

**Community Preservation Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2019, 7:30PM
Town Hall Annex 2nd Floor Conference Room**

In attendance were: Eric Helmuth
Eugene Benson
Charlie McCabe
Leslie Mayer
Richard Murray
JoAnn Robinson

Also in attendance: Jim Feeney, Assistant Town Manager

1. **Review/Approval of Minutes:** Eric Helmuth called the meeting to order at 7:34pm. The meeting minutes of December 11, 2018 were reviewed; Eugene Benson noted the minutes should be amended to note the prior meeting minutes were approved by vote at the last meeting. JoAnn Robinson pointed out a typo on the second page. Eugene moved approval as amended; Charlie McCabe seconded; all voted in favor.

2. **Warrant Article Discussion:** Eric Helmuth reviewed the language of a draft warrant article to officially change the name of the Community Preservation Committee. Since its inception, the Committee been addressed as the Community Preservation Act Committee, or CPAC, to avoid confusion with the Capital Planning Committee or CPC. In reports and correspondence, it has been necessary to note the informal name of the Committee. This warrant article aims to provide clarity and eliminate the need to make the awkward reference to the name in reports.

Eugene Benson asked if the Town must have a Community Preservation Committee under State law. Eric indicated that he discussed the possible change with the Town Manager, Town Counsel, as well as Stuart Saginor of the Coalition. There is agreement that there must be a Committee, but the name is not prescribed by law. Eric noted that Town Counsel stated this is common and had language available to put before Town Meeting that would provide blanked coverage to all references to the Committee. Eric believes this would be a good item for the Consent Agenda at Annual Town Meeting. Eugene moved approval; Richard Murray seconded; all voted in favor.

3. **CPA Budget Update:** Eric Helmuth presented the proposed fiscal year 20 salary offsets for Town Manager's Office staff. Leslie Mayer moved approval; Eugene Benson seconded; all voted in favor.

4. **Brief Review of CPA Projects Summary Status:** Eric Helmuth reviewed pie charts provided to the Committee that show historical funding by CPA category at a glance. Eugene Benson noted the pie chart for fiscal year 19 shows only 8% invested in historic preservation. This figure should include the reserve appropriation, or include an asterisk, so it is clear the 10% spending requirement was met. Leslie Mayer believes the open space and recreation spending should be split up to make it clearer. Jim Feeney offered to have an additional color added to the pie charts.

Eric introduced the project expenditure summary table, which is intended to give a snap shot of CPA projects to date. Eric mentioned the fiscal year 17 projects are all complete, and unspent funds should be turned back. Jim Feeney mentioned the table does not include the most recent round of bills that were paid, and there are substantial bills for the fiscal year 19 Mill Brook project soon to be paid. JoAnn Robinson is concerned with turning back any funds from the Historic Resources Working Group due to an agreement that additional work was to be completed by the consultant. Leslie Mayer pointed out that the Committee should consider adding a footnote for the Downing Square project due to the amount of money committed already. Eugene Benson stated the Committee's report should include an update on the status of this project.

5. FY20 CPA Application Discussion:

- a. Mill Brook/Wellington Park Phase III: Eric Helmuth informed the Committee that Amber from the Mystic River Watershed Association, on behalf of the project team, emailed before the meeting that they wished to withdraw their application. Jim Feeney provided some perspective on their reasons for withdrawing, and noted they are seeking a Community Development Block Grant this year to continue developing the design on the far side of the bank. Leslie Mayer confirmed the plan for the bridge work was still uncertain at this time. Eric reminded the Committee the withdrawal of this application leaves a delta of approximately \$360k between requested funds and available funds this fiscal year.
- b. Central School Renovation Project: Leslie Mayer informed the Committee there was a site visit today with Jenny Raitt and the Town's project manager. Leslie clarified that the application was seeking funding only for slate roofing repairs and brick repointing, and mentioned the budget in the application was a bit unclear due to roofing repairs being funded over the course of multiple fiscal years. The Committee discussed that this roof repair timeline was not ideal given that interior renovations would also be happening. Leslie pointed out that although the roof was very complex, emergency repairs were already underway and substantial water testing was completed so it is believe all active leaks have been addressed. There was a full study of the building envelope that resulted in a 190 page report not included with the application. Additionally, Leslie noted a variance was received for some of the exterior stair work, which limited this scope of work favorably. The funding plan for this project is still being developed in conjunction with the Capital Planning Committee. Leslie appreciates that this project aims to maintain the integrity of this historic building. Richard Murray noted that he walked the site about a month ago and was shocked by some of the conditions he observed.
- c. Spy Pond Bleachers: Eric Helmuth opened the discussion by referencing the Department of Planning and Community Development's consultative review. Eric reminded the Committee that the study intends to seek community input and gauge community interest on whether or not the structure should be saved. JoAnn Robinson would like to make sure the process does not just survey public opinion, but also gets input from the Historical Commission and other interested historic entities. Eugene Benson asked about the utilization of the structure, which the Committee agreed is minimal. JoAnn is also concerned the structure may dually serve as a retaining wall for the slope, which needs to be considered.
- d. Whittemore Park: Eric Helmuth noted there was no clear timeline for construction presented in the application or plan, just a phasing scheme. Richard Murray offered that this project, in combination with the Winslow Towers project, would have a positive

