

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Public Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2016

7:30 P.M.

Harvey Wheeler Auditorium
1276 Main Street, West Concord

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk's Office, Concord's Community Preservation Committee held a public meeting in the Auditorium of the Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 1276 Main Street, West Concord, starting at 7:30 P.M. Committee members Bouzha Cookman, Linda Escobedo, Greg Higgins, Dee Ortner, Barbara Pike and Peter Ward were present. Mr. Cratsley arrived after the Committee Member introductions.

Ms. Ortner called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M by introducing the Committee and Staff. She noted that one Committee member – Geoffrey Taylor – was not able to be present for this meeting.

Welcome, Introductions and Brief Review of CPA and CPC Procedures

Ms. Ortner gave a brief overview of the CPA funding process and the work of the Committee, including a review of the funding information to date. She explained that Committee Members worked directly with the Community Preservation Coalition for information on the CPA at the statewide level and noted the resources available. Ms. Ortner reviewed the four available funding categories – Community Housing, Open Space, Historic Preservation, and Recreation – and explained how the Committee would be reviewing projects in all four categories and provide a recommendation to Town Meeting for CPA funding approval. She noted that Concord's funds come in part from a 1.5% surcharge on property taxes and reviewed the median price for a property in Concord and the corresponding surcharge. Ms. Ortner added that there was more information on the website about the CPC and CPA funding process, as well as information on the requirements for surcharge abatements. Ms. Ortner stated that she felt it was important to emphasize that CPA funding was community funds which came from the residents of the Town. She noted that the local surcharge can be as high as 3% and noted how additional funds were provided by the State to those communities at 3%.

Ms. Ortner next reviewed the CPA funding timeline and the dates for this year's upcoming meetings. She noted that funding for this year's applications would be available starting on July 1, 2017 for those approved for funding at Town Meeting. She referenced the available handout with a list of those projects funded to date and noted that the list was also available on the Town's website. The Town was required to spend at least 10% of its funding on each of three categories (Community Housing, Historic Preservation, and Open Space) and that Recreation projects could also be funded but were not a requirement.

Ms. Ortner pointed out that Concord had funded its first CPA project in 2006 and that 153 projects had been funded over the last ten years. 69% of these projects were Town projects which Ms. Ortner explained included any work on Town owned buildings leased by other organizations. To date, Concord had allocated 22% of its CPA funding to Community Housing, 36% to Historic Preservation, 17% to Open Space, 23% to Recreation, and 2% to Administration. A little over \$17 million had been spent through the CPA process in the last ten years, with \$4.7 million coming from the State.

Ms. Ortner explained that the Committee did not expect to receive the 29% match from the State Trust fund that was received last year. At the moment, the Town was expecting a 20% match and estimated that just over \$1.4 million would be available for this year's CPA funding applications. She noted that this assumed that the Registry of Deeds fees would remain steady and noted that the fee had not changed during the life of the CPA program. She explained that the Community Preservation Coalition was working to secure higher fees for the future and how State surplus funds had been added to the State Trust fund in the past but were not expected to be available this year. She stated that the Committee would learn the exact match and amount of funds available by mid-November. Ms. Cookman also noted that there were a number of new communities considering the CPA this November and that this could also impact the amount of the State funding match.

Potential New Application Presentations

Ms. Ortner opened the discussion to the Public at this time.

Marcia Rasmussen, Director of Planning and Land Management, stated that she had provided the Select Board with a preliminary list of potential CPA funding applications which include the following:

