

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2016

7:30 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 7:30 P.M. Committee members Bouzha Cookman, John Cratsley, Dee Ortner, Barbara Pike and Peter Ward were present.

Ms. Ortner called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. .

Discussion with Concord Carlisle at Play on Field Renovation Project Progress

Concord Carlisle at Play (CC@P) representative John Boynton attended the meeting to update the CPC on the status of their work to restore the fields at Concord Carlisle High School. He stated that they had received positive feedback on the completion of Phase II of the project. He noted how the project now clustered the different play areas in one location and that it was great to see them all in use. The project had had an overage due to engineering costs as they had had to hire an additional engineer to work on drainage and environmental issues on the property. He reviewed those charges with the Commission and noted that the review work for the artificial turf had put the project 2% over budget instead of 2% under as originally planned.

A Committee Member asked about the cause of the drainage problems. Mr. Boynton explained that the construction site had not been adequately secured and a wash out in that area had compromised the underground system for the fields. The fields had been designed with a 12" shallow ditch that was intended to spread water evenly into the wetlands but this had been compromised by the construction site runoff. CC@P had repaired the damage and constructed a swale to prevent further damage and CCHS had paid for the damage to the system. Mr. Boynton believed that those issues were now in the past.

Mr. Boynton stated that Phases I and II were now complete and the new fields had been handed over to CCHS. The new Memorial Field had seen a lot of use in the fall and spring and he noted that both the soccer and lacrosse teams had made the post season this year. Mr. Boynton explained that the one area not completed in Phase II was the concession stand and that this was because of the State plumbing code which required 46 toilets based on the number of seats in the stadium. Both CCHS and CC@P felt that this was far more than was actually needed based on the use of the site and there was a possibility of getting relief for half of the required amount. However, CC@P felt that 23 toilets was still more than was needed and were concerned with the maintenance and safety issues of having so many on site. CC@P had told CCHS that they were ready to proceed with the concession stand but that it was up to CCHS to work out this issue. Ms. Ortner noted that the concession stand had been part of the CPCs approved plans for Phase II and noted that the expanded use of the area would make the building even more useful for the site. Mr. Boynton agreed and stated that they were ready to continue but that it was up to CCHS to work out the requirements and was in the hands of the School District now. Mr. Ward asked if the change in scope had altered their budget for Phase II. Mr. Boynton explained that the work was part of Phase II but was a separate fundraising element.

Mr. Boynton was asked if they were still working with 1/3 public, 2/3 private funding for the project. Mr. Boynton answered yes, and noted that their request for reimbursement had been for only 1/3 of the funds spent on the project at that time.

Mr. Boynton explained that Phase III would be in the former staging area for the High School construction. This phase would construct a natural grass field including a lacrosse practice wall that would be double sided and have 15' of surface. They will not use any artificial turf in this phase and the new practice area will be covered in a woven nylon surface/carpet instead. He explained that they did not want to use grass in the practice area as it would be quickly destroyed. In addition, they now planned to locate the throwing events for track and field in this area. The shot put and discus cage will be installed on one end of the new field and users will throw into the field. Ms. Ortner asked if this was more use in the area than originally anticipated. Mr. Boynton stated that they had not anticipated this particular use but noted that the throwing events were not time intensive sports and can be accommodated here. He added that CC@P was now planning to renovate the Cross Country course as well. This course had been eliminated with the construction of the new school and CCHS had recently hired a designer to lay out a new course on the site. CC@P planned to fundraise for the new course and begin construction over the summer.

Ms. Pike asked if there were any safety concerns with the location of the throwing events near the practice field. Mr. Boynton explained how the elements would be laid out and that it would be up to the coaches, who had been consulted in the layout, to make sure that safety precautions were met. Ms. Ortner asked if the field was in place yet. Mr. Boynton stated that the field would be ready by the Fall and that they planned to use sod so that it could be used sooner. It was noted that Phase III had received \$150,000 in CPA funds for the new grass field. A question was raised about landscaping. Mr. Boynton answered that they still needed to fundraise for landscaping but that they hoped to be able to do it.

Ms. Cookman asked if there would be a Phase IV. Mr. Boynton answered that Phase IV would be the amenities building, which they felt was important for the site. The size of the building needed, though, was currently well beyond their budget and was aspirational at this point. Ms. Pike asked if the building could be done in Phase III and Mr. Boynton explained that all of the \$850,000 for Phase III was allocated. Mr. Boynton went on to explain that their 1/3 public, 2/3 private amounts were based on the overall projects, not the amount allocated per phase and that they expected that once the final designs were complete, this would all be spelled out. It was noted that the public funds included \$400,000 from Carlisle CPA funds that was given in one request.

