



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, April 20, 2023, at 7:00 PM, held remotely via Zoom.

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

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; and Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown.

1. Call to Order

Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:02 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. Acceptance of 2023-3-30 and 2023-4-10 CPC Minutes

Mark asked if there were changes requested to the minutes other than those submitted by Elodia Thomas for the 3/30/23 minutes. There were none, though Allen Gallagher objected to the words dodged and avoided.

Motion: Jason Cohen moved to accept the 2023-3-30 CPC Minutes with the changes proposed by Elodia and Matthew Walter seconded the motion.

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

Motion: Jason Cohen moved to accept the 2023-4-10 CPC Minutes and Matthew Walter seconded the motion.

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

3. Deadline for Presenter or Agenda Item Materials

Mark opened the committee discussion by asking for the thoughts of members on this agenda item. Elodia proposed the item because applicants and presenters were submitting materials just prior to CPC meetings, which did not allow CPC members the time needed to review them. She suggested a deadline of Wednesday, a week before the CPC meeting to allow Lanae time to review and distribute materials to the committee members before the weekend. Elodia also recommended producing a simple

checklist of what was requested and what was submitted. Jason and Jamie O'Connell agreed with the idea.

Motion: Elodia moved that all materials be due on Wednesday of the week prior to the CPC meeting and to define a checklist of expected materials to be submitted. Dennis seconded the motion.

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

4. Coordinator Update

Lanae presented an update on the two FY 2022 CPA projects that were funded. She mentioned the progress reports emailed by Bob DiRico and stated that \$95,577 had been expended on Irving Park construction with another \$5,030 invoiced to be retained until the project is completed.

Lanae commented on the progress of the City Hall paintings project. She noted, Louise Orsini, the conservator, would be testing a nanogel product designed to clean fine art without manual swabbing. If successful, the product may be more efficient and get the task done more quickly. So far only \$2,903 of funding was spent on deinstallation and transport of the paintings. Lanae said she would report on the projects more formally with a detailed accounting once the first project reports were received.

Based on the low turnout for the application workshops, Lanae proposed holding CPA Clinic Hours throughout June and early July. She would allot about 1.5 hours on several dates for those with ideas who needed to be connected to municipal departments as co-applicants, for potential applicants to flesh out project ideas or for those with well-developed projects to get answers to specific questions. Lanae suggested making it a requirement to speak with her before submitting a project eligibility form. She will post last year's application workshop and Powerpoint presentation on the CPC webpage too. Lanae will also send an email notification and get information to City Councilors for their newsletters as well as other city department newsletters.

5. Committee Discussion on Annual CPA Public Hearing

Mark asked for ideas on how to prepare for and conduct the annual public hearing. Elodia thought the survey from last year had good questions and gathered important information. She proposed that as more projects are funded, the CPC should develop an attractive color-coded presentation of the projects with their status and financial information for insertion in the annual report.

Matt wondered whether the CPC should conduct a survey every year and suggested doing one every other year. Dennis and Elodia thought it stimulated community members to think about CPA. Others were concerned about low response when distributing a survey every year.

Mark recommended listing the pipeline of potential CPA projects cited in city plans and documents as well as pending projects such as Saltonstall Park. He mentioned the Open Space, Comprehensive, and Capital Improvement Plans. Mark emphasized the CPA funds should not supplant city funds or be used for maintenance; however, CPA funds could be used to develop a destination playground.

Elodia cautioned that the Comprehensive Plan had not been approved. She was concerned about putting forth items that had not be officially adopted.

Other ideas for the hearing included:

- Have the hearing in-person as a hybrid event in the Council Chamber
- Market on the CPA WCA-TV with a call-in session.
- Highlight funded projects and that some of the resulting plans would lead to capital projects.
- Continue to educate the public to fight misinformation.
- Personally invite all statutory board and commission members to the hearing.
- Do a “Stump the CPC” Q&A segment.
- Market the CPA and engage the public with committee member baseball caps (“Ask me about CPA”) or yard signs in committee member yard (“What do you want to know about CPA?”)
- Take a poll of the audience.
- Have project applicants or project beneficiaries provide testimony.
- Have Dan Hogan create a short video on the Irving Park Project.

The topic of project applications came up and Jason thought the Charles River had untapped potential for projects. Elodia mentioned the difficulties with DCR and cited Cannalonga Park as an example. Dennis presumed the City owns the riverbank and that DCR has an easement.

Regarding project applicant testimony, Joyce Kelly agreed to contact her team about participating in the public hearing. Lanae would contact Bob DiRico and Liz Helfer about participating on a panel with Joyce. The project awardees would discuss how to conceptualize a project and successfully bring it to realization.

Jason lamented the slow progress in approving projects as cash reserves grow. Elodia pointed out that based on the experience of other communities it takes 3 to 5 years to build the program. Mark mentioned the possibility of Saltonstall coming through soon, as well as opportunities at Walker Pond, results of central business district planning and the potential of the Police Station.

Before the meeting adjourned, Elodia stated that she was thinking about writing a minority statement about the 103 Nichols Ave. project as a guide for future projects. Mark asked that she not undercut the CPC’s decision-making and respect the majority decision. Jason and Jamie said it was Elodia’s prerogative as a Watertown citizen to do so, but there was no precedent set by other city bodies for this. Elodia described her statement as a way to inform the public. Jon mentioned he had considered writing an article for the Watertown News when he was the lone dissenter on the needs and resources in the first report. He decided against it because it probably would not look good.

6. Adjournment

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Matt Walter seconded the motion.

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

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:31PM.