- The Regional Housing Services Program – The Town planned to apply for half of this year's annual Membership costs. CPA funding for \$18,000 was requested with another \$18,000 to come from the Town.
- Junction Village Assisted Living Development- Ms. Rasmussen explained that the Select Board's task force had recommended that \$1 million in funding for the project come from the CPA. The Town was requesting that those funds be allocated over 3 years to the project.
- Harrington Park Master Plan – The Town was interested in completing a full engineering survey and master plan for the existing park which includes the Wheeler Harrington house. The Town was considering relocating the Ball Benson Barn to the site and was working with the contractor who originally dismantled it. The proposed project would include public outreach and discussion and the amount requested would be under \$100,000. Ms. Ortner asked if public meetings would be included in this project. Ms. Rasmussen answered yes, and that the funding would include hiring a facilitator for that discussion. Ms. Rasmussen noted that CPA funding had been used to study the site a few years ago and had produced an excellent Historic Structure Report. Unfortunately, the studies of the site itself have not met the Town's standards and more research was needed on those areas.
- Land Acquisition Funds – The Town had two potential land acquisitions in the future – one Open Space/Recreation site and one Open Space/Historic Preservation/Community Housing site. The Town was requesting \$650,000 for land acquisitions and Ms. Rasmussen noted that this amount would be matched by the Town Manager's funds. The Town was still looking at the numbers, though, and would have more information in the future.
- Chamberlain Park Bridge - The Natural Resources Commission was also requesting \$25,000 to design a replacement for the existing ca. 1970s bridge which was beginning to fail. This work would include stabilizing the supporting piers and was noted to be the same application as last year. Ms. Rasmussen noted that this project had not been included in those presented to the Select Board.

Ms. Ortner noted that projects were often not fully funded and that the amount of funds to recommend was part of the project discussion process. Ms. Rasmussen noted that several of the projects could be funded over multiple years.

Dan Rowley, Highway and Grounds Superintendent, spoke on behalf of the Town's Sleepy Hollow Cemetery Roadway and Stone Wall Restoration project. He presented a color coded map of the Cemetery's roadways and explained that they had added a new color since last year to show the area that had already been funded. He explained where work was underway using last year's CPA funds and that asphalt had been removed and that drainage and grading work was in process in those locations. The work was proceeding well and nearing completion. He reviewed the other sections of the map and noted that the blue areas were done in 2008 and in good condition. Next year, they hoped to address those areas colored in yellow, red, and green and to restore the stone wall along Bedford Road. The work was expected to cost \$600,000 and Concord Public Works was requesting \$450,000 in CPA funds for the project which would be matched in-kind by the Town. Mr. Rowley added that phasing the project had worked very well and that they appreciated the CPC's support for the project.

Ms. Ortner asked if the work could be phased further. Mr. Rowley answered that it could and explained how the area currently under construction was an inherently difficult one to work with. Mr. Rowley also showed before photos of the area alongside construction documents showing the repaving, resetting of posts and efforts to better control rainwater.

Melissa Saalfield, Development Director for the Umbrella Community Arts Center, explained that they planned to apply for phase II of their project to restore the original windows in the Emerson Umbrella. Ms. Saalfield explained that CPA funding had previously allowed the Umbrella to complete and Historic Structure Report for the building and to restore its cupola. Last year's funding had allowed them to restore 53 of the 100 original windows in the former school. That work was still in progress now and many of the upper sashes of the windows had been removed to be restored off site. The restored windows are thermal pane/double pane windows and significantly improved the insulation of the building. This year they planned to request \$138,000 to complete the work. CPA funding would represent 70% of the funds used for this project. Ms. Saalfield noted that the Umbrella was also working to raise \$20 million for their overall building project.

Ms. Cookman asked what percentage of this year's funding had come from CPA funds. Ms. Saalfield answered that the current project was 70% CPA, 30% other sources and that they hoped to have the same percentage this year but would work with whatever they received. Ms. Ortner noted that the Committee was always looking to match CPA funding with other sources and in kind services.

Maureen Mara and David Swain presented on behalf of the West Concord Union Church (WCUC), which is celebrating its 125 year anniversary. To celebrate, the WCUC is planning an extensive \$1.7 million renovation of the building, of which about \$460,000 would be for the restoration of the Pine Street entrances. Their plan was to replace the two existing entrances with a unified, universal entrance that would access both the elevator and interior steps. They noted that the church is a significant historic structure and that the CPA funding would be used to improve access. The building was heavily used by the community with approximately 900 hours of community services held here

each month. The project would both improve community access to the building but would also make the Pine Street façade consistent with the Victorian Design of the historic structure. The WCUC planned to request \$153,000 from CPA funds, which would be 33% of the cost of the entrance work. The WCUC has committed an additional \$900,000 to the overall project and feel that this is both a worthy CPA project and well supported by the community.

