



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

CITY OF WATERTOWN Community Preservation Committee

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, January 15, 2026, at 7 PM held in hybrid format in the Lower Hearing Room of City Hall.

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

Absent: Matt Walter and Abigail Hammett.

Others Joining: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator

Others Joining Remotely: Larry Field, Watertown Housing Advisor; and Mark Krackiewicz.

1. Call to Order

Bob DiRico called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and noted it was being held in a hybrid format per the Governor's order suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Law. After a roll call, Bob appreciated Allen Gallagher stepping in as interim chair and presenting the CPC recommendation to the City Council in December.

2. Acceptance of Minutes

A. Draft 2025-11-20 CPC Minutes

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to accept the November 20, 2025, CPC minutes as written and Marissa Mayo seconded the motion

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

3. Coordinator Update

A. CPA Projects Status Report

Lanae delivered the following report on the three active CPA projects:

1. City Hall Paintings Restoration is about to be completed with the installation of the sign panels on the barriers in front of the paintings. Louise Orsini, the conservator, offered to speak about the restoration process at an event in the spring, so that may be an opportunity to celebrate the completion of the project.
2. Walker Pond Conceptual Design team will host its third community meeting on 2/5/26. The second meeting and community survey showed more favorable response to concept 1, the forest park, with some elements of Concept 2, favored by participants.
3. MDLA architects had an issue with the curvature of the metal frame and UEL scanned the laminate portion of the structure to provide data to the metal fabricator. With the data, the fabricator will adjust shop drawings to achieve the desired curvature. Bob projected a timeline of another 6 weeks minimum with a spring completion date likely.

Phased project applications to be submitted:

1. Cemeteries Restoration - Michelle Moon is preparing an RFQ for an architect to produce construction documents (CDs). The project application will most likely seek funding for the CDs and at minimum restoration of priority gravestones.

Projects that may come forth in 2026:

1. The City Clerk's office may submit an application for document preservation.
2. The Affordable Housing Trust has added they will *consider* applying for CPA funds to secure site control of a property to their strategic plan
3. There is some discussion of an application for restoration of the North Branch library as a space for HATCH.

B. Proposed 2026 CPA Calendar and Application Schedule

The proposed meeting calendar is the same with no meeting in December and the proposed application schedule, follows the same due dates as last year. Future application schedules are up for discussion as part of updating the plan.

Lanae explained that the lack of applications last cycle was probably not due to the annual deadline, but rather some proponents put forth ineligible projects while others were able to secure funding elsewhere, or some didn't obtain approval to carry out a project on city property. Most projects are initiated by the city and there is only so much capacity to oversee CPA projects. Also, there are not that many organizations who deal with open space and there are not many historic resources owned by the city. Further, there is only one non-profit developer aside from the Watertown Housing Authority who has expressed interest in developing housing in Watertown, and it is a regional operation.

C. CPA Quarterly Financial Report

Lanae asked if there were any questions about the financial reports attached to

these minutes, and there were none.

4. Committee Discussion

A. New CPA Plan

Lanae asked if the CPC wanted to hire a consultant to do a community process similar to the last plan engagement process. Jamie offered that five years was too soon to do the extensive public process with a planning consultant. She proposed reviewing the existing plan and updating it. Mark Krackiewicz also suggested reviewing the existing plan to identify goals that had been achieved.

The committee agreed to review and update the plan in-house. Jamie also proposed working with Tyler Cote on a public engagement process to develop survey questions.

B. Housing Reserve Allocation Policy

Lanae described how at the last public hearing many seemed confused by the term reserve and thought the CPC was holding funds in reserve. This issue can be addressed in updating the plan to better explain the term and how much funding is actually available for projects. Lanae recommended leaving the housing reserve allocation at 10% to provide the greatest flexibility. She noted there are other constituencies who want investment in open space and historic preservation and currently funds are available in the budgeted reserve and fund balance if needed for housing.

Lanae added the affordable housing trust was scheduled to meet the following week to discuss their draft housing plan. It includes a statement that the Trust will consider applying for CPA funds to secure site control of a property once one is identified. They have no site in mind and money is not an issue—it is identification of a site. Metropolitan Area Planning Council, also known as MAPC, is performing a study to identify and test affordable housing incentives for developers.

Lanae spoke with Tia Tilson, the president of the Watertown Community Foundation, and Larry Field separately about convening housing stakeholders to discuss ways to create affordable housing in Watertown. Given the Trust's continuing work on their strategic plan and the MAPC study, Lanae proposed placing that event on hold until after the plan and study are completed.

C. CPA Coordinator Supervision

The City Manager proposed a new administrative code where the coordinator would no longer report directly to the CPC with a dotted line to the Director of Planning. The rationale, explained to Lanae by Steve Magoon, was it seemed out of order for Lanae to be the only staff person reporting to a body composed of volunteers. Lanae explained there is nothing in the ordinance about the coordinator position and the current direct reporting scheme is in the job CP Coordinator job description.

The CPC discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the coordinator reporting directly to planning as opposed to the committee. There was concern

about a committee of volunteers having the responsibility of supervising and supporting the coordinator. There was also concern about the Committee's independence and the appearance of the coordinator being under undue influence if directly supervised by a Planning department staffer when department staff submit many of the CPA applications. It would place the coordinator in an awkward position when holding planning department applicants accountable or enforcing special funding conditions.

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to write a strongly worded letter to City Manager and City Council that Lanae remain under CPC supervision. Allen Gallagher seconded the motion.

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

5. Adjourn

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Allen Gallagher seconded the motion.

Vote: Allison Eck, Jamie O'Connell, Amy Plovnick, Bob DiRico, Allen Gallagher, Marissa Mayo; and Dennis J. Duff voted in favor.

Adjournment: 8:10 PM

Attachments:

1. [Proposed CPA Application Schedule](#)
2. [CPA Financial Statements](#)
3. [Jon Bockian Letter Opposing Change in CP Coordinator Supervision](#)