



CITY OF WATERTOWN

Community Preservation Committee

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

Minutes of CPC Meeting Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 7:01PM, held remotely via Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Mark Krackiewicz, Chair; Jon Bockian, Vice Chair (Acting Chair for this meeting); Allen Gallagher (left at 9:10pm); Dennis J. Duff; Abigail Hammett; Elodia Thomas; Jamie O'Connell (arrived at 7:04pm), and Matt Walter.

Absent: Bob DiRico

Others Present: Lanae Handy, Community Preservation Coordinator; Steve Magoon, Department of Community Development and Planning; Katie Swan; Department of Community Development and Planning; David Warner, Warner Larsen Landscape Architects; Benjamin Griffith, Normandeau Associates; Michael Albano, Department of Public Works; Leo Martin, Conservation Commission; Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown; Joyce Kelly, Historical Society of Watertown; Nicole Gardener, City Council; Patrick Fairbairn; Donald McDonald; Michele Waldman; Linda Scott; Joan Gumbleton; Margie Wayne; Anita Ray Dobbs; Carolyn Gritter; Theo Offei; Jacky van Leeuwen; Jessica Grimsby; and Jamie Gordon.

1. Call to Order

Jon Bockian called the meeting to order at 7:02PM noting the Governor's executive order to extend the suspension of certain open meeting law provisions.

2. Walker Pond Application Amendment

A. Amended Scope of Services - Ecological Study

Steve Magoon presented the expanded scope of work for the Walker Pond Project and noted another subconsultant was brought on for a more thorough ecological study. The total project budget was now \$132,697. David Warner described the budget adjustments. He explained Warner Landscape Architects sought proposals from multiple consultants and that the Normandeau proposal was the most favorable. The proposed scope is attached to these minutes. David also presented the outline of the area controlled by the city as well as the boundaries of the study area (found in the attached presentation).

Committee Discussion and Questions

Abigail Hammett asked about the type of fee structure proposed and if Feldman was

no longer performing the wetland delineation, would they cover the flagging that Normandeau left out of their scope of work. David responded that there was a 10% markup to the Normandeau figures to provide a buffer and there would be no change in the budget unless there was a change in scope.

Elodia Thomas inquired about the \$5,000 in expenses and the tree survey. David replied the \$5,000 was a reimbursable expense budget that would cover travel to the site and any necessary excavation. He added, Feldman would perform a precise ground tree survey to inform construction drawings while Normandeau would perform a GIS mapping of trees that would be less precise.

Jamie O'Connell raised questions about the water quality testing costs, lack of details about the sampling plan, and not sampling at least once in July through September. David responded that the tests and number of tests may not be fully known. Ben Griffith of Normandeau answered that they would need to get quotes for the testing when they had samples in hand. He agreed it was unusual to end sampling in June and pointed out Normandeau would take surface and bottom samples and test for Potassium, Phosphorus, and Nitrogen. Jamie also asked whether baseflow or stormwater flows would be analyzed. Ben replied only baseflows would be studied unless that was not a realistic option based on the weather conditions. Jamie advised the scope should include some interpretation and recommendations or a menu of options for next steps. The consultants expected further investigation may result and that there would be interpretation and recommendations that would not increase costs unless it became an iterative process.

Lanae Handy asked how the funding approval date affects the project timeline. She asked if those early studies could be pushed to next year given delays in getting contracts from the procurement office.

Steve offered the planning department could potentially pay for some early season study. David noted some animal studies have a certain window and the consultants wouldn't want to miss an opportunity. He added the priority of the study was to protect and enhance habitat and help inform construction sequencing. Ben commented that frogs and birds needed to be studied in May while vernal pool studies needed to be conducted around mid- to late March.

Dennis J. Duff asked if trees at 2" diameter at breast height could be surveyed. Ben responded the industry standard was 3" and lowering to 2" would significantly increase numbers to include trees unlikely to survive.

Jamie ultimately requested a revised timeline, a cost estimate for samples analyzed externally, an extra round of sampling in July and September, and a sampling plan with specificity of locations and which nutrients would be tested for.

Jamie asked a question about the process related to whether the CPC could ask questions of the team during deliberation. She wanted to discuss whether all 10 ecological tasks should be done. Jon wanted to know what Steve thought about doing all 10 ecological study tasks. He replied, more information was better and that if the CPC would fund all 10 tasks, he thought they should be done.