Ms. Ortner asked if the building was in the Historic District. Ms. Mara stated that it was not in the District but was adjacent to it. Ms. Cookman asked about the project's timeline and Mr. Swain stated that they planned to begin in April 2017. He explained that they had begun planning the project in 2014 believed this work to be crucial to restoring the building, including fixing a ca. 1960s addition, and integrating the newer elements into the historic structure. Mr. Ward asked if the project would fund design and construction. Mr. Swain stated that it would only fund the construction and showed the interior and exterior views of the proposed area. He noted that the current exterior entrance was built of crumbling concrete and led to a failing 1980s entranceway. These areas were badly constructed and needed to be replaced, and they wanted to take the opportunity to clean up the lines. The proposed work will bring the entrance up to existing Building Code and will move the primary access away from the busy corner with Main Street. Ms. Pike raised the question of using CPA funding on religious institutions. Members discussed the current case against this use and past practices. Members agreed that funding could be used for an historic building owned by a congregation but that they needed to be careful to confirm that the funds would go towards a public benefit. Ms. Escobedo asked the applicants to check whether the building was on the Historic Resource Survey and Ms. Kritzer offered to assist the applicants with this. Ms. Cookman asked what the Applicants would do if they did not receive funding. Ms. Mara stated that they would go ahead with the project but thought that this was appropriate for CPA funding because of the area's heavy community use. She felt that the requested funding was a desirable ratio and thought that they were very close to achieving their funding goal. Ms. Cookman noted that the CPA fund was at an historic low and explained that the Committee would be trying to leverage the existing funds as much as possible.

Anna Wood, Assistant Director of Recreation, explained that she was new to the Department and was present to explain their potential proposal for the Rideout Park facelift. She noted that Emerson Playground was well used and visited but that Rideout was not as well utilized. The Town had previously set aside funds for that area and had begun to make improvements. The CPA funding request would be for a new pavilion and splash pad for Rideout Playground. The splash pad would be a free and accessible water feature and there would be no limitations to accessing it. The pavilion was proposed because there were no picnicking facilities in the area. Concord's Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan recommended that there should be five in Concord and this would be the first one installed. Ms. Wood noted that Rideout had little shade or seating and reviewed the potential site plan at this time. The new splash pad was estimated to cost \$80,000 and the pavilion would be another \$46,000. Ms. Wood added that they would need a private donor to assist with the work.

Ms. Ortner asked that the Department include in their application which of the two projects was the higher priority. Ms. Cookman asked about any other renovations to the site. Ms. Wood explained the general plan for integrating the adjacent parcel into the site and believed that work would begin soon. Ms. Cookman asked what the Recreation

Department would do if the project was not funded. Ms. Wood stated that a private donor was the only other option and that they might decide to apply again next year.

Pat Nelson, Executive Director of the Concord Children's Center, explained the new proposal for the Natural Playscape at Ripley. She noted that last year's funding application had been for invasive species removal and the construction of a new platform. Invasives clearing work was planned for next Spring but their priorities for the site had shifted after the recent tornado. The CCC had decided to put the platform on hold. Instead, they proposed to replace a number of significant trees that were taken down due to the storm. She reminded the Committee that the CCC's first project had been to clear out the woodland area adjacent to their playground. They had removed the invasives in that area and installed native shade plantings which were now in danger due to the loss of the overhead canopy. Ms. Nelson explained that they had lost 9 large trees which had shaded the nature walkway and that the first part of their funding request would replace these trees. Part II proposed to connect the Natural Playscape with the new playgrounds proposed by the Concord Integrate Pre School (CIPS). The idea for Part II was to integrate the two areas by creating an easy and accessible walkway between the two outdoor play areas that would create one unified play space. The total cost of this project was around \$25,000, which included both replacing some plantings and repairing some damaged equipment. To just replace the trees and install the new path was expected to be under \$15,000.

