



## TOWN OF WATERTOWN

### Community Preservation Committee

Mark Krackiewicz, Chair  
Jason Cohen, Vice Chair  
Jonathan Bockian  
Bob DiRico  
Dennis J. Duff  
Allen Gallagher  
Jamie O'Connell  
Susan Steele  
Elodia Thomas

**Approved Meeting Minutes: Thursday, October 7, 2021, held remotely via Zoom at 7PM.**

**Committee Members Present:** Mark Krackiewicz, Chair; Jason Cohen, Vice Chair; Jon Bockian, Bob DiRico, Allen Gallagher, Jamie O'Connell, Susan Steele, and Elodia Thomas.

**Others Present:** Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Elise Loukas, Chair of Historical Commission; Michael Lara, Executive Director of Watertown Housing Authority; Andy Compagna, Chair of Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee; Patrick Fairbairn, Conservation Commission; Sally Hajjar, Steve Steadman, Michele Waldman, Peter Rosenmeier, Jessica Grimsby, Matthew McNeff, and David Russo.

1. **Call Meeting to Order** - Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:01PM. He announced the meeting was being held remotely as allowed by the Acts of 2021.
2. **Acceptance of Minutes**  
Mark reminded CPC members of his proposed change to the 2021-9-16-Draft-CPC-Minutes and asked if there were other comments or requested changes. He called for a motion to approve the minutes with the requested changes.  
**Motion:** Jon Bockian moved to accept the 2021-9-16-CPC-Minutes with the proposed changes and Allen seconded.  
**Vote:** Bob DiRico, Jason Cohen, Jamie O'Connell, Mark Krackiewicz, Elodia Thomas, Allen Gallagher, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. Susan Steele abstained.
3. **Committee Discussion - Eligibility Forms**  
Concerns/Suggestions for Improvement, Determination of Eligibility, and Issues to be Addressed in CPA Funding Application

Mark remarked that there were three purposes for the discussion: 1.) To determine whether projects are eligible for funding or not; 2.) To determine whether to invite applicants to move forward; and 3.) To raise concerns and issues that need to be addressed and/or make recommendations to applicants as to what the CPC would like to

see in the full application. After this review, Lanae would send letters as to eligibility and outline concerns or needs to be addressed in the full application.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Committee members made points about the definitions of terms as they related to outdoor recreational space in the CPA. Jon pointed out capital improvements, such as plantings should be long-lasting. Elodia noted that all improvements must be made within the perimeter of the property. She also read from the rehabilitation definition that improvements should make the land more functional by installing pathways and irrigation.

Regarding notification of eligibility, CPC members listed information they would generally like to see in notification letters, such as whether projects might fall into more than one category and whether project proponents are seeking other sources of funding. The letter should list the components that are not eligible and add the definition of capital improvement. Jason was concerned about establishing a precedent by drafting a detailed notification letter and being held to that standard. He also declared the purpose of the CPC at this time was not to debate the merits of the project, rather determine the eligibility.

Some remarks made by Committee members related to *Outdoor Recreation applications from Gregory St. Louis, Superintendent of the Department of Public Works* follow: Elodia has heard community members desired lovely pocket parks. Mark was concerned about the design process: how would public input be incorporated and who would be the designer? What would be the public process? Jon cautioned against asking for more than the Community Preservation Plan calls for. Allen raised the issue that CPA funds should not be used for Town maintenance projects. Elodia pointed out DPW would have to describe how the completed park projects would be maintained. The *Irving Park (North/South)* and *Saltonstall 2021* projects were found to be eligible with some components, such as streetscape (if outside of the park perimeter) ineligible. The Filippello Park application was a duplicate of Winter St. and will be revisited. The Winter St. Pocket Park was found to be clearly eligible.

The CPC members disagreed about the eligibility of the *Walker Pond* project. There were many concerns raised, including: whether the project would create outdoor recreation, why the Conservation Commission was the applicant, the fact the property had not been acquired by the Town, and whether a conditional eligibility notification letter should be sent.

Elodia suggested that the CPC have an emergency meeting if the Town acquires the property to consider the project as a high priority off-cycle project. Mark favored that approach and suggested a phased project development, with ecological assessments and a design phase involving a public design process as the first phase. Jon, Jamie, and Jason thought it was reasonable to determine a project was eligible with conditions. They did not favor having the CPC make recommendations to applicants about their projects. Jason described the situation as analogous to the Planning Department and Planning

Board. He thought feedback should be offered by staff and there should be a consistent level of feedback given to all applicants.

