

# **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

## **Public Meeting Minutes**

**January 9, 2017**

**7:00 P.M.**

### **First Floor Conference Room, 141 Keyes Road**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's Office, Concord's Community Preservation Committee held a public meeting in the First Floor Conference Room at 141 Keyes Road starting at 7:00 P.M. Committee members Dee Ortner, Barbara Pike, Geoffrey Taylor and Peter Ward were present. Finance Committee Representative Tom Tarpey and Senior Planner Lara Kritzer were also present at this time.

Ms. Ortner called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Committee Members Linda Escobedo and John Cratsley arrived after the start of the meeting.

#### **Discussion and Update on any Project Changes**

Ms. Ortner asked if there was any information on the results of the West Concord Advisory Committee's meeting with the Grantham Group about the Junction Village Project. Ms. Kritzer stated that she was not aware of the results of their discussion but would look into it.

There were no other project changes or updates at this time.

#### **Discussion of Any Applicant Concerns about Draft Conditions**

Ms. Kritzer reported that no requests for changes in the draft conditions had been received. It was noted that Applicants have until February 21 to request further information.

Ms. Ortner asked if Ms. Kritzer had heard anything from those Applicants that had not been funded. Ms. Kritzer answered that she had discussed the funding process with the representatives from West Concord Union Church, and that the Town projects which had not been funded this year would likely be submitted again next year.

#### **Discussion of Presentation for Finance Committee Public Hearing**

Ms. Ortner stated that she was tentatively scheduled to meet with the Finance Committee on Feb. 9 to discuss this year's funding recommendations and noted that the Finance Committee Public Hearing would be held on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Ortner stated that she planned to present the PowerPoint presentation on Feb. 9 and would be working on updating the presentation between now and then. For both the Finance Committee meeting and hearing, Ms. Ortner encouraged Members and Applicants to attend.

Ms. Ortner asked if the questions raised by Dorrie Kehoe at the CPC's Public Hearings had been addressed by the Grantham Group. Members believed that a response had been sent but asked Ms. Kritzer to resend it for everyone's review. Mr. Ward believed that a response had also been received to the questions raised by the Finance Committee. Mr. Tarpey confirmed that the Finance Committee had received Grantham's answers and had drafted a list of responses to those answers. He explained that the Finance Committee Chair had received a draft of the responses and expected that they would be finalized at the next meeting on Wednesday and forwarded to the Select Board. He stated that they were all mindful of the need to address any concerns soon.

Ms. Ortner asked if the Finance Committee had met with the Select Board to discuss the project yet. Mr. Tarpey answered no, but that a meeting might take place before the end of the month. It was noted that a Concord preference for residents had been requested and discussed this process. Ms. Kritzer stated that Dan Gaulin from the RHSO office had sent the response to Dorrie Kehoe's letter before Thanksgiving and stated that she would send it out to members again. Ms. Ortner asked that the response be added to the November 14 minutes as a final attachment. Ms. Pike asked what would happen to the Junction Village funding if Town Meeting did not approve it. Ms. Ortner explained that the funds would be moved back to the CPA General Fund, with a portion added to the Community Housing Reserve Fund to meet the Town's 10% funding requirement.

Ms. Escobedo arrived at this time.

### **Discussion on Priorities for the Upcoming Year**

Ms. Ortner explained that the following discussion items had been raised over the course of the year and set aside for future meetings. She explained that she wanted the Committee to get back on track with these items.

Potential Change in Surcharge – Ms. Ortner noted that the CPC had established a subcommittee including Ms. Cookman, Ms. Pike and Ms. Ortner to look into changing the amount of Concord's local surcharge. This subcommittee had not yet met but Ms. Ortner had spoken with the Finance Committee Chair about the long term changes that they were anticipating which might impact Concord's tax situation. She noted that there were some concerns going forward with the ramifications of such changes on the local surcharge.

Ms. Pike stated that she would like to know how Committee Members felt about the issue and was concerned that the real problem was with the reducing of the State's match. Mr. Ward asked if there was a possibility of change at the State level and Ms. Ortner noted that there was a push for a change in how the State Trust Fund was funded but that no changes had been enacted yet. Mr. Taylor stated that he was interested in learning the impact of the recent addition of several large cities to the CPA on the State Match. He thought that the Committee should be well armed with facts and reason before moving forward on any change in the local surcharge.

Ms. Ortner noted that the Committee had until 2018 to decide whether to move forward with this change, as any vote to change the surcharge would require a local ballot during a general election. She pointed out that the Committee would know more about the fallout from the new CPA communities next fall and could look at how to increase the visibility of the CPA in the meantime. Ms. Escobedo stated that it was important to factor the Finance Committee's long term issues and goals into the decision. She pointed out that the Committee should consider when contract negotiations were in progress and how those decisions might impact the budget and financial outlook of the Town. Ms. Ortner felt that it was important to discuss these issues with the Finance Committee and stated that she would continue to work on it.

