Town of Watertown

Community Preservation Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, July 28, 2020, Remote Zoom Meeting, 7:00 PM.

Committee Members Present: Elodia Thomas, Chair; Jon Bockian, Bob DiRico, Jason Cohen, Dennis Duff, Allen Gallagher, Mark Kraczkiewicz, Maria Rose, and Susan Steele.

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Avery Wolfe, Leo Martin, Janet Jameson

1. **Call to Order**

   Elodia Thomas, Committee Chair, called the meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:02 p.m. She announced that the meeting would be remote and encouraged interested community members to sign up for Notify Me

2. **Chair Update**

   Elodia reported that the finances had not been updated since the May 28th meeting. She also reported a fund balance of $6,989,424.98, less personnel and consulting expenses. Elodia informed committee members that Tom Tracy must perform a cash reconciliation, which may take until August or September. He projects the town surcharge will amount to $2,350,000 and conservatively estimated with the state match an additional $2,600,000 to the CPA in FY2021.

   Elodia further informed the committee that she and Mark had attended a Watertown Housing Partnership meeting and learned there is still no formal policy vetted by the Town Council regarding emergency rental assistance. However, they did find there are town resources for rental assistance: $175,000 from Watertown Housing Partnership and $50,000 from the Watertown Community Foundation.

3. **Acceptance of 5-28-20 Meeting Minutes**

   Jon requested adding Jenn Goldson's comments to the record. He moved to amend the minutes to reflect her comment that there is no legal reason preventing the CPC from considering a proposal now.

   Jon also requested adding to his statement, "it isn't necessary to provide public access to a building's interior," the following: "if CPA funds are not used to restore the interior."

☛Jon moved to amend the minutes. In the discussion, Dennis stated he would take each change as a separate vote because he would vote for one and not the other. Maria added she believes minutes should capture the spirit of the meeting as opposed to a verbatim record. A majority voted in favor of the first change.

☛ Maria made a motion to include second amendment, adding Jon's statement, "if CPA funds are not used to restore the interior." Mark seconded and all were in favor.

4. **Approval of Renewal of Community Preservation Coalition Membership**

   Elodia stated membership dues remain $4,350 and that the CPC should support the Community Preservation Coalition.

   ☛ Dennis moved to renew CPC's Community Preservation Coalition membership. Maria seconded; there was no discussion and all were in favor.

5. **JM Goldson Presentation – Summary of Community Engagement**

   Avery presented that although there was not as much engagement on the website as hoped, the webinar went very well with over 50 people in attendance. She emphasized that in the process tonight the CPC will give community feedback and comments consideration because this issue was raised at the webinar.

   Avery's presentation is attached. Some of the major themes expressed were the desire to have a balance between development and quality of life as well as to support projects distributed throughout Watertown.

   During the discussion about the values statement and guiding principles, the following emerged:

   - The values statement could be rewritten a bit to better reflect town values by omitting language about prioritizing projects.
   - Most committee members wanted to exclude the arts culture phrase, as it's confusing because the CPA can't fund arts.

The committee made further comments and suggested the rewording and the moving of sentences as Avery went over the eight guiding principles and the goals for each CPA category. Jon suggested that it would be difficult to do a good job making revisions tonight and that committee members should send comments after the meeting.

Avery reminded everyone that changes made tonight would go into the draft plan and would not be the last opportunity to make changes. Some highlights from the discussion included:

- Requested removal of “equally distributed” and “universal design and accessibility”, (because all projects would meet ADA accessibility).
- Dennis didn’t agree with including two or more CPA focus areas, while Maria added the survey responses favored this principle.
- Remove “preserving or acquiring assets.

  Housing Goals

- Avery went over the pros and cons of local preference. Committee members had a debate wherein there was strong support for using CPA funds on projects with local preference.
- Delete #2 entirely under Housing Goals.
- Change #6 to “support direct housing assistance programs to eligible community households.”

  Outdoor Recreation and Open Space

- Add attractiveness to #1
- Add playing fields to #3
- Accepted newly added goal #2

6. **Discussion about Watertown CPA Application Process and Materials**

   Avery presented results of the survey of the committee and mentioned issues to consider with regard to the timing of application process. Committee members favored an annual, two-step process, keeping things simple. The majority of CPC members wanted to accept quality, time-sensitive applications out of sequence. Additionally, CPC members wanted a robust reporting process, preferring reports tied to project milestones. As for finances, members agreed to allocate 5% to administration and refrained from specifying an amount to reserve for time-sensitive projects. Finally, members agreed to allocate 65% to the undesignated fund.

   Newton’s, Malden’s, Hingham’s, New Bedford’s and Somerville’s application materials were cited as good models by more than one committee member in the survey on project applications and processes.

   Avery made final remarks about the CPA Plan table of contents as well as the schedule for the draft plan and upcoming meetings.

7. **Adjournment**
   Dennis moved to adjourn, Jason seconded and a majority was in favor.
   Meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.