



# 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 Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 7:00PM, held remotely via Zoom.**

**Committee Members Present:** Mark Krackiewicz, Chair; Jon Bockian, Vice Chair; Bob DiRico; Allen Gallagher; Dennis J. Duff; Elodia Thomas; Matt Walter; Jason Cohen; and Jamie O'Connell (joined at 7:05).

**Others Present:** Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Michael Albano, Department of Public Works; Michael Cookson, Department of Public Works; Chris Golden, Michael D'Angelo Landscape Architects; Andrew Gambardella, Mt. Auburn Cemetery; Beth Brown, Mt. Auburn Cemetery; Gus Fraser, Mt. Auburn Cemetery; Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown; Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown; Eugenie Johnston, Trees for Watertown; Margie Wayne; and Jacky Van Leeuwen.

### 1. Call to Order

Mark Krackiewicz called the meeting to order at 7:01PM, noting it was being held remotely according to the Governor's extension suspending certain provisions of Open Meeting Laws.

### 2. Acceptance of Minutes

#### A. 2023-10-19 CPC Minutes

Mark Krackiewicz asked if there were any changes to the minutes and there were none.

**Motion:** Allen Gallagher moved to accept the minutes as recorded and Jason Cohen seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Matthew Walter, Elodia Thomas, Mark Krackiewicz, Dennis J. Duff, Allen Gallagher, Bob DiRico, and Jon Bockian voted in favor. (Jason Cohen and Jamie O'Connell were not present at the 10/19/23 meeting.)

### 3. Coordinator Update

#### A. CPA Projects

Lanae Handy gave a brief update on each of the projects in progress.

**City Hall Paintings** - The contract for the conservator was finally executed and the painting restoration will be able to resume.

**Cemeteries** - Ray Dunetz, landscape architect for the project has a contract that is in the process of being executed. The firm produced a draft assessment for the two cemeteries.

**Edmund Fowle House** - The gutter replacement project was completed and Lanae posted photos on the CPC webpage.

**Commander's mansion** - The landscape architectural team is completing the survey and Liz Helfer is planning a site visit soon.

**103 Nichols Avenue** - An RFP for design services is being posted in the Central Register. The Phase II assessment will begin sometime after the design firm is hired.

Elodia Thomas stressed the importance of being included in the design process for 103 Nichols Ave. early enough to ensure the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is accessible.

#### 4. Committee Discussion

Mark introduced the discussion about the 4 remaining applications after the withdrawal of the 80 Mt. Auburn St application. He emphasized the goals of the discussion were to (1) determine which applicants should be invited to present their projects and (2) to develop questions to be answered at project presentations and/or in writing.

##### A. FY2024 CPA Project Applications Evaluation

###### **Browne House**

Allen summarized the application, noting it was well done and the team was well qualified. He questioned whether the financial position of one applicant should be taken into account while not doing so for another applicant. For example, should the CPC vote for the Browne House project but not vote for the Scots Charitable fence project based on the finances of the organizations. Elodia pointed out Historic New England maintained 38 historic properties and helped with over 120 other properties. Historic New England found it easier to secure grants for capital improvements than for planning. She also mentioned it was the oldest house in Watertown.

Mark thought Historic New England should be asked to present. Committee members had the following questions or requests for clarification.

###### *Questions/Comments or additional information*

1. Clarify what the CPA request would be used for and verify it would not be used for construction administration.
2. Explain why Historic New England would not be able to do the work if not for CPA funds, in other words demonstrate need.
3. Clarify the hours and dates for admittance of visitors.
4. What does Historic New England do to reach out to Watertown residents and make them aware of free admission for residents?

## **Scots Charitable Fence**

Matt Walker endorsed the project and left the analysis and questions for the applicant to Jamie O'Connell. He spoke about the importance of the cemetery to the community. Matt mentioned the many objects, features, and notable people buried there as well as its significance as the first garden cemetery. He also cited its importance as an arboretum and bird migration spot along with the plans for new entrances. Matt highlighted Mt. Auburn Cemetery's preservation team's great track record and expertise. He also noted self-funding of their many capital projects would be unsustainable.