Ms. Cookman asked about the replacement trees. Ms. Nelson explained that the damaged trees had been 32-34" caliper trees and that they would want to install more mature replacements for shade. They were working with a landscaper on the project that could source the trees and had a rough estimate for new Poplars and Sugar Maples. Ms. Ortner asked if native trees would be installed and Ms. Nelson answered yes. Ms. Ortner suggested that they include photos of both of the play areas with their application. Mr. Cratsley asked if the CCC was still working with the Sudbury Valley Trust. Ms. Nelson was not sure that the Trust would be involved this year as none of the proposed work was on their land. Mr. Cratsley asked if the School Department was contributing to the play areas. Ms. Nelson stated that they had made overtures and that the School had taken care of clearing the area after the storm. She explained that the CCC utilized land belonging to both the Town and the School Department. Ms. Ortner asked if this project would overlap with the CIPS Playground. Ms. Nelson answered yes, explaining the original designs for both areas and the opportunity to link the carousel to the CIPS area which was created by the new pathway. Mr. Higgins suggested that the CCC look to other potential funding sources for the trees. He noted that the Middlesex School would be required to replace trees because of a new project on their property. He suggested that the CCC work with Middlesex School to see if some of the new trees could be installed in this location instead. Members reviewed the site plan and Ms. Ortner asked the Applicant to break out the cost of the trees and the pathway and to note which project had the higher priority for them. The Applicant was asked to provide a site plan showing the current and proposed work on the site. Ms. Cookman asked if any of the tree damage was covered by insurance. Ms. Nelson explained that this was a Public/Private Partnership question and that CCC was working with the Town on that question and their future options.

Anne Kilroy and Casey Atkins, CIPS Parents Group representatives and project advocates, presented their proposal to renovate the existing outdoor play areas. Ms.

Kilroy explained that CIPS was a part of Concord's School system and was located at Ripley School. The program worked with children of all abilities and provided early intervention services for kids with neurological and physical disabilities. The program used a 50/50 model with half of the kids in the regular program and half on individual plans. Because of this mix, their facilities needed to accommodate a range of uses and 18 months was the typical age of a child in the program. The play area is broken into three sections with a covered canopy over the entrance at the center. Ms. Atkins explained that the children go to 2.5 hours of classes and that the open play area adjacent to CCC is not really an option for CIPS because it is too open an area for the age of their students and the time available. The proposal for the CIPS playground is to develop an accessible play area that is safely enclosed and has dual therapeutic uses. Ms. Atkins explained the features to be incorporated into the playground to increase the flexibility of the area. The group was also working with Designer Jennifer Brooks on the playscape. The equipment would be useable for children with walkers and panels in the fencing would include play elements as well. The area would be designed to benefit children with limited mobility as well. The team showed the proposed site plan and explained what would stay and what would be replaced. The project would include a new poured rubber path and surfaces which were better for accessibility than the existing woodchips. Ms. Kilroy explained the use of the poured rubber and noted that it was impact and accessibility rated for the areas in use. A path through the new surface would connect the two play areas. It was noted that the existing swings and grass area would remain.

Ms. Cookman asked whether the space could be used in all seasons. Ms. Atkins explained that the existing play area was mostly mulch and was hard to shovel out in the winter and the children generally played in the gym. The new surface would be easier to maintain and the project would include shade structures for the summer months. Ms. Ortner asked when the area was used. The School used it from 9-3 on weekdays and the community used it on the weekends, particularly when games were taking place on the adjacent fields. The Applicants saw this as a chance to build a community resource by investing in the area. They noted that the playground complemented the trails, fields, and adjacent natural playscape and would be designed to feel open. The project had the support of the Minuteman Arc and Concord Public Schools and they would be going to the School Board for approval in October. The total budget was expected to be \$300,000 with the anticipated request for CPA funding of \$150,000. The rest of the project would be funded through grants and donations. Ms. Ortner asked if there were heat issues with the proposed asphalt. Ms. Kilroy answered yes, and that they would be using a light color and including shade elements to help with that problem. She noted that similar elements had been installed at Rideout Playground. They were also working with the School Department about adding trees to the area.

