



Town of Watertown Community Preservation Committee

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COMMITTEE MEMBER

Elodia Thomas, Chair
Jonathan Bockian
Jason Cohen
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Mark Krackiewicz
Allen Gallagher
Maria Rose
Susan Steele

Special Meeting with JM Goldson

Minutes: Thursday, January 2, 2020, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 4:00 - 6:12 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Elodia Thomas, Chair, Jonathan Bockian, Jason Cohen, Bob DiRico, Dennis Duff, Allen Gallagher, Maria Rose (4:26pm). **Absent:** Mark Krackiewicz, Susan Steele.

Others Present: Jenn Goldson, Lanae Handy, Leo Martin

1. Call to order

Elodia Thomas, committee chair, called the meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Informational overview and update by JM Goldson regarding community engagement process, committee participation and materials for 1st Public Forum and upcoming focus groups, and Q&A

Jenn Goldson presented materials for the first public forum. She stressed that the materials are drafts, even though they are not marked as such. Discussion ensued about removing Sawins Pond and replacing it with Walker Pond as it was discussed during the CPA campaign. Elodia Thomas requested that all CPC members send comments to Lanae Handy by January 16, 2020, so that they can be given to Jenn Goldson for editing. Elodia Thomas stressed that she would like all CPC members to respond to Lanae Handy, even if only to say they have no comments.

Elodia Thomas reported on the use of Tufts Health Plan space, the room being used, and how many people it can accommodate. Jenn Goldson then reviewed the open forum format. Dennis Duff asked about participation for forums one and two. Jenn Goldson answered that she tries to encourage people to go to both forums because they build upon each other. Allen Gallagher liked the individual topic hand-outs. He also asked about charts and how they can be produced. Jenn Goldson said she can produce them. She also has a CPA overview chart that shows what is CPA eligible.

Jason Cohen commented that he is thinking ahead to questions that are going to be asked in breakout sessions and what, as facilitators, they need to know. Jenn Goldson said her presentation will be geared toward what the CPA is and what projects are eligible. She also instructed the CPC not to hesitate to pull her over to their break-out sessions, if necessary, because she will be wandering around to make sure things are going smoothly, and to take any hard questions. Elodia Thomas suggested that questions can be handled at the beginning and at the end, and Jenn Goldson agreed that is a good idea. Jenn Goldson offered that, if the format is small groups, she can provide index cards or post-it-notes for eligibility questions. Maria Rose stated that she thinks that the average Watertown resident is not a potential applicant. Jenn Goldson agreed, but said people come in with misconceptions that they ask about. She further agreed that most attendees will be general residents, but some will be potential applicants, asking specific questions (i.e., developers), and interpreting what is eligible for CPA is not black-and-white, so questions/answers can be complicated, which is why she likes to give examples of projects that have already happened in other towns. Elodia Thomas said the biggest thing she has heard from the field is about project maintenance, specifically, who will be in charge of maintenance going forward. Allen Gallagher commented to Jenn Goldson that the CPC will be acting as information gatherers. Jenn Goldson agreed, and Elodia Thomas added that the CPC will be trying to get the pulse of the community.

Maria Rose asked if the forum format had been decided and if they were doing the “pom-pom thing.” Jenn Goldson would like a group of 70-80, with no more than eight people at a table. If the group is larger, then it would be necessary to use an open house style with CPC members at stations. Another option presented by Jenn Goldson was World Café style, consisting of an opening presentation, a different topic at each table (with facilitator staying with topic), and people rotating every 10-15 minutes. Jenn Goldson cautioned that World Café style gets complicated because some people opt out of certain topics. She said she has found that moving around is a better way to keep people engaged, but it gets chaotic. Jenn Goldson stated that she prefers either B1 or A2 JM Goldson Workshop Style options.

Maria Rose agreed that people have their niche and then they leave. Jenn Goldson said the other benefit of the open house is that people don’t feel social pressure to stay. She would rather have people come and leave early, then not come at all. Elodia Thomas emphasized that she would like attendees to register because you need a name badge and to go through Tufts security, and it would make things easier if people would pre-register.

The flyers were discussed briefly. Elodia Thomas offered that she has approximately 30, which can be laminated by Bob Dirico for those who will be posting at outdoor locations.

