



CITY OF WATERTOWN

Community Preservation Committee

Mark Krackiewicz, Chair
Jon Bockian, Vice Chair
Jason Cohen
Bob DiRico
Dennis J. Duff
Allen Gallagher
Jamie O'Connell
Elodia Thomas
Matthew Walter

Minutes of CPC Meeting Monday, September 25, 2023, at 7:00 PM, held remotely via Zoom.

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

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Michael Lara, Watertown Housing Authority; Carsten Snow, Cambridge Housing Authority; Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown; Jamie Gordon; Jacky van Leeuwen; Jimmy Mello; Linda Scott; Joe Bednar; and Kirsten M.

1. Call to Order

Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7PM, noting it was being held remotely according to the Governor's extension suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Laws.

2. Acceptance of Minutes

A. 2023-8-17 CPC Minutes

Mark Krackiewicz asked if there were any requested changes to the minutes other than his. Matt Walter requested the word "thought" be changed to "though" in the paragraph about Belmont Watertown United Methodist Church.

Motion: Jason Cohen moved to accept the minutes with the requested changes. Allen Gallagher seconded the motion.

Vote: Matthew Walter, Elodia Thomas, Dennis J. Duff, Mark Krackiewicz, Allen Gallagher and Jon Bockian voted in favor.

3. 103 Nichols Ave. Project Update

Michael Lara updated the Committee on the group home project. He explained the Watertown Housing Development Corporation had disposed of the 103 Nichols Ave. property to a recently formed Nichols Ave. LLC to allow procurement relief under the 2022 state economic development bill. Michael noted they no longer needed to go through the state design board selection process.

Elodia Thomas remarked that keeping funds within the community was part of the intent of CPA law and encouraged Michael to consider local developers and contractors. He confirmed that any local contractors with talent and a good track record would be.

Mark asked if the contractor with the lowest bid must be selected, and Matt asked if prevailing wage was required. Michael confirmed that.

Jason Cohen asked why the design process increased from 3 to 4 months. Michael replied that the process would be faster if the project was awarded to the same design team.

Elodia was more concerned about accessibility on both floors for residents to age in place and for visitors. She asked that the committee be included in the process. Michael assured the committee it was a possibility to make both floors accessible and pointed out that would make both floors eligible for Facilities Consolidation Fund (FCF) funding. Jason added that certain design elements are subjective and warned of designing by committee. Lanae asked about the timing of FCF approval and when a firm commitment was anticipated in relation to the CPA application deadline. Michael stated there would be a strong indication about whether FCF would approve funding before the CPA application was due.

4. Committee Discussion

A. Community Preservation Coalition Dues

Mark cited the importance of Community Preservation Coalition membership and the organization's efforts on behalf of CPA communities. He asked for a motion to renew the Committee's membership.

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to renew the Committee's Community Preservation Coalition annual membership dues in the amount of \$7,900. Jason Cohen seconded the motion.

Vote: Allen Gallagher, Jon Bockian, Elodia Thomas, Matthew Walter, Jason Cohen, Mark Krackiewicz, and Dennis J. Duff voted in favor.

B. CPA Permanent Signage

Mark framed the discussion by asking if each project should have the same sign or different signs, whether every project needed a sign, and what the language should be.

Matt said he would be happy with a sign being posted for 10 years and that not every project needed a sign, or a sign needed to be installed forever. Dennis pointed out the projects are forever and asked if one size fits all. Elodia answered scale mattered, for example, there could be a small sign on the barrier in front of the city hall paintings and a stone with a plaque could be placed near the central seating area at Irving Park.

Jason liked the language on the Hubbardston sign example.

Jon asked if the grant agreement required acknowledgement signs and whether historic properties would be allowed to have signs installed. He also asked about the degree of approval needed from city departments regarding sign appearance and location. Mark liked Bob's suggestion of installing a stone with a plaque in Irving Park because it would be approved by the DPW.

Elodia proposed adding the name of the park and date of the renovation to read:

Irving Park (Title) This park renovation in 2023 was generously supported by the people of Watertown through our Community Preservation Act Fund (body)

Jason would like to see a basic template for different situations.

The Committee agreed to have Marcia Ciro or another designer do a mockup with various fonts.

Dennis said it was unfortunate that the MDLA designers were not asked to produce a sign. Elodia added she could reach out to MDLA designers and Marcia. Mark said he would contact Bob.

Elodia raised the issue that Lanae had been displaced from her office space, would be working remotely, and now be reached by cell phone. She wanted to discuss the protocols of the committee and the need for process, information, and discussion. Elodia was concerned that the committee was not informed immediately.

Mark explained that Steve approached him about the need for space for a newly hired full-time employee and that Lanae would have a space in city hall for public-facing duties.

Dennis was concerned that the committee wasn't notified before the meeting.

Jason wondered what would have changed if the committee was informed right away. Elodia replied, the committee could have brainstormed about an alternative space.

5. Coordinator Update

A. CPA Projects

Lanae reported that:

The **city hall paintings project** was still stalled due to contract delays by procurement.

The architectural team had completed its fieldwork for the **cemeteries preservation plan**. They expect to have a draft assessment by mid-October and will prepare recommendations for the final draft to be presented in late November. Late in the day an issue came up about a loose headstone near the high school as well as preservation of trees on the property boundary. Joyce consulted with the gravestone conservator and the Ray Dunetz team.

The **Commander's Mansion project** began with a kickoff meeting in September and Lanae sent the committee a revised timeline.

The **Fowle House gutter project** is expected to begin in October.

The communication surrounding the start of work and when key project events occur was not smooth. The gravestone conservator had already started his assessment before Joyce was informed. Mark asked Lanae to have consultant teams and project managers inform her of key events so that she and interested CPC members may attend.

There was an inquiry from Thomas Sullivan who had contacted Nicole Gardner about turning the corner of Boylston and Mt. Auburn into an intergenerational park. Councilor Gardner referred him to Mark and Lanae. Mr. Sullivan referenced Waltham acquiring property for a school using eminent domain. Lanae responded to him that property ownership was an issue as well as environmental site conditions. She added the city needed to be involved in any potential project.

B. CPA Administrative Budget

Lanae said she would report on the administration budget next month because she didn't have the updated financial information from the Auditing department.

6. Adjournment

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Matt Walter seconded the motion.

Vote: Matt Walter, Elodia Thomas, Jason Cohen, Mark Krackiewicz, Dennis J. Duff, Jon Bockian and Allen Gallagher voted in favor.

Adjournment: 8:52 PM

