

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Public Meeting and Hearing Minutes

September 3, 2019

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 and hearing in the First Floor Conference Room at 141 Keyes Road, starting at 7:00 P.M. Committee members John Cratsley, Peter Ward, Diane Proctor, Nancy Nelson, Burton Flint, Judy Zaunbrecher and Tom Kearns were present.

Mr. Cratsley called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to the CPC and Overview of Application Process

Mr. Cratsley introduced himself, and the rest of the Committee to audience members. Mr. Cratsley explained that while the Committee does not have a quorum of members, they can still conduct the public informational session.

Mr. Cratsley gave a brief presentation summarizing the Community Preservation Act in Concord. Mr. Cratsley explained that there is a 1.5% out of a possible 3% surcharge on real estate property tax bills for CPA and that the first \$100,000 of taxable value is exempt. He explained that persons with income less than 80% of area median income are exempt, as well as seniors with income less than 100% of area median income. Mr. Cratsley stated that the locally raised funds are matched on a percentage basis by funds in the State Community Preservation Fund. Mr. Cratsley then reviewed the four project categories: Community Housing, Historic Preservation, Open Space and Recreation. He then reviewed the application process and important dates and deadlines.

Questions from Prospective Applicants

Ms. Rasmussen presented the list of projects from the Department of Planning and Land Management and Recreation. The project list included:

1. White Pond Beach Access Improvements
2. Gerow Recreation Area Improvements
3. Warner's Pond Dredging
4. Affordable House on Gerow Property
5. RHSO Program
6. Assabet River Pedestrian Bridge
7. Wheeler Harrington House and Land Design Workshop
8. Chamberlin Bridge Survey and Permitting

Mr. Cratsley asked if accessible parking was available at White Pond this summer. Ms. Rasmussen stated that some parking was made available. Ms. Proctor asked how many times the pond was closed this summer due to algae bloom. Ms. Rasmussen stated that it was open more often than previous years. Ms. Zaunbrecher asked about the attendance at White Pond this summer. Ms. Rasmussen stated that the highest attendance recorded was 132 users. The Committee asked questions about the opening of the Bruce Freeman Rail

Trail and the planned bridge over route 2. Ms. Rasmussen stated that the anticipated opening date of the bridge is November 2021. Ms. Zaunbrecher asked if alternative [non-town] construction funds will be used for the Assabet River Bridge Project. Ms. Rasmussen stated that yes; they are looking into all funding options.

Rich Reine provided an update on the Emerson Field Project, and presented the preliminary design plan, and the list of improvements that need to be made. Mr. Reine stated that the total project cost is \$1.9 million, and that they will be requesting \$500,000 of CPA funds this year.

Mr. Flint stated that he is surprised at the numbers for this project and how much it has increased since the first application. Mr. Flint stated that this sounds like a town capital project, not a CPA project. Mr. Reine stated that there is town funding allocated for this project as well. Mr. Ward asked at what level will they be able to move forward. Mr. Reine stated that with the existing funds, they could make a large dent in it. Mr. Flint asked if this is a restoration project, or if improvements were being made as well. Mr. Reine stated that it is rehabilitation. Mr. Kearns asked about the detail plans for the project. Mr. Reine stated that they have completed the master plan, they will need to hold neighborhood and other public meetings, and then they would be able to contract for the detail plans. Ms. Zaunbrecher asked what the life expectancy of these improvements are. Mr. Reine said that the splash pad would be about 25 years, and the field improvements will last longer. Ms. Zaunbrecher asked if these improvements would add to the town's maintenance. Mr. Reine stated that these improvements would decrease maintenance costs.

Kathleen Fahey, of the Friends of Minuteman Park, presented a proposed project to rehabilitate the hardscaping in the gardens at the Butrick Mansion. Jenn Miller, an intern with the Minuteman National Park explained that they will be requesting \$40,000 to restore and repair the hardscaping in the garden, and that they would likely return next year for additional funding. Mr. Flint asked about the ability of this organization to perform capital improvements to this property. Ms. Miller explained that the park itself is not allowed to apply for grants, so this organization does on their behalf. She further explained that the Friends would administer the funding, but the work would be completed by the park. Margie Brown, the Resource Manager for Minuteman National Park, explained that they have volunteers and court-ordered service groups, as well as interns that currently maintain the gardens. Ms. Brown stated that they host a garden party fundraiser each year as well in order to maintain the gardens and all of the wrought iron components of the garden.

Jean Goldsbury of Minute Man Arc, presented their proposed outdoor accessible oasis project. Ms. Goldsbury explained that the park will be open to the public and will connect with public trails. She explained that the park will feature accessible walkways, accessible picnic tables, adult-sized accessible swings, musical instrument installations and a new sport court (which will also be accessible). The total project budget is \$282,000, of which they have already raised \$80,000. Ms. Goldsbury explained that they also have submitted several grant applications, and they will be requesting \$100,000 from CPA. Ms. Proctor asked what inspired this project. Ms. Goldsbury stated that it was designed to be an enhancement to those that use Minute Man Arc, and also for adjacent residents and visitors (Concord Mews, and the Thoreau Club). Stephanie Parish explained that about 75 of the daily members have high needs, and it is difficult to get

them to other facilities. Mr. Flint asked about the gas line easement. Ms. Goldsbury stated that the landscape architect has said it will be a non-issue because no permanent structures are being built on top of it. Ms. Goldsbury stated that they have not approached Tenneco about it yet, but will do so soon.

Mary Anne Nelson and Rick Eifler of the Concord Housing Authority provided more details about the proposed affordable house on the Gerow property. Ms. Nelson explained that it will be a two bedroom house and that the parcel will need to be transferred over to the CHA, and that there will be an easement over the BFRT. Ms. Nelson explained that they secured design funds from the Select Board, and the CPA request will be for construction funds. Mr. Flint asked how many existing affordable units are on Commonwealth Ave. Ms. Nelson stated that there are three existing units.

Mr. Cratsley recused himself for this discussion item and Mr. Kearns chaired the following discussion. Holly Cratsley, of the First Parish Church stated that the church may be submitting an application to restore the clock tower. Ms. Cratsley stated that they understand that funding church projects has been controversial, but believes the clock tower is separate from the church. Ms. Cratsley briefly summarized the history of the clock, and the work that needs to be done to the clock and the clock tower, including re-gilding. Ms. Cratsley stated that they are planning to bid the project over the summer, so they will have an exact cost for the application, but they are expecting to submit an application requesting \$60,000 to \$75,000. The Committee discussed how this is different than the Acton and Oak Bluff legal cases.

Carlene Reed asked how much Ms. Rasmussen's projects total. Mr. Flint stated he did the math and it is \$2.025 million.

Ms. Gill stated that she will be submitting an application to increase the Staff and Technical Services amount from \$30,000 to \$40,000.

The Committee briefly discussed some of the projects that were at the June informational session that were not here today.

CPA Trust Fund Increase

Mr. Cratsley presented the CPA trust fund increases, including the new registry of deeds fee increases. Mr. Cratsley also explained that there will possibly be a consolidated net surplus in the amount of \$10-\$20 million that may be distributed.

Project Update Report and Project Status Reports

There were no project updates.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ward provided one correction on the July 16th minutes. Mr. Kearns moved to approve the minutes of July 16, 2019 as amended. Ms. Zaunbrecher seconded the motion and ALL OTHERS VOTED IN FAVOR. The motion passed (7-0).

Mr. Ward moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kearns seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Gill
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: September 24, 2019

Secretary