



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 on Thursday, May 18, 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; and Michael Lara, Watertown Housing Authority.

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. Matthew Walter requested the items requiring votes be moved to the beginning of the agenda so he could leave early to attend the Historic Preservation Commission awards event. The agenda was reordered.

2. Acceptance of 2023-4-20 CPC Minutes

Mark asked if there were changes requested to the 2023-4-20 Minutes and there were none.

Motion: Jon Bockian moved to accept the 2023-4-20 Minutes and Allen Gallagher seconded the motion.

Vote: Matthew Walter, Elodia Thomas, Mark Krackiewicz, Allen Gallagher, Dennis J. Duff, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. Jamie O'Connell and Jason Cohen had not arrived yet and Bob DiRico was absent from the 4-20-23 meeting.

3. FY 2024 CPA Budget Allocation Vote

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved that the Community Preservation Committee request the City Council appropriate and transfer FY2024 CPA funds which total \$4,000,000 to the following: 5% totaling \$200,000 for administrative expenses of the Community Preservation Committee; 10% to the community housing reserve totaling \$400,000; 10% to the historical preservation reserve totaling \$400,000; 10% to the open space/outdoor

recreation reserve totaling \$400,000; and 65% to the undesignated reserve totaling \$2,600,000. Matthew Walter seconded the motion.

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

4. Election of Committee Chairs

Motions: (1) Allen Gallagher nominated Mark Krackiewicz to a term of one year as chair of the CPC and Matt seconded the motion. (2) Allen also nominated Jon Bockian to a term of one year as vice chair of the CPC and Jason Cohen seconded the motion.

Votes: Motion (1) Jason Cohen, Matthew Walter, Bob DiRico, Jamie O'Connell, Mark Krackiewicz, Allen Gallagher, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. Dennis Duff and Elodia Thomas voted against. **Motion (2)** Allen Gallagher, Jon Bockian, Mark Krackiewicz, Jamie O'Connell, Bob DiRico, Matthew Walter, and Jason Cohen voted in favor. Elodia Thomas and Dennis Duff voted against.

5. Committee Discussion:

- FY2023 CPA Annual Program Report

Mark asked if there were comments on the annual report. Elodia suggested adding a color-coded chart tracking project expenditures to the financial information section. Jon noted the comprehensive plan should be referred to as a draft. Lanae will make those edits and add responses from the one question survey and post the draft on the CPC web page.

- CPA Annual Public Hearing - 6/15/23

Lanae mentioned that she reached out to WCA-TV and Irving neighbors about recording a video promoting the Irving Park improvements. She received a few responses and noted Bob DiRico had flyers put in the mailboxes of park neighbors.

Lanae shared that Joyce Kelly, Liz Helfer and the Irving Park architects would participate in a panel about the CPA application process. She solicited ideas for questions from the committee. Elodia proposed: What went well? What could be improved? What other resources would have been beneficial?

Allen asked what had been done to promote the event. Lanae said she had sent a Notify Me email to the city planning and CPC lists and information to Jeanne for social media posting on city sites. Lanae had also posted a flyer in the library, posted on the library newsletter, on Nextdoor and on the CPC web page. She will send a reminder email, a request to Watertown News, and an email to City Councilors to post in their newsletters.

The hearing program will feature the Irving Park video, the CPA awardees panel, and a summary of the annual report before opening to public comments.

6. Statutory Committee Member Reports

Jamie O'Connell reported on Conservation Commission activities. She stated Arsenal Park Phase B was going out to bid. Jamie went over the plans by CDM Smith, noting the spray park was put back in and that there would be skate and ball parks, as well

as community gardens, basketball and tennis (pickleball striping) courts, a playground and picnic area. Jamie said there would be a reduction in impervious surface area and an increase in natural area with stormwater control through native plantings. The commission also discussed the GSA site along Arsenal between Greenough Blvd. and Coolidge Ave., which is contaminated and overseen by the Army Corps of Engineers. She believed DCR had become the owner and the commission discussed turning the space into a park with CPA funds.

Dennis mentioned the Arsenal Park was supposed to be passive and not active. Jamie stressed there had not been a change in use as the courts had been there. Dennis countered that the courts had been added later. Jamie responded to Mark's question about the amphitheater area, noting the natural playscape proposed was cut and the area will be planted for erosion control. Jamie answered Dennis' question about Walker Pond, indicating nothing specific was discussed yet.

Bob DiRico gave an update on Irving Park. He said the curbing, electrical conduits and paving had been installed in the center and upper park area, while irrigation would be installed next week. Bob added the plants had been sourced with plants and trees arriving the following week. He said there would be summer help watering and the sidewalk would be done the first week of June.

When asked if the DPW was thinking about future projects aside from Saltonstall Park, Bob reported, DPW was engaging a design firm to look at Howe and Bemis. He noted it would take time to perform community engagement and that design and capital improvement funds were available for a majority of those two projects—about 60-70%. Bob also indicated irrigation systems were needed in most parks and going forward he would like to install irrigation as part of park renovations. In addition, Victory field would need to have its irrigation replaced.

Jason relayed the Planning Board was busy with petitions, applications, and rezoning requests. The Planning Board recommended approval of projects on Water St. for Boston Development Corporation, Pleasant St. on the old Russo site, Arsenal St. at the old Sterritt Lumber site, and most recently, the project on Main St. He said he would like to see more people come out to the hearings. Jason announced the next big project on the agenda in June would be the Watertown Mall proposal, which spans a couple of blocks. He advised members to tell everyone to attend so that the Planning Board could hear from a broad swathe of voices. Jason responded to a question about what would become of Target and the Registry from Allen, saying Target would remain, and he wasn't sure about the Registry.

Mark commented on Watertown Affordable Housing Trust's analysis of possible affordable housing sites. He reported the Trust was developing two scopes of work. One for site analysis and the other for determination of housing development size on particular sites.

Allen Gallagher emphasized there is good information in the written report he submitted. He stated the WHA had received many grants and the highest marks from HUD. Michael Lara updated the committee on Nichols Ave., indicating the WHA is preparing the scope for designer Request for Services (RFS) for the state Design Selection Board. On McSherry Gardens, the WHA will be moving forward with phase 1 to create a community room and fully accessible senior units, as well as kitchen and flooring upgrades. In answer to Elodia's question about partnering with Voc-Tech schools for repairs in units, Michael said it had not been explored though HUD had apprenticeship programs in the past. Allen mentioned the WHA maintenance staff of 5 had responded to 7,000 service calls in the past year.

Elodia brought up posting that materials related to agenda items must be received the Wednesday prior to a CPC meeting for inclusion in that meeting's discussion. At the close of the meeting, Mark mentioned the CPC should organize some site visits for Irving Park when it's completed and when the design teams start the cemeteries and Commander's Mansion projects.

7. Adjournment

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

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

Adjournment: 8:28PM