TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Community Preservation Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes: Thursday, January 20, 2022, held remotely via Zoom at 7PM.

Committee Members Present: Mark Kraczkiewicz, Chair; Jason Cohen, Vice Chair; Jon Bockian, Bob DiRico, Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Jamie O’Connell, Elodia Thomas, and Matthew Walter.

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Vincent Piccirilli, City Councilor; John Airasian, City Councilor; Nicole Gardner, City Councilor; Larry Field, Department of Development and Community Planning; Michael Lara, Watertown Housing Authority; Kristen Monti, Watertown Housing Authority; Emily Horgan, Watertown Housing Authority; Janet Buck, Planning Board; David Leon, Watertown Housing Partnership;Joyce Kelly, Watertown Historical Society; Joe DeLarauze, Cambridge Housing Authority; Toby Reed; Michele Waldman; and Susan Flint.

1. **Call to Order**
   Mark Kraczkiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:00PM and stated the meeting was being held remotely according to the Act extending the Governor’s Emergency Order and waiving certain provisions of Open Meeting Law. Mark then requested a roll call.

2. **Acceptance of 2021-12-16-Draft-CPC-Minutes**
   Mark noted Jon Bockian requested a change to the minutes and asked if there were any others. Elodia remarked that committee members should review the meeting video to ensure their requested change is accurate.

   Motion: Allen Gallagher moved to accept the minutes with the change proposed by Jon. Jon seconded the motion.

Vote: Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Jamie O'Connell, Elodia Thomas, Matthew Walter, Mark Kraczkiewicz, Jason Cohen, Jon Bockian, and Bob DiRico voted in favor.

3. **Subcommittee – CPA Application Guidelines and Forms Update**

   Mark brought up the idea of having a working group to look at updating application guidelines and tweaking application forms based on what has been learned from the application process during this first round. He asked for volunteers. Jon volunteered and Mark asked Bob to join Jon. Lanae will coordinate the group.

4. **Committee Discussion – Application Evaluation**

   Jason asked about making use of the extra meeting date if the discussion required much more time beyond 9pm. Allen suggested deferring the discussion about the Nichols Ave. project until the February 3rd date.

   The format of the ensuing discussion involved an introduction of the project by Lanae that included comments on what was missing from the initial application and how responsive applicants had been in providing follow-up information.

   City Hall 1630s and 1930s Paintings
   Dennis presented that the project was straightforward and modest in scope. He was concerned about and asked what will be found when the paintings are removed. Joyce Kelly, project applicant, said it was unknown and that she would be meeting with Steve Magoon about assurances regarding maintenance. Elodia found the application to be well done and the most thorough one. However, there were concerns and questions about the barrier design and conformance to all ADA regulations as well as whether existing lighting was adequate. Joyce stated the conservator told her the lighting was LED, which would not be damaging to the paintings. Additional concerns raised were:

   - the In-kind labor rate seemed too low and should contribution of labor by City employees be added;
   - whether braille could be incorporated on the signs;
   - whether it sets a precedent for the city to defer regular maintenance until historic resources require capital improvement dollars from CPA; and
   - the need for more details on maintenance plan and budget needed.

   Committee members suggested having Watertown Historical Society sign off on report that maintenance was performed and impressing upon the City Council that they have a fiscal responsibility towards maintenance of historic resources after CPA funds are awarded.

   Rehab the Arbors

Bob presented the project. He was perplexed as to why his name appeared in the application when he simply recommended the applicant get a historic landscape architect involved with the project. His concerns were:

- it seemed to be more of a maintenance project, bids were not apples to apples and painting was not included;
- whether the current arbor design was appropriate since most arbors don't look like the one at the Commanders Mansion;
- how vines would be protected during project implementation
- whether other funding was available; and
- lack of historic preservation expertise brought to project planning and proposal.

Matt had concerns that the project was not a historic preservation project as the existing structure appeared to be built in the 1980s out of 2x4's and hardware store fasteners. He was disappointed in the lack of research about the resource and with the bids proposing to rehabilitate only half of the structure. He thought the design should take into account context and relate to the design of the Commander's Mansion. Though Mark noted the arbors were apparently built in 1945, Matt remarked it was likely the original structure had been rebuilt given the materials that compose the existing structure.

Other Committee members were concerned that:

- the application did not address accessibility issues (getting from handicapped accessible space in parking lot to arbors);
- there was a lack of details about the maintenance and a maintenance budget;
- there didn't appear to be effort to reach out to the public, municipal bodies or others to obtain community support; and
- there was no pursuit of funding for planning from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to perform research and develop a plan. Construction could be funded up to $100,000 and a CPA match could be sought for development and construction.

Committee members recommended more involvement from the Department of Community Development and Planning in looking at the landscape comprehensively and applying to MHC. In addition, historic preservation and horticultural professionals should be involved in the project planning to provide details the Committee would need to evaluate the project. CPC members agreed the application was not sufficiently developed and not to invite the applicant to the presentation step in the application process. Lanae will draft a letter to Tammy F. McKenna and Steve Magoon.

Irving Park

Jamie presented it was difficult to evaluate the project due to the early stage of development where there were no detailed plans to demonstrate it was a capital improvement project. There was a question about the total budget and the $25,000 in consultant fees. Bob clarified design fees would be covered by DPW and the $25,000 in the budget was for construction oversight. Jon didn't see how there could be community support or opposition for the project without the design details.

Committee members commented that the applicant was moving the project along in good faith. A design vetted by the community and an estimated budget would be needed in advance of project presentations in March. The Committee was comfortable with leaving the project open to allow the applicant to meet that timeline. Dennis added that the applicant could reapply in the next round if the timeline could not be met.

Mark asked about the application evaluation process. Committee members remarked that:

- the influx of information was confusing, and it would be helpful to know which questions applicants had responded to in advance of meetings;
- more time was needed between submitting comments and questions, receiving a compilation of CPC member responses, and meeting to discuss applications;
- it would be useful to see all the comments and responses from their peers;
- the compilation was useful and thought it was helpful to the applicant; and
- the project review could be divided between several meetings.

5. Adjournment

Motion: Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting and Jason seconded the motion.

Vote: Elodia Thomas, Matthew Walter, Mark Kraczkiewicz, Jason Cohen, Jon Bockian, Bob DiRico, Allen Gallagher, Dennis J. Duff, and Jamie O'Connell voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:03PM.