Community Members' Comments and Questions

Michele Waldron and Anita Dobbs were concerned with protecting sensitive areas from construction and that studies be performed now to avoid disturbance or harm.

Leo Martin recommended doing all 10 tasks.

Linda Scott asked if David had experience designing a purely passive space, and any experience with Normandeau. David replied that he put together a team with

expertise and that his past projects were multifaceted with ecologically sensitive areas associated with them. Normandeau was selected because of their various capabilities with aquatic and land studies.

Joan Gumbleton mentioned that the area was dumped into and asked if there was any idea of clean-up costs. Steve responded that the purpose of the study was to create a design and the project wouldn't pay for clean-up. Ben could help the team decide what to do with the ecological area. For instance, Steve thought there may be things in the sediment that shouldn't be disturbed, while removing a shopping cart may make sense.

Jon said he expected the meeting would go beyond 9pm and Elodia suggested taking a vote on that. Jon stated she would be able to make a motion to adjourn at any time.

Motion: Elodia made a motion to set time for another meeting and Dennis seconded the motion.

Jon said he wouldn't entertain that motion just yet. Jon explained that he and Mark intended for there to be a motion to approve a project as proposed and then debate from there to add any amendments.

Motion: Matt Walter moved to approve the project as proposed. Jon asked if there was a second to the motion.

Motion: Dennis moved to discuss the other 3 projects and leave Walker Pond for the next meeting. Jamie emphasized the CPC should discuss the Walker Pond project while the project team was present to answer questions.

Mark seconded the motion made by Matt with an amendment to revise the scope to include recommendations based upon the ecological study, an updated timeline taking into account when studies should be done, study of the pond depth, sediment, and flow characteristics. Matt accepted that amendment. Jamie added what Steve would be willing to pay for and what would wait until next year to the amendment. Steve committed to paying for early tasks if the CPC approved the project. Elodia wanted to make certain the budget figure was adequate. Steve proposed increasing the budget to \$145,000 to cover the costs of items added to the scope and would return any funds not spent to the CPA fund.

Motion: Mark moved to revise his amendment to reflect the increased request of \$145,000.

Matt accepted the amendment with the addition of a revised scope and timeline as well as recommendations from the team and the budget increase.

Jamie O'Connell and Mark Krackiewicz initially asked for extensive water sampling regimes that included pond contours and depth, flushing rate input/outputs, and testing of sediment. Jamie asked if there was any reason to conduct this further water quality study from the design perspective. David responded that there would be time before developing construction documents to do more study and analysis. Ben added there was a potential for water quality to become lengthy and a need for baseline data to avoid the study extending beyond what is needed or to end up duplicating tests later.

Jamie asked if hazards learned from task 2 that would interfere with recreation (creating a beach, canoeing, or allowing dogs in the pond) David pointed out that the public may not want to introduce domestic animals, may want to respect the natural shoreline, or may not want water recreation.

Mark withdrew the portion of his amendment regarding analysis of sediment,

determination of the water depth and study of the water budget (inputs and outputs).
Matt accepted the revised amendment to his motion.

Abigail asked about performing all 10 tasks and where the analysis transitioned from informing the design to more maintenance related information. Jamie thought all 10 tasks made sense because they have design considerations and could allow the flexibility to integrate the design with nature and potentially incorporate migration corridors.

Jon asked for a vote on Matt's original motion with the friendly amendments.

Vote: Elodia Thomas, Jamie O'Connell, Jon Bockian, Dennis J. Duff, Mark Krackiewicz, Abigail Hammett, and Matt Walter voted in favor.

Motion: Jon moved for the CPC to obtain the revised scope in writing with the conditions as proposed by Jamie. Elodia seconded.

Vote: Matt Walter, Elodia Thomas, Jamie O'Connell, Jon Bockian, Dennis J. Duff, Mark Krackiewicz, and Abigail Hammett voted in favor.

Due to the lateness of the hour the other items on the agenda were deferred.

3. Adjourn

Motion: Dennis J. Duff moved to adjourn, and Elodia Thomas seconded the motion.

Vote: Jamie O'Connell, Abigail Hammett, Jon Bockian, Mark Krackiewicz, Elodia Thomas, Matt Walter, and Dennis J. Duff voted in favor.

Adjournment: 9:40PM

Attachments:

1. [Walker Pond Presentation](#)
2. [Walker Pond Ecological Study Proposal](#)