Jon suggested creating a conditional eligibility letter for Walker Pond and that Mark should speak with Leo Martin, Chairman of the Conservation Commission. Elodia asked Jon to recommend language and to look at Chapter 40 section 8C, regarding Conservation Funds. Mark summarized the decision the *Walker Pond* project was conditionally eligible subject to acquisition.

### **Community Housing**

In reviewing the *Watertown Affordable Housing Trust (WAHT)* application, CPC members disagreed about moving the project forward to the CPA Funding Application step. While support of a municipal affordable housing trust is an eligibility, the WAHT does not exist as a legal entity. Jamie supported conditional eligibility to be consistent with Walker Pond projects. Elodia conveyed that most CPC's don't fund Housing Trusts in their first years. She strongly supported focusing on tangible projects. Jon said it would be totally inconsistent to proceed one way with Walker Pond and another way with the WAHT. Finally, Allen proposed determining the project eligible pending the establishment of the WAHT as a legal entity. Susan was concerned about the vagueness of the application and considered it premature. Allen added the WAHT could always apply again when they are legally formed. Bob said the CPC had to be consistent, however, he wouldn't consider either Walker Pond or WAHT eligible and disagreed with granting conditional eligibility.

In reviewing the *Rosary Senior Housing* application, Mark stated it was clear the project was eligible and a commitment from CPA would leverage further funding.

CPC members agreed the *103 Nichols Ave.* project was eligible. Allen described the property and its history. Jamie raised concerns about the potential use of the lot as open space, while Mark and Jason pointed out this was a classic urban infill development site.

### **Historic Preservation**

Lanae stated the applications from religious institutions were awaiting a legal analysis from the Town legal counsel, therefore discussion was deferred.

The Mass Historic Commission Inventory was not eligible under the historic preservation category based on the CPA guidelines and DOR IGR 2019-14 guidelines. However, the inventory may be funded out of the CPC administrative budget if it assists the CPC in carrying out its administrative duties. John said given available information on historic resources was inadequate, it would make sense to perform an inventory to learn more about resources and needs in the historic preservation category.

Susan pointed out that it is not uncommon for municipalities to fund historic inventories. Jon would like to see the Watertown Historical Commission make recommendations on what is needed. Allen thought it would be advantageous to improve the inventory to inform decision making on future historic preservation applications. Elodia didn't find it necessary to conduct the inventory now except for the advantage of obtaining Mass

Historical Commission matching funds. She pointed out preserving what you are not aware of is tricky. Elodia added the library application, Inventory of Historical Resources, was similarly ineligible. Committee members decided more information was needed about such inventory projects.

The two projects *Town Hall's 1630's & 1930 Geographical Paintings* and *Rehabilitate the Arbors* historic preservation projects were discussed and both were considered eligible. Mark applauded the fact that the *Town Hall's 1630's & 1930 Geographical Paintings* was the first public-private partnership project. The *Town Hall's 1630's & 1930 Geographical Paintings* will require a designation of local historic significance prior to submission of a CPA Funding Application. There was some question about whether the arbors and grounds of the Commander's Mansion were on the National Register simply because the building was on the National Register as part of the Watertown Arsenal Historic District.

#### **Local Historic Significance**

Elise Loukas explained the Watertown Historical Commission will include information as to why a property or item is determined to be historically significant in their support letter. The Commission will do research, take pictures, and do its due diligence for whatever CPA project comes before it. She also remarked that Newton recommends CPA applicants go before the Historical Commission to obtain support for all historical preservation projects whether they have local historic significance designation and/or are on the State Register of Historic Places. Having Historical Commission support makes the project application stronger.

#### **4. Use of Administrative Funds for Historic Resources**

Mark suggested deferring this part of the agenda until a future meeting. The committee will meet on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Lanae will post eligible projects using the project summary spreadsheet, adding another column to indicate eligibility determination once the process has been completed.

#### **5. Adjournment**

**Motion:** Jon moved to adjourn and Elodia seconded.

**Vote:** Jamie O'Connell, Bob DiRico, Susan Steele, Elodia Thomas, Allen Gallagher, Jon Bockian, Jason Cohen, and Mark Krackiewicz voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:55PM.