Jenn Goldson reminded the CPC that they are currently four weeks out from the event. She suggested that CPC members personally invite 10 people each and encouraged them to do so face-to-face or via a personal email. She further suggested that the CPC offer to register people. Maria Rose followed-up by stating that she is curious about Allen Gallagher’s question regarding how many people will register. Dennis Duff asked if there is a maximum capacity for the event. Elodia Thomas responded that Tufts could accommodate 300. Jason Cohen asked if Tufts is charging the CPC for use of the room. Elodia Thomas answered that Tufts is providing the room free-of-charge and that they have been very accommodating. Maria Rose asked if the CPC members needed to register for the event and Elodia Thomas answered, yes. Maria Rose also asked about refreshments. Jenn Goldson said that JM Goldson would provide jugs of water and cups, clementines, and

other basic light snacks that do not require utensils. She added that if the CPC wanted to provide additional snacks, they could do that.

Regarding publicizing the event, Jenn Goldson suggested announcing it on public access cable, and that a CPC member might even consider appearing on a local cable show. She also suggested a mini interview on Zoom that could be posted to the CPC website, and that she would be happy to help with that. She added that it's easy, fast, and no cost. Jenn Goldson also suggested making announcements to all boards and commissions. Elodia Thomas commented that Town Council President, Mark Sideris, would be promoting the event at the town inauguration. Other suggestions included promoting the event in neighborhood groups and school groups. Jason Cohen suggested will distribute flyers to the all schools Maria Rose offered to post flyers at Dunkin Donuts and Starbucks on Mount Auburn Street, as well as the banks in Watertown Square. Elodia Thomas suggested posting flyers at Uncommon Grounds and Dunkin Donuts on Main Street. Maria Rose added that she would post at all the town diners and the Armenian library. Lanae Handy asked that CPC members let her know as soon as they post their flyers, so that she can keep track of what has been done/not done. Dennis Duff offered to post flyers at The Talk and Town Diner. Jon Bockian volunteered to put up flyers at heavily trafficked MBTA stops e.g. the Watertown Square barn.

Jenn Goldson suggested taping a Zoom video and asked the committee whether or not they liked the idea. Elodia Thomas answered, yes, that it would be great to do. Elodia Thomas and Jenn Goldson agreed to get together and do it the following week, and Jenn Goldson offered her office to record the video.

Jenn Goldson suggested that A2 is the best format to use for the event, and the CPC agreed. The decision was made to go with the A2 format. Jenn Goldson said that stations would be geared to each CPC discipline and there would be a board explaining each station, a board for post-its, and a "catch-all" station. Elodia Thomas suggested providing a map where people can place a dot on where they live, and it could be combined with the "catch-all." Jon Bockian changed his vote to B1 and stated that he doesn't like the fragmentation of A2 or the post-its. Maria Rose added that she is not wedded to A2, and that people made valid points against it. Jenn Goldson offered a compromise of small groups with extra tables. If there are extra people, they could be sent to the extra tables, and would fend for themselves without a specific facilitator. Jenn Goldson said she is firm about not having more than eight per table. She also stated that the absolute last date to make a decision on format is Monday, January 20, 2020. Jason Cohen asked why not make a decision tonight. Jenn Goldson said she was pushing because she thought a decision could be made now, but she can wait for January 20, 2020. Bob Dirico said he can definitely get 10 people to attend. Maria Rose said she will invite her neighborhood, but she won't badger people. Jenn Goldson suggested sending emails, but then following up with face-to-face conversation or a phone call. Jason Cohen agreed, but said he knows his cohort and will not badger them. Jenn Goldson suggested offering the survey to people who cannot make the forums. Jon Bockian offered that if there are more than 30 registrants on Eventbrite by January 20, 2020, then the CPC should go with A2. Elodia Thomas added that she posted the Eventbrite link to Facebook and also sent it out via email.

Jenn Goldson then discussed facilitator tips for small groups. She emphasized that CPC members have emotional intelligence and don't have to follow her list. She suggested beginning with introductions, reading an exercise question, using a warm-up question to digest the presentation, employing a round-robin, and then more free-flowing discussion as group the gets used to each other. Jenn Goldson said the facilitator will be asked to give a

brief (one or two minutes) synopsis at the very end. She added that, for B1, she will provide all questions and transcribes all answers. For A2, participants will be asked to write everything down. Jason Cohen asked if people would ask about the money in the CPC fund. Jenn Goldson answered that such information will be part of the presentation. Lastly, Jenn Goldson gave some facilitator tips. She suggested: Round-robin gives everyone a chance to say something. Don't allow ideas to be repeated by multiple people. Don't hesitate to politely intervene. Don't hesitate to ask her for help. Suggest the use of post-its for people who are quiet. Try to make eye contact with people who don't speak much. For those who speak too much, especially off-topic, suggest they use post-its. Elodia Thomas suggested having a sense of humor. Maria Rose asked for confirmation about 30 participants as a cut-off number, and Jenn Goldson replied that she would be more aggressive and use 50 participants as a cut-off number. It was agreed that, if 50 is hit by January 20, 2020, then the format will be A2.