Anne Hayden, 342 Sudbury Road, asked about the \$850,000 for Phase III. Mr. Boynton noted that not all of the funding for the project was connected to the CPC funded work. He explained that there were elements of the field restoration that could not be funded with CPA funds and clarified those elements now. Ms. Hayden asked how much of the project was connected to the CPA funds and Mr. Boynton explained that the overall project would come out to 1/3 public CPA funds and 2/3 privately raised funds. It was noted that there were elements of the project that could not be paid for with CPA funds but that they could be part of the total amount spent on the project. Ms. Hayden questioned the two new items – the cross country course and the overlook area – that had been added to Phase III. Mr. Boynton noted that CC@P was not designing the cross country course and would only be contributing funds to its construction. Ms. Hayden expressed concern that there was more being done on

the site than previously discussed and stated that the first time that she had heard about these elements was in the School Committee reviews of the project.

Ms. Ortnier noted that any changes to the elements of the project funded with CPA funds must be brought in for review. She asked about the changes approved by the School Committee and how it changed the approved plans. Mr. Boynton stated that the School Committee had approved two new items - an overlook that was planned as part of Phase III and would be a \$30,000 addition to the project, and a 20'x 30' maintenance building considered to be Phase IV. He explained that they had originally planned to do one building with both amenities and maintenance storage, but as the project developed, they had decided to separate the structures and locate a basic maintenance building in a less expensive location. Ms. Cookman asked about the timing for the amenities building. Mr. Boynton answered that they hoped to have the design ready this Fall for construction in the Summer of 2017. Mr. Ward asked whether utilities were needed for the building. Mr. Boynton stated that there was electricity but no plumbing yet. Ms. Pike asked about the paved pathways and Mr. Boynton explained how they were integrated into the plan. Mr. Boynton expressed his appreciation for the CPA funding and noted the great feedback that they had received for the finished work.

Beginning of Year General overview of CPA process, public meeting process and policies, CPC specific policies, open meeting law, electronic mail, etc.

Ms. Kritzer gave a quick review of the CPC's annual calendar and workload and noted that additional information on policies, open meeting law, and other Committee requirements was available to anyone who had not already received it.

CPA Finances and Potential Surcharge Changes

Finance Director Tony Logalbo was present at this time to discuss the impact of a change in the local surcharge on CPA funding and other funding options. He passed out handouts and explained that the first chart showed a history of CPA funding in Concord. The 1.5% surcharge was established by Town Meeting and a ballot vote in 2004 and the Town received its first State match in the third quarter of 2005. Mr. Logalbo noted that the State match followed the amount of local surcharge collected as part of the local tax bill. The Town reported on how much was levied and Mr. Logalbo explained that low and moderate income residents could request an abatement. He explained the process for these requests and noted that the Town had received fewer requests over time. He noted that there were 35 abatements filed this year, with 70 filed at its height. Mr. Logalbo explained how the net levy was divided up to determine the percentage of State Match. In the first few years of the program the Town had received a 100% match to the local surcharge collected, but this percentage had declined with the recession and as new communities entered the program.

Referring to the handouts, Mr. Logalbo explained that the FY16 matching funds were true numbers and that the FY17 funding was a projection. He was expecting this year's match to be down and noted that Boston was considering enacting the CPA, which would bring the match down further. He explained how the State divided up the funds in three rounds - Round 1 was distributed to all member communities, and Rounds 2 and 3 were distributed to communities at 3% with a weighting to those communities with lower property values. He explained that if the Town received more than was projected, the extra was placed in the general fund for use in the next year. He reviewed the timeline for receiving CPA funds and

noted that they would receive an updated adjustment to the current projections in August. Mr. Logalbo also noted that the State had voted to augment the CPA fund for the last few years with State surplus funds. This had begun in FY14 and raised the State funding match each year since. However, this year the State was anticipating a funding shortfall and he did not anticipate that this boost would be available. Mr. Logalbo went on to explain that the Round 2 funds were allocated based on a decile ranking, in which Concord was at the lowest decile, and that Round 3 provided a little extra funding but its definition was less clear.

A question was raised about the chart on page 5 of the handout and what might be available in FY18 if the Town moved to a 3% surcharge. Mr. Logalbo noted that the Town would have to ratify the change in 2017 and that the soonest the additional matching funds would be available would be in the third quarter of FY18. He estimated that the Town would go from an estimated \$1.3 million to \$2.66 million with the proposed change and explained that this used a projected State match of 15% with a 4% addition in Round 2.

Ms. Cookman asked if anything was being done to raise the fees that contributed to the State fund. It was noted that the Community Preservation Coalition was working on this and had established that the purchasing power of the CPA fund had dropped from \$20 to \$12 over the course of the program. The Coalition was working to increase the fee but no one knew when this would move forward in the legislature. It was also noted that the Coalition believes that Springfield may also join the CPA in the near future.

Mr. Logalbo suggested that the CPC plan for a 10% match in the future. Ms. Cookman asked if there was anything available on the purchasing power of the CPC. Mr. Logalbo stated that he did not have that information as he had not found it to be helpful in the past. Turning to Page 6 of the handout, he explained that this sheet showed the Town debt picture and explained that this did not include any School debt. Ms. Ortner explained that she had wanted to learn about the Town's debt because the CPC had the authority to bond funds for projects. Mr. Logalbo explained that the chart showed gross versus tax supported debt, how the debt was funded and the Town's responsibilities. He noted that Concord was also responsible for over 70% of the Regional School District's debt. The Town's total debt this June was at \$106 million.