### *Questions/Comments or additional information*

1. Clarify the relationship between the Friends of Mt. Auburn Cemetery and Mt. Auburn Cemetery and confirm that the group has permission to conduct the project.
2. Provide evidence or a commitment letter for \$75,000 from Scots Charitable Society.
3. Clarify who is on the team and their roles.
4. Is horticulture a part of this project? Scottish themed plantings are mentioned. Is there a planting plan and are these plantings native or compatible with this region?
5. How was the timeline developed and is it dependent on fundraising success?
6. Provide more information about the fundraising plan and status. How would a condition of the grant agreement tied to there being adequate funds available to complete the project before CPA funds affect the applicant's decision to conduct the project?
7. Clarify budget details.
  - a. How were costs estimated and which documents support these estimates?
  - b. There is no quote for Foster Architecture construction administration services and no quote for horticulture.
  - c. Is a contingency needed?
  - d. Explain the statement that the project will go forward once 60% is raised. Is the 60% needed to go forward coming from non-CPA sources?

During the discussion Jamie suggested standardizing the review so that committee members don't receive applications until they are complete. Elodia reminded committee members that when the CPC adopted the Community Preservation Plan, they made a commitment to prioritizing municipal historic resources. Dennis Duff added that he felt Mt. Auburn Cemetery turned their back on Watertown.

## **Walker Pond**

Dennis summarized the application stating that there seemed to be preconceived ideas about what to include in the project regarding active recreation. He also questioned why certain items below were not included in the scope. Elodia added she was concerned about project development meetings that the CPC had no access to.

### *Questions/Comments or additional information*

1. Why are a complete tree inventory and water quality study not included in the scope of this phase?
2. Clarify project schedule, there seems to be typographical errors on the years. Are there plans to avoid peak vacation periods and the holiday season? Is 6 months enough time?

3. Clarify the need for a new survey and the amount. There were surveys done by Feldman in 2009 and 2012.
4. Explain how the three easements impact the project and its feasibility and how the city as a new grantor may be able to change the easements.
5. Identify the groups and stakeholders who have met to inform the project application.
6. Describe the plans for connectivity to be explored as part of this project including the easement portion.
7. Identify the key stakeholders who will be meeting as mentioned in the scope of services.
8. Discuss the study of the pond from an ecological perspective. What would be done to make it ecologically healthy and functional?
9. How will you ensure sustainability is incorporated in the planning process?
10. Can the scope of services expand on how universal design principles will be used in the design of the pathways?
11. How will bicyclist and pedestrian access and connections be evaluated in the feasibility study?
12. The team seems to have most of its experience with hardscape and playgrounds as opposed to a natural landscape. Describe how the team will address this.
13. Will this project need a budget contingency? Will funding for additional cost items be requested?
14. Is cost estimation included in the budget?

#### **Saltonstall**

Elodia described the positive aspects of the application and plan. She pointed out the MDLA team did great work. Elodia also highlighted features such as the removal of the stairs, addition of permeable pathways, and other improvements in accessibility. She identified the following issues:

- The complete plan had not been presented by the applicant and was not included as part of the new application.
- There were no details in the bid documents
- Details were missing about the performance structure and who would be building it.
- The applicant never met with Joe Levendusky about sound and lighting as recommended by the City Manager
- The landscape plan changed.
- MDLA's answers to questions posed by the CPC at its 7/20/23 meeting were not distributed to the CPC
- Reservations about the pavilion designer

#### **Questions**

##### **Plan details**

1. What are the answers to the committee's questions posed at the 7/20/23 CPC meeting?

2. How has the landscape plan changed?
3. How are benches configured; what direction are they facing?
4. Was a movie screen added to the pavilion and why?
5. Clarify the status of the \$160,000. Has it already been spent?
6. What is the difference between impervious cover in the existing conditions and the proposed plan? Will the drainage be designed through the course of this project?
7. Will green drainage infrastructure solutions be considered such as rain gardens?
8. Can shade trees be added to the lawn?
9. Was evaluation of bike infrastructure considered?
10. Will lighting be dark sky compliant?
11. Given that Trees for Watertown provided input, why didn't they provide a letter of support for the project?
12. Is access to the stage ADA compliant?
13. Is the timeline still valid?
14. Is there a difference between maintaining the existing park and the planned park? How will that maintenance be institutionalized?
15. Clarify what the CPC request would pay for in your itemized budget?
16. With the total budget approaching \$3,000,000, to reduce the total budget, can you provide a list of optional items or components with their costs?

Bob DiRico pointed out that MDLA itemized their bid sheet. He said the pavilion roof or skin was proprietary and only one company could provide it. More than one company could provide the laminate, but it was very detailed. The beams were standard.

The CPC agreed the Walker Pond and Saltonstall Park project presentations will be held on Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup> and the historic preservation project presentations will be held on Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 5. Adjournment

**Motion:** Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Jon Bockian seconded the motion.

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

**Adjournment: 9:04PM**