With a construction contingency of \$153,053, the soft cost contingency is 3%. The developer fee was increased to 10% as requested by CEDAC to provide WHA with a greater stake in the project and could provide a cushion to the project.

The presentation is attached to this report.

CPC members had the following comments and questions:

Marissa Mayo - Would there be a local response to maintenance requests. *The WHA will maintain the property and DDS has emergency maintenance response capacity.*

Abigail Hammett - What is the relationship of the timing of FCF financing to the construction loan?

CEDAC can't guarantee when their funding would be available. If possible, the team will get the construction loan as late as possible to save interest fees.

Amy Plovnick, asked about the home being designed as solar ready.

Required by the stretch code

Matt Walter - The request doesn't include the installation of the solar panels.

The WHA can bid the purchase and installation of the solar array, which should be no more than \$150,000.

Jamie O'Connell - How much coverage would the panels provide?

Designed to cover 100% of electricity, though that would be affected by the equipment installed to operate the home.

Bob DiRico - Status of sign-off from DPW on the stormwater plan.

The final sign-off will be provided as part of the building permit.

Abigail - Would it be helpful for the CPC and the City Council to write a letter in support of placing Watertown residents in the home?

The CPC and Council could do so.

Bob - How many bidders? Were they competitive or was there a wide range? How will tariffs and material cost escalation affect the costs?

There were four bidders. Three bids were close to the team's cost estimate and one was substantially lower. Material escalation and tariffs should be covered by the bid. Though due to unprecedented times and uncertainty the contractor will try to pass costs along, but there is also a 7% construction contingency.

Motion: Jamie O'Connell moved to recommend the 103 Nichols Ave project for the full amount requested subject to the following conditions:

1. Funds can't be disbursed until after closing of all relevant loans.
2. A commitment letter from CEDAC for FCF funding is received
3. Approval of recommending the difference between up to \$1,500,000 and the request amount of \$1,258,127 with the difference being set aside for solar panels that will be bid in the future.

Bob DiRico seconded the motion.

Vote: Matt Walter, Allison Eck, Jamie O'Connell, Abigail Hammett, Allen Gallagher,

Dennis Duff, Marissa Mayo, Amy Plovnick, and Bob DiRico voted in favor.

3. **Committee Discussion: Commander's Mansion Building Envelope Application**

Lanae introduced the project as the second phase of the Cultural Landscape Report and Building Exterior Assessment. The request for \$610,000 was for construction documents to restore and preserve the building envelope of the mansion, restore windows, and modernize the elevator. The applicant Chris Nixon, of Public Buildings was present.

Lanae explained that the CPC would raise questions and make comments that would be provided to the applicant to address in writing and/or in their application presentation.

Allen called for comments from the committee. Matt was in support of funding the project and asked if the elevator was historic and eligible.

Lanae instructed the Committee that the elevator was eligible to make the building accessible for its intended use. However, she pointed out that Stuart Saginor counseled the CPC to make sure this component had public benefit and was the best use of CPA funds.

Allen said it was important that the elevator be used for accessibility.

Chris assured the CPC the roof did not need to be completely restored and that the restoration could be phased. The request included actual work on windows and the elevator.

Matt would like to see as many of the recommendations, made in the building exterior assessment performed in the first phase, as possible implemented.

Chris noted a part of the application was to get the construction documents produced for the most serious exterior problems.

Marissa asked about approved materials as she did not see any listing of specific materials and whether he would send materials for analysis.

Chris answered that there are construction documents and a list of work done with materials from the previous restoration. Some elements were not historic. He will do some research first before doing material analysis.

Allen asked about the windows.

Chris thinks the sashes can be saved. All of the glass must come out for reglazing, priming and repainting of the double hung windows.

Jamie asked where the first phase of the project stands and whether specific funding conditions were met?

Lanae answered that there is a larger landscape piece that came out of the Cultural Landscape Report. This project was mostly restricted to the building exterior. Lanae asked about the landscape architecture fee and work to be done on the paths.

Chris noted his request was restricted to making routes to the building comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Marissa asked about whether there was a climate action plan considered in replacement of the gutters.

Chris pointed out that the project includes a re-evaluation of the storm water management and that there may be non-historic features that are damaging to the building.

Matt asked if there are any applications for the use of non-wood materials.

Chris said he is a firm believer in using wood and natural materials.

Abigail asked about the high fees for architectural design, which Chris explained would include full cost design development and a cost estimator. Abigail asked about the inclusion of a waterproofing consultant and thinks having a designer's work reviewed by a waterproofing consultant beneficial.

A discussion about the elevator led to some discussion about whether that element could be included in the off-cycle request. Jamie pointed out that the CPC never explicitly prohibited including additional elements in a phase II request, so the Committee decided to include the elevator in this request.

4. Acceptance of Minutes

A. 2025-7-17-Draft-CPC-Minutes

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to accept the 2025-7-17 minutes as written and Abigail Hammett seconded the motion.

Vote: Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Jamie O'Connell, Bob DiRico, Matt Walter, and Abigail Hammett voted in favor. Allison Eck, Amy Plovnick, and Marissa voted present.

B. 2025-9-18-Draft-CPC-Minutes

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to accept the 2025-9-18 minutes as written and Matt Walter seconded the motion.

Vote: Matt Walter, Allen Gallagher, Amy Plovnick, Marissa Mayo, and Dennis Duff voted in favor. Bob DiRico, Jamie O'Connell, Abigail Hammett, and Allison Eck voted present.

5. Adjourn

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Marissa Mayo seconded the motion.

Vote: Meeting adjourned by unanimous vote.

Adjournment: 9:16 PM

Attachments:

1. [103 Nichols Ave Group Home Project Presentation](#)
2. [Christine Nichols \(Housing Consultant\) Analysis of Project Updates](#)
3. [Liz Cremen's Letter of Support - 103 Nichols Ave](#)
4. [Commander's Mansion Building Envelope Application](#)