impact on Arlington Center in general, and the Winslow residents. JoAnn Robinson noted that she worked with the project team regarding historically important pieces in the park. The Committee believes there could be community questions about the impact on the various uses of the park during construction, as well as the proposed tree removals. The applicant should be prepared to speak to these, especially if they arise at Town Meeting.

- e. Old Burying Ground: Jim Feeney updated the Committee that the project team applied for a capital grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council Cultural Facilities Fund in the amount of \$200k, which would serve as a 50% match to the CPAC grant, if awarded. JoAnn Robinson reiterated that the work required is necessary, and the application is a result of the CPAC funded study.
- f. Tercentenary Markers: Eugene Benson has noticed other historical markers in Town. JoAnn Robinson confirmed there is a very similar sign in the Old Burying Ground that also needs restoration, and that restoration of the various markers will need to continue over time; however, with the expected low cost of the project, it likely is not worth the investment of time to seek grant funding. Eric Helmuth appreciates that this is a distinct project, and part of a larger state-wide effort to restore these markers in other communities; he noted Scituate recently used Community Preservation funds to restore their markers.
- g. Whittemore Robbins Cottage: Eric Helmuth noted that project reviewers Chuck Tirone and Clarissa Rowe are not present at the meeting. Jim Feeney confirmed there was a site visit with Clarissa and Christine Bongiorno, and that Clarissa shared her notes with Chuck. JoAnn Robinson would like someone from the Historical Commission, probably Patrick Guthrie, on project team; JoAnn reminded the Committee the window scheme has already been approved by the Historical Commission. Jim Feeney envisions a process similar to the one used for the Carriage House project, and informed the Committee that interior remodeling will be funded by the capital plan to create counseling space and accessible bathrooms that can be used to support future use of the Carriage House.
- h. Arlington Reservoir Project: Charlie McCabe summarized the substantial investment and commitment already made by the Town and Committee, but pointed out there is a tremendous amount of work to be completed. Charlie would like to understand better what the priorities are in Phase II, pointing out a citizen approached the group during the site visit about the condition of the parking lot. Eugene Benson would like additional information about the potential costs of phasing the project, and what work would be completed first. Eugene also believes the Town should file a CPA application in Lexington for work to be completed within their borders. The Committee was not certain if this would prove successful. Lastly, Eugene pointed out that the Town's Energy Manager should be consulted about adding solar to the structures on the site.
- i. North Union Playground: Charlie McCabe recapped the site visit, confirming the playground is 23 years old and in need of replacement; it is in a great location, is heavily used year-round, and is leveraging State funding. Charlie also pointed out that it is used by the Thompson School in conjunction with the smaller school playground. He believes this would be a good area of Town to invest in. Eugene wonders if due to funding constraints, it may be necessary to prioritize one of the Recreation projects. Jim Feeney reminded the Committee applicants were encouraged to submit applications for all projects to numerous funding sources, such as CPA and CDBG, so there would be flexibility among the various funding sources.

- j. Winslow Towers: Richard Murray described the building and the occupants who reside in it, as well as the current challenges facing the building. Richard summarized that the Housing Authority is seeking \$500k from the CPAC towards a window project that will cost approximately \$2M, and include the use of reserve funds and State funds. Richard outlined Ann Woodward's meeting with Housing Authority Executive Director John Griffin and Maintenance Director Bob Cronin. Ann would like to see additional materials presented regarding community need and community support, as well as a detailed plan to leverage State funds, including HiLAP funds. If not awarded a CPA grant, Richard believes the project would need to be done in phases.
6. **Other Business:** No other business to discuss. Richard Murray moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:18pm; Eugene seconded; all voted in favor.