

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Minutes

September 5, 2018

7:00 P.M.

Harvey Wheeler Community Center

1276 Main Street

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's Office, Concord's Community Preservation Committee held in the Auditorium at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center at 1276 Main Street at 7:00 P.M. Committee members Terri Ackerman, Peter Ward, John Cratsley, Hester Schnipper, Burton Flint, Tom Kearns and Melissa Saalfield were present.

Staff: Heather Gill, Senior Planner

Also Present: Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management
John Boynton, Concord Free Public Library
Deirdre Bellevue, Minuteman Arc
Rick Eifler, Concord Housing Authority
Linda Escobedo, Select Board Liaison
Brenda Gould, Habitat for Humanity

Ms. Ackerman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Informational Session

Ms. Ackerman gave a brief presentation summarizing the Community Preservation Act in Concord. Ms. Ackerman 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. She 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. Ms. Ackerman stated that the locally raised funds are matched on a percentage basis by funds in the State Community Preservation Fund. Ms. Ackerman explained that at least 10% of the CPA funding each year is allocated into the following categories: Community Housing, Historic Preservation, and Open Space. Funding can also be used for Recreation. Ms. Ackerman reviewed the timeline for the application and funding process for the upcoming year as well as the application deadline.

Brenda Gould, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell asked the Committee about their interest in a CPA project funding Habitat for Humanity and the possibility of purchasing land using CPA funding for a Habitat project. Mr. Cratsley indicated that the CPC has provided funding to the CHDC for land acquisition, and recommended that she meet with them. Ms. Gould stated that getting land is their biggest hurdle, and that once they have that they are able to raise the remaining funds to build the houses. The Committee urged Ms. Gould to discuss and partner with the Concord Housing Authority and or the Concord Housing Development Corporation.

Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management for the Town, presented a list of ten projects that the Town has identified and will be submitting applications for. The list included:

1. **Development of Gerow Park adjacent to Warner's Pond and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (\$300,000) (Open Space, Recreation)** – Acquisition of the Gerow land in

July 2018 included the concept of developing the property with a community park for picnics, concerns and other outdoor activities. These funds would be combined with a potential additional matching amount that is being sought through an environmental bond bill.

With future plans to dredge a portion of Warner's Pond to improve the health of the pond and expand recreational opportunities (results of the study expected this summer), the water front aspect of this land could provide a community beach for swimming or boat access.

2. **Town support for CHDC Junction Village Assisted Living project (\$300,000) (Community Housing)** – This year's funding request of \$300,000 is to be combined with \$700,000 granted over the past two years for a total of \$1,000,000. These funds contribute toward the "Town's share" of \$2,400,000 for the construction of an 83-unit fully affordable assisted living facility (estimated at \$16,992,000) on land owned by the Concord Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) at 6X Winthrop Street. This project was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals under Chapter 40B in 2016. The project site is located within walking distance of the West Concord Village District and Fitchburg commuter railroad line, as well as directly adjacent to the future Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.
3. **Warner's Pond dredging project (\$250,000) (Open Space, Recreation)** – Prior CPA funds have been used to study Warner's Pond and ways to improve the ecological health of the pond. After the initial study that determined dredging to be the most effective way to control weeds and resulting eutrophication, with costs ranging from \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 depending on the quality of silt, the Town sought additional CPA funds to study the silt material to better estimate the cost of dredging. Concurrently, the Town included \$500,000 for Warner's Pond dredging in its Capital Improvement Plan for 2020. This application would seek the first half of funds as a match to the Town's capital funds.
4. **Land Acquisition of a parcel from the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association (\$100,000) (Open Space, Historic Preservation?)** – The RWEMA has offered two to three parcels of land around the existing Emerson House to the Town of Concord. This is the first of two (and possibly 3 applications) to purchase a 3.4 acre parcel of land located between the house and access from Walden Street. The Emerson-Thoreau Amble is located over this parcel, which includes the Mill Brook. An estimate will be prepared by Avery Associates for the actual value of this first parcel later this summer.
5. **Regional Housing Services Office (\$19,000) (Community Housing)** – The RHSO has been funded in part by the Town and by the CPC over the past 8 years; this request represents half of the funds needed. The RHSO provides critical support to the Town's affordable housing initiatives. The Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) was established in 2011 to oversee the administration of affordable housing programs in Concord and six neighboring communities (including Acton, Bedford, Burlington, Lexington, Sudbury and Weston). The RHSO provides professional staff support to all seven communities in meeting the administrative and monitoring needs of their existing affordable housing programs, while also working with each community to develop additional programs and further regional housing efforts and goals.
6. **Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2B (\$50,000) (Recreation and Open Space)** - The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is envisioned as a non-motorized, ADA accessible, multi-use trail serving as a recreational and transportation resource for residents and visitors of all

ages and abilities. Phase 2B is in design with an anticipated bid date of fall 2019; this Phase will connect the Acton section of the trail with the Concord section of the trail. The design and construction of the BFRT is consistent with the goals outlined in the Community Preservation Plan, the Concord Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan. These additional funds requested will be used for additional design that will connect existing trails near Route 2 with the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Bridge over Route 2, historical interpretive panels and site development near the Nashoba Brook crossing at Route 2 and other items that may be desired but determined ineligible for State funding.