Ms. Cookman asked if the project could be phased. Ms. Atkins stated that they were discussing that question but that most of the cost came from one area of the project. Pouring the rubber was expensive but it would be cheaper to do all of that work at one time. It was noted that the carousel pathway would also be poured rubber. It was noted that the shade elements would cost about \$28,000, the rubber \$75,000, the one large piece of equipment \$40,000 and the fencing about \$40,000. Ms. Ortner asked if the School would permit extended use of the area. The Applicants answered yes, that it was open to be used by anyone outside of school hours. Ms. Ortner suggested that they reach out to teams and parent groups for help with additional funding. Ms. Kilroy noted that on October 2 the adjacent Natural Playscape would be having an event and how they were

looking to develop community investment in the area this fall. They hoped to begin construction by next summer.

David Clark was present on behalf of the Timothy Wheeler House, a Greek Revival home on Walden Street in Concord Center which had been given to a non-profit for the purpose of Elder living over 100 years ago. He asked if it was worth applying for CPA funds to restore the historic house. Members asked if the property had an Historic Structure Report. If not, they suggested that this would be a good first step for CPA funds. Mr. Cratsley asked what work they had in mind. Mr. Clark answered that the front areas of the house needed work and explained that the house was licensed for seven residents but only had three at this time. The House is owned by a Non Profit with an endowment. Mr. Ward asked if those living there were permanent residents. Mr. Clark explained that residents could live there as long as they were relatively independent as they did not provide any medical support. Residents were required to be Concord or near Concord residents. Members asked how much funding would be requested. Mr. Clark thought that \$25,000 would be enough to start but noted that they could easily find more work to do. He suspected that the house was not ADA Compliant but explained that the residents needed to be able to get around the house on their own. Ms. Rasmussen stated that she had met with another member of the Timothy Wheeler House's Board to discuss options for the building. She thought that an Historic Structure Report was a good place to start and noted that they could work with the Regional Housing Services Office to consider affordability for the units. Ms. Ortner suggested that Mr. Clark meet with Ms. Kritzer during the week to discuss Historic Structure Reports and the project. Members encouraged Mr. Clark to apply for the Report as well as to look for potential matching funds if possible.

Mr. Higgins reported that he was aware of two potential projects from the Natural Resources Division. The first was to clear the invasive plants from the Mill Brook Way area adjacent Concord Lumber on Lowell Road. He noted that the area was overgrown with invasive plants and believed that \$68,000 would be requested to clear and replant the area. The second project was for the bridge at Chamberlin Park and would be similar to the application that did not receive funding last year. Ms. Ortner asked that the Town prioritize its funding applications if possible.

Existing Project Updates

Ms. Kritzer reported that the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail project was moving forward and had recently acquired easements from surrounding properties for the Trail's construction. Ms. Rasmussen stated that most of the restrictions were donated to the Town and that the remaining 18 were purchased for a total of \$53,000. Trail work was also continuing on section 2B from Acton.

Members agreed that existing project reports should be made available quarterly and reviewed at the meeting. Ms. Kritzer was also asked to update the list of open projects on the same basis and to look into those projects which were long outstanding or not progressing. Members also asked to see information on quarterly spending by the Fund and to have that information added to the website.

Members noted that the MCI Concord Fountain had been completed and installed. The Dept. of Corrections was interested in holding a dedication for the fountain but no specific date was given. Ms. Kritzer was asked to look into this further.

Review and Approval of Minutes for July 2016

It was noted that not all Members had seen the revised draft minutes. Ms. Kritzer was asked to resend those for approval at the next meeting.

Members agreed that all future meetings would begin at 7:00pm rather than 7:30pm. The next meeting will be held on October 4 in a location to be determined and the October 12 meeting was canceled at this time.

Review and Approval to Close the Following Projects:

Ms. Ortner stated that she had reviewed the project files and found them to be complete. Mr. Higgins moved to approve the following projects as closed.

- Main Entrance Stairs – Project 15-15
- Wright Tavern Restoration, Project 5-12
- CCC Phase II Infrastructure, 9-13

Ms. Cookman seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR.

Other Business

It was suggested that the November Public Hearing process should be added to the Oct. 4 agenda for discussion. Members also asked for a discussion on the criteria for permanent CPA funding signs.

Mr. Higgins moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cookman seconded the motion and ALL VOTED IN FAVOR. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Kritzer
Senior Planner

Minutes Approved on: _____ November 7, 2016 _____

Bouzha Cookman, Secretary