



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

Meeting Minutes: Thursday, March 18, 2021, Remote Zoom Meeting, 6:30 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 (joined the meeting at 6:46 p.m).

Others Present: Lanae Handy, CPC Coordinator; Leo Martin, Conservation Commission Chair; Lisa Feltner, Town Council.

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mark Krackiewicz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:34. He read the Governors Executive Order suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Law, allowing remote meetings.

Lanae called the roll. Jon Bockian, Jason Cohen, Bob DiRico, Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Mark Krackiewicz, Jamie O'Connell, and Elodia Thomas reported they were present.

Mark asked new CPC member Jamie O'Connell to introduce herself. Jamie stated she was replacing Maria Rose as the representative from the Conservation Commission and briefly described her background as an environmental scientist.

2. Acceptance of 2-18-21 Meeting Minutes

Mark summarized the comments provided by Elodia and Jon, which are attached to the minutes. He then asked for comments or discussion. Elodia clarified her corrections to the minutes regarding the sequence of the next steps to be taken in advance of the public hearing.

Motion: Jon moved to accept the minutes with the corrections and Allen seconded the motion.

Vote: Jon Bockian, Jason Cohen, Bob DiRico, Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Mark Krackiewicz, and Elodia Thomas voted to accept the minutes with corrections.

3. Discussion about CP Plan Public Hearing

Mark summarized a possible scheme and proposed schedule for the public hearing on the CP Plan.

Jason asked about having the hearing on May 20, 2021, the regularly scheduled CPC meeting date or to having the hearing on another date. He advocated for advertising the hearing as early as possible and favored a description that would make the event appear as compelling as possible.

Mark, Dennis and Allen wanted to keep the May 20th date for the public hearing to avoid holding the hearing in June near school closing and vacation time. Jason asked if the timeline seemed too aggressive.

Mark outlined the purpose of the hearing. He indicated it was an opportunity to inform the public about the plan and the application process. He proposed having a presentation such as a 30-35 minute Power Point.

Jon wondered if there could be a video presentation available in advance of the hearing as a way to keep the presentation as brief as possible.

Jamie asked about the content of the Power Point and who would prepare it. Susan inquired about access to the draft plan. Jason recommended getting the draft plan out roughly coinciding with the April meeting.

Jamie suggested having some sort of presentation would be more productive than simply beginning the hearing with the comment period. Susan asked whether we would accept feedback in advance. Mark said that Lanae had mentioned people could send written comments to her by email. Jamie recommended a questionnaire for feedback. She remarked the comment period should be extended for two weeks after the public hearing. Jaime also thought the CPC could present a summary of written comments at the hearing. Mark suggested comments could be summarized and posted on the CPC website as well.

Jon asked if there was a way to have people sign up to speak in the Zoom meeting. Jason agreed that would bring order to the hearing. Jon also wondered if it would aid the moderators. Jason then volunteered to be the moderater and manage the Q&A function in Zoom.

Jamie thought that comments must be spoken to count as public record. She suggested we confirm that. Town Councilor Feltner remarked committee members must be heard at all times, but public comment in any form could be attached to the record.

After considerable discussion about the hearing format and the possibility of having an optional RSVP. Elodia indicated the CPC should not expect to orchestrate how people make comments. She suggested the event be held in the webinar format of Zoom with the chat function disabled and all comment put in the Q&A function so that it doesn't appear the CPC is rigging the system.

The following was proposed: a brief presentation and then acceptance of comments through the Q&A functions. While questions will be allowed and can be emailed after the hearing, the hearing will be focused on comments on the plan. That will be made clear in the hearing publicity. Comments will be limited to two minutes per person. Mark will moderate and Jason will monitor the Q&A. People commenting would be expected to state their name and address.

Further into the discussion about the public hearing, Jason asked if the website could accept comment after the hearing. Lanae noted the website overhaul wouldn't be ready in time to do that. When Susan asked about organizing comments by topic and funding category, Elodia specified the typical process whereby people would send comments to Lanae and they would go into a folder available on the town website.

Elodia asked for clarification about whether there was an expectation that we would make changes to the plan after all the work that had been done. Jason pointed out the committee would have discretion to make any modifications based on the public's comment.

Mark discussed the ways the hearing could be publicized. Lanae will email people on the Community Preservation Notify Me list, the town planning email list, and Watertown News. All CPC members could send out emails to their own lists. Allen suggested advertising on WCA-TV. Town Councilors would be asked to get the word out to their constituents. Jon suggested a press release.

Mark proposed a presentation that included a history of CPA in Watertown, public engagement results, values statement, CPA financial statement, highlights of the resources and needs for each funding category, funding category goals, and a flowchart of the application process.

Jon said that the plan speaks for itself and we can't go through everything found in it. Susan agreed that there will be plenty of opportunity for the public to review the plan in advance. Jason and Allen called for brevity and presentation of the highlights.

Jamie suggested having one slide with a link to the plan with the expectation that people have read the plan and come prepared to make a comment as opposed to learning about the plan at the hearing.

4. Consideration of Change to Meeting Start Time

Mark declared that two members find the 6:30 meeting time is a hardship. Susan noted it interferes with dinner.

Motion: Jon moved to change the meeting start time 7pm. Susan seconded.

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

5. Adjournment

Motion: Dennis moved to adjourn and Elodia seconded.

Vote: Jon Bockian, Jason Cohen, Bob DiRico, Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Mark Krackiewicz, Jamie O'Connell, Susan Steele and Elodia Thomas voted in favor.
The meeting adjourned at 8:17pm.