



CITY OF WATERTOWN

Community Preservation Committee

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

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 7:00 PM, held remotely via Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Mark Krackiewicz, 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; Megan Langan, Dept. of Public Works; Michael D'Angelo, Michael D'Angelo Landscape Architects (MDLA); Chris Golden, MDLA; John Seger, Seger Architects; Michael Lara, Watertown Housing Authority (WHA), Olivia Field, WHA; Kristin Monti, WHA; Carsten Snow, Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA); Stefan Wolkenhauer, CHA; Tim Clinton, Fuss & O'Neill; Wendy Tram, Fuss & O'Neill; John Mucciarone, ZED Architects; Anthony Palomba, City Council; Christine Rogers, CPC Housing Consultant; Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown; Cliff Cook, Watertown Housing Trust; Janet Buck, Planning Board; MJ Munroe; Tom Beggan; Anthony D.; Jacky Van Leeuwen; Brian Costello; and Frank Galligan.

1. Call to Order

Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and noted the meeting was being held by Zoom as allowed by the extension of the Governor's order waiving certain provisions of Open Meeting Laws.

2. Committee Discussion:

A. DPW Extension Request - Saltonstall Park Application

Mike D'Angelo stated the project team held their first public meeting in November and there were many comments to be addressed. The applicant requested more time to incorporate changes and gather more input. There will be another public meeting at the end of the month. The applicant anticipates making a presentation to the CPC in May. Mark stated the request in effect asked for the CPC to review the updated application off-cycle. He solicited the thoughts of CPC members. Dennis J. Duff asked if the upcoming community meeting was only being hosted by Zoom.

Elodia Thomas had no objection to the granting the extension due to strong city support of the project. She would like to see projects done correctly. Elodia hoped the

applicant's attempt to respond to comments and develop an accurate budget by going to bid in April would prevent the CPC from needing to return to the City Council for a budget increase. Jon Bockian agreed with Elodia about DPW providing an accurate budget and was glad they were seeking additional community input. He worried about setting a precedent and wondered about the rationale for the extension. Jason Cohen supported Jon's view about setting a precedent.

According to Bob DiRico, the project began as a simple landscaping project and transformed into a larger and more complex project. He said the DPW had one well attended public meeting, however the second meeting had limited attendance. Bob knew they would need to obtain more public input. He cited the difficulty in getting cost estimates to prevent returning to the City Council to request a budget increase. Bob hoped to have real numbers for a presentation in May and avoid missing another construction season.

Mark asked if there was an external deadline associated with the economic development funds. Jamie O'Connell asked if the project could be put out bid with the understanding that CPC recommendation and City Council approval would be required to release the funding. She thought there was a limited amount of time to spend the funding from the State.

Elodia said the time sensitivity stemmed from all the activities that take place during the summer. She noted it would be a major coup for Watertown to have a park completed so quickly in a prominent location. Dennis would also rather grant an extension to avoid the situation that occurred at Irving Park

Jon spoke about the need for additional public comment before the committee's deliberation. Mark said seemingly the project is high priority and the external deadline came from the need to complete construction before the next summer season.

Motion: Dennis moved to approve the request for delaying the DPW presentation until May and Elodia seconded the motion.

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

3. FY 2023 Project Presentation

A. 103 Nichols Avenue Project Application

Michael Lara presented that the home on 103 Nichols Ave. would be deeply affordable to 100% of residents and comply with accessibility requirements. He requested \$175,000 in funding for project design to the stage of 100% complete construction drawings. Michael would not be seeking reimbursement for funds expended. Beaverbrook STEP would provide \$50,000 to the project if the CPC granted funding. Michael stated an open house was held in March of 2022 and meetings would be held for design review if CPA funding was granted. He assured the design would comply with storage requirements and there was an additional kitchen on the second floor to assist with individual life plans. Michael further pointed out the design was changed to comply with dimensional requirements.

Tim Clinton from Fuss & O'Neill spoke about how a closer look at soil gas was taken to avoid vapor intrusion into indoor spaces of the home's occupants and to nearby residents.

A passive venting system would be installed to direct vapors to the roof, which would be simple and cost effective in new construction.

Mark inquired about the sequence of predevelopment work and if environmental testing would begin early and whether there would be time for a 3rd-party review. He also asked if more probes would be done. Carsten Snow responded that the schedule would allow for that review and that Fuss & O'Neill were confident in the remediation performed.

Elodia commented that the venting costs were considered prohibitive when the first environmental assessment was performed, and lenders would require an environmental assessment report no older than one year. Tim responded specific to Phase 1 assessments that after 6 months an update was required and after 1 year it must be redone. Elodia emphasized that the lender selects the environmental firm.

Bob asked why vents would be installed internally and whether ground water was contaminated. Tim responded the vent design was internal for aesthetic concerns and that there was some petroleum in the ground water.

Dennis wondered about the cumulative affects of the vapors especially with all of the lab development. Tim couldn't speak to the lab discharges, but stated there wouldn't be large levels of vapors vented.

Elodia asked for a breakdown of people served by community out of the over 200 individuals served by Beaverbrook STEP and how many from Watertown needed housing. She also asked why there were two kitchens and dining areas and would residents be able to age in place. Michael did not have answers about tenant selection and offered to add a lift as an alternate additional item if it would not be cost prohibitive. Further Elodia questioned the \$10,000 for operating expenses for new construction and what CHA was providing. She offered that WHA should look at putting 10 units in the Willow Park redevelopment. Elodia suggested requesting seed money from CPA for this bigger project while providing 103 Nichols as an open space amenity. Michael responded that rents are limited and the funds were for preventative maintenance. He also said CHA has expertise in the legal and environmental aspects of development. Michael added that he was glad the CPC was thinking big, but the Willow Park project was more than 3-5 years out.

Jamie asked if there were any limitations on the use of the yard and Tim replied that the contamination had been cleared to the water table.

Christine Rogers commented that the schedule was still aggressive She had not yet done a thorough analysis of the proforma to determine if the project would be financeable and operable.

The committee would compose a list of items need for deliberation, including further analysis from Christine.

Community members in attendance expressed support for the project. Janet Buck stated she had experience with this type of development and all of her concerns were addressed. Jacky Van Leeuwen supported the project and was shocked that it would only serve 5 individuals. Councilor Palomba supported the project and thought the team made a better presentation because of the CPC's questions. As the project had been

extensively vetted, he thought it would be a nice way to start using CPC funds for affordable housing.

Jason pointed out that the project may not be perfect, but more than necessary was being made of the environmental conditions and venting. He added the WHA owns the land and the project had other sources of funding. Mark cautioned that those comments should be saved for deliberation at the next meeting.

Dennis questioned whether former Watertown residents who had been placed in other communities could be moved to the home and if the CPC would be committed to funding construction if it recommended funding for predevelopment. He thought there were better sites to build on.

Mark closed by noting next month the CPC would deliberate and members should think about conditions to be placed on projects they wanted to recommend.

4. Adjournment

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

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

Adjournment: 9:09PM