Changing Schedule for CPA Funding Application Process – Ms. Ortner noted that Mr. Higgins had initially raised this idea of moving the process into the summer to allow more time for the application and review process. Mr. Taylor asked how it would work

and Members discussed whether the application process could begin in June. Ms. Escobedo stated that she had no problem with holding the informational meeting early but was less sure about how the deadlines should change. Members discussed the constraints of the existing schedule and the difficulty of holding public meetings during the summer months. Members agreed that getting information and publicity out early was key. Members agreed that the schedule and Community Preservation Plan needed to be completed earlier in the spring in order to accommodate an early meeting schedule. Members agreed to consider this a high priority item and to discuss changes to the schedule at the February meeting. Ms. Pike agreed that it would be helpful to hold the informational meetings earlier. Mr. Ward found that the CPC timeline to be a helpful tool and Mr. Taylor agreed, suggesting that it be placed more prominently on the website. Ms. Kritzer agreed to update the webpage to make the timeline more visible.

Potential Permanent CPA Sign Program – Ms. Ortnier noted that the Committee had gone back and forth on the issue of signage and whether to require the use of permanent or temporary signs. Ms. Escobedo had thought that Mr. Cratsley had concluded during the last discussion that if the CPC was going to require permanent signs, it should also pay for them. Ms. Ortnier agreed, noting that questions on the size, material and cost of such signage had been raised. Ms. Pike noted that the Harvey Wheeler Community Center had a permanent sign in place for the Community Chest and suggested that a similar sign might work for the CPC. However, she also thought that it might be hard to say that everyone needed to install signage.

Ms. Ortnier noted that this had been discussed for some time and felt that the Committee needed to decide whether it was going to take action, and if so, what that action might be. Ms. Escobedo suggested that the grant agreements could be amended to say that if an Applicant is going to post a permanent sign, then any CPA funding is expected to be recognized. Mr. Taylor felt that if the CPC had provided a lot of funding for the site, it should have a sign. Ms. Pike asked how the CPC could make the public more aware of where its funding was going. Members discussed whether more temporary signs were needed as well. Ms. Kritzer was asked to do an assessment of how many sites could use temporary signage and how many of which size might be needed. Members also asked Ms. Kritzer to add this requirement to the Plan and Grant Agreements as a new project condition.

Monitoring of New and Open Projects – Ms. Ortnier stated that CPC Members should be aware of status of the open CPA funding projects. Mr. Ward suggested that Ms. Kritzer update the list of open projects and the funds remaining to them for the February meeting. Ms. Ortnier asked how often applicants were asked for updates. Ms. Kritzer explained that applicants had been periodically requested to provide updates in the past. Members discussed whether these updates should be made an annual or biannual requirement and whether they should be asked to come in for interviews periodically. Ms. Ortnier thought that the Committee needed more quantitative data on how the monies were expended and the project documented. She also wanted to discuss how to make sure that funding was released in appropriate amounts.

Mr. Taylor noted that the Committee had discussed the release of funds at the last meeting and agreed that more accountability would be helpful. Members discussed how to review the funding reimbursement process. Ms. Ortnier expressed concern that the Committee needed to verify that a project's funding match and cost was the same as

anticipated in the application. Members discussed the current process and noted that the current discussions on Public/Private Partnerships might suggest different processes for documenting and sharing costs. Ms. Ortner suggested that the Committee revisit the project presentation slides to look at how the matching and other funding was presented.

Mr. Cratsley arrived at this time.

Ms. Ortner expressed concern with the accountability of funded projects. Members agreed to look at how the information on projects was presented to the public to make sure that it was relevant to the discussion. Members also discussed the question of how important the funding percentages were to a project's approval.

Outreach to General Public – Members discussed how additional public outreach could be incorporated into the surcharge discussion. Mr. Taylor suggested that the Committee work with the Concord Journal on an article and noted that the timeline could be posted in the paper as a graphic to get the word out on new deadlines as early as possible. Ms. Ortner noted that there was not a lot of enthusiasm amongst applicants for open houses, and that it would be hard to find one date that worked for everyone. Members agreed to start with publicizing the timeline and making more visual tools.

### **Committee Photo for Town Report**

The CPC agreed to forgo this year's photo.

### **Fund Distributions and/or Approvals**

Mr. Taylor reported that he was reviewing requests for reimbursement for the initial work underway to clear invasive plants from Gowings Swamp and for the installation of the new merry go round at the Natural Playscape at Ripley.

### **Approval of November 1, November 7, November 14 and December 12 Minutes**

Members had received copies of all draft minutes prior to the meeting and several Members had sent back proposed revisions.

Mr. Taylor moved to approve the November 1 minutes as revised. Ms. Escobedo seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Ms. Pike moved to approve the November 7 minutes as revised. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and ALL VOTE IN FAVOR.

Ms. Pike moved to approve the December 12 minutes as revised. Mr. Cratsley seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

The November 14 draft minutes were continued to the next meeting to allow more time for review.

Mr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Pike seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer  
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: February 22, 2017

Bouzha Cookman, Secretary