



Town of Watertown
Community Preservation Committee
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Committee Members
Mark Krackiewicz, Chair
Jason Cohen, Vice Chair
Jonathan Bockian
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Allen Gallagher
Jamie O'Connell
Susan Steele
Elodia Thomas

Public Hearing Minutes: Thursday, May 20, 2021, Remote Zoom Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

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

1. Open Public Hearing

Mark Krackiewicz opened the hearing at 7:05 p.m. He introduced himself and the other Committee members. That introduction served as a roll call and all members responded present. Mark acknowledged Maria Rose, Conservation Commission designee for her service. Mark said the CPA fund held \$10,075,000 as of May 6th. Dennis J. Duff acknowledged Elodia Thomas for her efforts chairing and coordinating the committee. He commended the enormous amount of work she performed on the draft community preservation plan.

2. Brief Presentation of Draft Community Preservation Plan Highlights

Mark introduced Elodia and she spoke about the committee's accomplishments and timeline as well as the public engagement process. After Elodia spoke, Mark presented highlights of the Draft Community Preservation Plan. Lanae briefly went over the application process. Mark followed with a summary of next steps.

3. Opening to Public Comments

Mark opened the public comment portion of the hearing.

Name	Address	Comment
Anne Fitzpatrick	Standish Rd.	Appreciative of the hard work and expresses strong support for open and greenspaces. How will land purchases be handled? Understand there is an application process with a firm deadline. What will be a process for buying land? Watertown has given up so much land to development that there isn't much left to preserve.
	Response by Mark	Noted there will be times when real estate transactions necessitate the off-cycle review of applications.
Bob Shay	139 Russell Ave.	Is there a requirement that a certain amount of the fund be disbursed each year? The CPC should be getting more return on the money in the fund. They should be able to invest CPA funds in town bonds to get a higher rate of return. The application process takes 8 months. Is there anything that can be done to expedite the process.
	Response by: Mark Elodia Lanae	There is no requirement for disbursing a certain amount of the fund. The CPC does not invest the CPA funds. That's done by the town through the Auditor, Tom Tracy An annual application process is typical, taking 8-9 months.
Deborah Peterson	9 Westland Rd.	Thanks to the committee for their hard work. The idea of community priorities and values is of concern. She was surprised how much the issue of housing appealed to those she spoke to when she canvassed for CPA support. The public engagement was heavily skewed to a particular demographic and the committee shouldn't rely too heavily on that response.

Name	Address	Comment
Jennifer Van Campen Exec. Dir. MetroWest Collaborative	51 Harvey St., Cambridge	The application process needs to be reconsidered. Based on her experience, the process tracks more with communities with a town meeting form of government. The parts of the plan about the shortage of open space feel disingenuous. She is concerned about the number of acres of open space per person figures. That number looks severely short and feels dramatic.
	Response by: Leo Martin, Chair Conservation Commission Elodia	The open space number is accurate and not inflated. The figure includes town-owned and publicly accessible park land. On the application timeline, noted that the CPC wants to give as many applicants as possible the opportunity to apply. She investigated many communities and rolling application deadlines were not common, an annual deadline was the norm.
Chris Penland	Standish Rd.	Thanks to the committee for the creation of the plan and passage of the Act. He supports open space as a project, theme, and priority for the CPC. Land acquisition by the town can be bonded. The per acre price in Watertown is only going to get higher. Encourages acting now rather than rehabilitation. It will cost more in the future so spend money on opportunistic purchases of open space now.
Ellen Rothman	14 Fairview Ave.	Can an applicant be an ad hoc organization without a 501(c)3? Does the fiscal agent have to be a 501(c)3? Does the applicant get all of the funding up front?
	Response by: Elodia and Lanae	An organization would not necessarily need to have a 501(c)3, but the priority is for town-owned resources. The applicants will not get all the funds upfront, the funds will be disbursed under the terms of a customized grant agreement. The fund disbursement timeline will be on a case-by-case basis with a portion retained until the project is complete.
Steven Owens State Representative 29 th District		Thanked the committee for their work on the process. The document showed a real care and dedication to the community and looks forward to seeing the projects brought forth.

Lanae read the attached comments received by email for the record: [Attached Comments](#)

4. Closing of Hearing

Mark closed the public hearing and there was no other business on the agenda. Jon noted that at the next CPC meeting on June 3rd, the Committee would vote to adopt the Community Preservation Plan.

Motion: Dennis moved to adjourn the hearing and Susan seconded.

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

Motion: Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting and Susan seconded.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.