7. **Wheeler-Harrington Master Plan (\$20,000) (Open Space, Historic Preservation?)** – Funds were provided from the Community Preservation Fund in 2014, which allowed completion of a historic structures report; a cultural landscape report and a natural resources/environmental report. Unfortunately, a final management plan integrating the three reports was not completed. This funding request will include review of the completed reports, further research of the flora/fauna on the property, public outreach meetings to obtain input and generate consensus on a vision for the property (house and park) and final documentation of recommended actions, including consideration of whether the Ball-Benson Barn and/or house might be located on this site and how this property may be integrated with other adjacent town-owned land (i.e., Marshall Farm and former Rogers land).
8. **Heywood Meadow stone wall (\$20,000) (Open Space)** – The recently restored stone walls at Heywood Meadow, construction of steps into the meadow, and installation of native pollinator plantings have enhanced this asset for the community. Replacing the unsightly bollards at the intersection of Heywood Street and Lexington Road with approximately 70 feet of fieldstone wall will provide an important visual connection between the two sides of the meadow at this well-travelled intersection.
9. **Old Calf Pasture invasive species removal (\$15,000) (Open Space)** – This conservation land supports the largest regional population of the state-listed Britton’s violet (*Viola brittoniana*), which has been diminishing in the presence of the invasive glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*). DNR has been working with local conservation organizations and individuals to control glossy buckthorn and monitor the violet populations at the meadow since 2008. This request represents one more year of funding; the Natural Resources Division will be seeking alternative funding sources in the future for continued efforts.
10. **Junction Village Open Space (\$50,000) (Open Space)** – A task force is being formed to work with the Concord Housing Development Corporation to design the open space along the Assabet River associated with the Junction Village affordable housing project. The task force will work with a landscape architect to design a community walking trail that will loop around the Junction Village project and along the Assabet River connecting to two points along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. The CHDC will be funding the consultant services required to prepare an engineered survey and the landscape architectural design. Matching funds, in the form of earth moving/invasive species removal, will be provided during construction by the Grantham Group.

Ms. Rasmussen indicated that the Public Works Department, as well as the Recreation, also have projects they will be submitting applications for that were not included on this list.

John Boynton, Trustee of the Concord Free Public Library summarized the Library Expansion project, in which they will be seeking CPA funding for. Mr. Boynton explained that there has been a demand for meeting space at the library for the community, as well as an expanded children's center and flexible spaces. The library purchased the property at 151 Main Street, with plans to renovate and expand the library to connect it to this structure. Mr. Boynton stated that this project will create dedicated meeting spaces, an expanded children's room and teen room, flexible makers spaces, tutoring spaces, teaching spaces and offices. Mr. Boynton stated that the total project cost is \$8.5 million. He explained that they will be submitting an application for CPA funding in the amount of \$500,000 under the category of historic preservation, in order to renovate and make the structure at 151 Main Street accessible.

Mr. Flint asked who owns the library. Mr. Boynton stated that it is a public private partnership between the Town of Concord and the Concord Free Public Library Corporation. He explained that the Corporation is responsible for all of the capital improvements to the building, and that the operating costs, such as staffing, is the responsibility of the Town. He further explained that there is a friend group of the library that fundraises for all of the programming at the library. Mr. Ward asked what the \$8.5 million cost includes. Mr. Boynton stated that includes all costs, including architectural/engineering costs, construction and fit out costs.

Commission Membership

The Committee discussed possibly having the new NRC representative as the committee's treasurer and asked to put off voting until the next meeting.

CPC Plan Update

The Committee discussed the need to update the CPC Plan to reflect the new Envision Concord Long Range Plan. Ms. Gill reviewed the amendments that she has made to the plan to include the 2018 Town Meeting articles, the 2017 Annual Town Report, and the goals set by the Envision Concord Long Range Plan. The Committee discussed possibly amending the General Selection Criteria outlined in the plan.

Project Update Report

Ms. Lamplough gave a brief project update report to the Committee, letting them know which projects had invoices paid since the last CPC meeting.

Other Business

Ms. Gill reviewed the spreadsheet that identifies the line items that were erroneously reimbursed for routine maintenance for the Robbins House. Ms. Gill provided copies of the invoices for these line items, of which added up to \$2684.73. Ms. Gill indicated that she had provided this information to the Robbins House, and they concurred with her findings. The Committee agreed and asked that \$2684.73 is deducted from any remaining reimbursement requests.

Ms. Gill indicated that she provided the Ripley Playground a small CPA sign to install. Ms. Gill indicated that she met with Ryan Kane at Rideout Playground to discuss locations for a permanent CPA sign. Ms. Gill showed the committee the proposed locations, and the committee preferred a large sign in the flower bed near the parking lot.

Ms. Gill indicated that she has completed the CP-3 report for FY18, which included updating all open projects and adding the newly funded projects in the Community Preservation Coalition's database.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Flint motioned to approve the minutes of July 17, 2018 as amended. Mr. Ward seconded the motion and ALL OTHERS VOTED IN FAVOR.

Mr. Ward moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Saalfield 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: 10/30/2018

Dee Ortner, Secretary