Mr. Logalbo stated that he wanted the CPC to consider the total picture including both the Town's bond rating and taxpayer implications. He showed how the handout also included information on what it would cost the Town in interest and debt service to bond its CPA funds and noted that Concord was well rated because it paid back its debt rapidly. He had projected these amounts assuming a 10 year structure with a 4% coupon because that is how the Town had issued its bonds in May. He explained that the true interest on the bonds would be around 1.2%. He explained that any premiums raised would go back to the Town's general fund and not the CPA fund and explained the revenue and bond process. If the CPC proposed to bond CPA funds, then the debt payment would come off of the top of any future funding. He noted that the Town could only bond for a purpose outlined in State Law (Chapter 44, Section 7 or 8) and that this would prohibit the Town from borrowing for the CHDC's Junction Village project because the State only allowed bonding for a Housing Authority. He explained any bond raised funds must be used within 18 months and that most bonding was done for land acquisition projects. He thought that bonding CPA funds had its potential uses but that the subject should be approached with care.

Mr. Ward asked what the process was for bonding CPA funds and how long it could take to do. Mr. Logalbo answered that it could be accomplished within a few months once the nature of the project was known. Ms. Ortner asked about the CPA bonding capacity. Mr. Logalbo explained that his primary concern was how bonding would impact the Town's bond rating. He referred Members to the Moody report and noted that Concord received a AAA rating because it had a carefully planned bond structure which he did not want to see disturbed if possible. He noted that Concord planned carefully and worked well below its bonding capacity to achieve this.

Ms. Cookman asked about the provisions required to receive an abatement. It was noted that Concord had adopted provisions to allow households at 80% Area Medium Income and Seniors at 100% Area Medium Income to receive abatements if they applied for them. It was noted that there were no proposed changes to the abatement structure.

Ms. Ortner asked if a change could be made to the CPA through a petition article and it was noted that it could. Members discussed how a separate article would need to be proposed to make this change and whether it made sense to wait for 2018 to tie in with the election balloting. Ms. Cookman asked if there was any information available on the change in land prices since the CPA passed. Mr. Logalbo suggested that the Committee speak with the Town Assessor Lane Partridge on that issue and how it impacted the CPA funds purchasing power. Mr. Logalbo had also brought an update on the CPA funding accounts which were reviewed at this time.

Mr. Logalbo was asked for his opinion on changing the CPA surcharge for Concord. Mr. Logalbo thought that it was worthy of discussion by the Town and asking whether it was their will to make this change. He reiterated that the CPC might want to wait until 2018 to tie in with the election process. Members discussed the process for changing the surcharge and how it could be publicized.

Discussion of CPC goals/priorities for the upcoming year

This discussion was continued to the July meeting. Members were asked to review the information on CPA funds spent on municipal versus nonprofit projects for that discussion.

Begin Review of Changes to the Community Preservation Plan

Ms. Kritzer noted that an updated draft of the 2017 Community Preservation Plan had been sent out to Members prior to the meeting. She explained that the changes were primarily annual updates to the Housing section and application materials, but that the proposed Purchase Order approval process had been added to the Reimbursement section. Members agreed to review the document and sent any comments before the July meeting.

Ms. Kritzer also noted that the Town Manager had reviewed the Grant Agreements and had suggested that the CPC add language to remind applicants that they must follow all applicable requirements and regulations. Members agreed that this should be incorporated into the Agreements for next year.

CPA Surcharge Discussion

Ms. Ortner and Ms. Cookman had recently met with Finance Committee members Linda Miller and Thomas Tarpey, Town Manager Chris Whelan, and Community Preservation Coalition Executive Director Stuart Saginor to discuss the merits of the proposed changes. They planned to speak with the Conservation Land Trust and would be meeting with the Planning Board on June 21. Ms. Ortner would also be meeting with Select Board Chair Mike Lawson in the morning to discuss her presentation to the Select Board on June 20.

Members were asked to report on their discussions with other Commissions at this time. Mr. Cratsley reported that the Planning Board was generally cool on this proposed change. Mr. Ward noted that the next Recreation Commission meeting would be held next week. They planned to review the recommendations from the Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan at that time and he would ask the Commission to consider of potential applications in the context of future recreation projects. Ms. Cookman thought that it would be helpful to know what the Town had earmarked for future funding. It was noted that the Commission wanted to get a sense of the Town's needs and demand in order to plan for the future. Members were also interested to learn if there was support in the Town for the proposed change. Mr. Cratsley thought that residents would see this as a means of funding the Junction Village project.

Status Report on Open Projects and Projects To Be Closed

Ms. Kritzer reported that a number of project files were now ready to be reviewed for closing. Ms. Ortner agreed to review the files for closing at the next meeting.

Review of Information on Permanent CPA Funding Signs

This discussion was continued to the July Meeting.

Approval of Minutes for January 25, April 11, and May 9

Members had reviewed the draft minutes prior to the meeting. Ms. Cookman moved to approve the January, April and May minutes as revised. Mr. Cratsley seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Ms. Pike moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cookman seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: July 14, 2016

Bouzha Cookman, Secretary