Jenn Goldson turned the discussion to the survey. She stated that a lot of people worked on the survey, and that Elodia Thomas and Lanae Handy invested a lot of time in it. Jenn Goldson distributed the most up-to-date draft of the survey on and pointed out that the logo was used as a banner on SurveyMonkey. Regarding the logo, Jenn Goldson said that she loves the colors and thinks it's a cool logo. SurveyMonkey estimates the time to complete the survey at nine minutes and rates it as "great." Jenn Goldson said she made a few changes, cut it down a little bit more, and tried to clarify language for consistency. She pointed out that question two is problematic because the map of the electoral districts cannot be used, so she suggested adding an "other" box where participants' street can be listed. Everyone agreed to that idea. Jon Bockian wondered why Questions 1-3 are not part of "demographics" at end of survey and whether or not they should be moved. Jenn Goldson answered that they could be moved to the end. Elodia Thomas added that they could be viewed as "warm-up" questions at the beginning. Maria Rose commented that you might lose a lot of people by the end of the survey. Jenn Goldson suggested putting "how would you describe yourself" at end of survey. Elodia Thomas said her big concern was about "rank your priorities," and Jenn Goldson agreed that that does not work, and it should be changed to be able to check all the boxes. Jason Cohen said maybe it could be followed up with an explanation of choice. Jenn Goldson stressed that she doesn't feel strongly about most things in the survey, but does about the question about percentages, so she took it out. She stated that most people don't know what things cost and she doesn't think it's fair to ask the public, who do not have the tools or the knowledge, to answer such a question. Elodia Thomas asked why Question 6.6 is still in the survey - "People do not know where to find information about housing resources and/or assistance in Watertown". Jenn Goldson answered that it was a mistake and she would take it out. Jenn Goldson said the question is relevant because the CPA can fund a housing coordinator position. Jon Bockian asked what the harm was in having it. Maria Rose said she thought the wording should be written in the positive rather than the negative. Jenn Goldson agreed with Maria Rose and suggested changing the framing. Bob DiRico and Jason Cohen also suggested changing it. Jenn Goldson offered different wording. Jason Cohen pointed out that the CPC is still just gathering information. Jenn Goldson said the very last thing she wanted to point out about the survey was directing it to Bang the Table. She agreed that it is a great idea, but it cannot be done until Bang the Table is paid for, which cannot be done until the town pays JM Goldson. Jenn Goldson suggested introducing Bang the Table at the open forum, and then once JM Goldson is paid by the town, Avery Wolfe will do all the set-up for Bang the Table.

Dennis Duff commented that Jenn Goldson made a great presentation/rebound. Jenn Goldson told the CPC that she had asked Anna Callahan to step back as project manager,

and replaced her with Avery Wolfe because her personality, approach, and style is a better match. Maria Rose said she had no problem with Anna Callahan. Jenn Goldson agreed that Anna Callahan is great, but she wanted to match the best person with the CPC, so Avery Wolfe will be the project manager.

Discussion followed about whether or not the CPC should hold their scheduled January 16, 2020 meeting. Elodia Thomas said she was okay with skipping it, but it would leave a lot for the February 2020 meeting, including catching up on minutes and the election of a new chair. It was agreed to keep the January 16, 2020 meeting, as scheduled. Maria Rose suggested instituting a vice-chairperson, as well as a chairperson, who could then move into the chairperson position after a year of on-the-job training. Jon Bockian stated that he does not believe that selecting a new chairperson is a priority. Elodia Thomas disagreed, stating that the CPC by-laws state that a new chairperson must be selected annually, and since they were sworn in last February, the chairperson's tenure is over in February 2020. Furthermore, she does not want to serve as chairperson after February 2020. Jon Bockian said he wants to get back to and focus on rules and regulations and it should be added to the next agenda. Elodia Thomas does not see this as an immediate priority as there are time sensitive tasks that need to be addressed, that the Attorney General has ruled as to what constitutes a majority on CPC votes, that people should familiarize themselves with the new DOR regs she sent to everyone, and the CPC still has a long way to go in learning about best practices as they work with JM Goldson. Jon Bockian disagreed about the priority of adopting rules of procedure and as to what the law allows as to the CPC setting its own rules to require more than three votes to adopt a motion.

3. Authority, Board, Commission Updates

It was determined that there was not enough time to address this agenda item.

4. New Business

It was determined that there was not enough time to address this agenda item.

5. Adjournment

- Dennis Duff made a motion to adjourn. Bob Dirico seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Minutes Transcribed by Anne Korte