

Community Preservation Committee
May 13, 2013
Police Station Conference Room

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Community Preservation Committee was called to order by Chairman Mike Dissette at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were members Mike Dissette, Paul Healy, Judith Grohe, Margaret Welch, Mary Lou Gagnon, Bob Uhlig, Jane Healey, Don Little and Cindy Zabriskie.

3. Minutes

Mike Dissette moved to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2013 meeting as submitted. Paul Healy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. Masonic Temple Preservation Restriction

The discussion of the Masonic Temple Preservation Restriction was tabled.

5. Deliberation on FY 2014 Applications for Community Preservation Funds

The CPC members deliberated over their recommendations to City Council for 18 applications for Community Preservation Funds. The following items were distributed: a letter dated May 3 regarding St. Anna's Chapel, a letter dated April 19 from the Windy River Group regarding the Inn Street improvements, an estimate from Bartlett Tree for work at Atkinson Common and revised bonding schedules for the Kelley School and high school.

Mike Dissette opened the meeting to comments from the public. Mary Hassinger said that CPA revenues were not intended to be an extension of funding for the municipality. She said CPA funds should be reserved for projects of the citizens that will improve the quality of life in the city. She said the committee members have a public trust to support projects that are not under the control of city government.

Mike Dissette said over \$2 million has been requested for 18 projects. After the bond debt has been taken into account, a total of \$631,000 is available for allocation, \$136,134 of which is from uncommitted funds. He reminded committee members that City Council might approve their recommendations, disapprove them or approve them at a lower amount. The Council does not have the authority to fund a project for which the committee has not recommended funding. Administrative expenses, which include \$2,500 for Community Preservation dues and stipends for the planner and minute taker, total \$12,000. A lower amount is generally awarded than is available to provide a cushion in case surcharges and matching funds are lower than anticipated. Mike Dissette recommended a \$30,000 cushion, leaving \$588,000 available to be awarded. Mary Lou Gagnon pointed out the debts greatly decrease the amount of available funds and will continue to do so for many years.

The committee members began their deliberations with a discussion of the bonding requests for the Kelley School and the high school. A bond payment analysis for the high school was

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provided only for the project as a whole and not for each of the four phases separately. Judith Grohe commented that she is not in favor of bonding the work at the high school. Mary Lou Gagnon suggested that the portion of the work that is critical might be funded this year and a reduced bond might be considered next year. Margaret Welch said a phased approach is very typical for this type of work. She recommended awarding \$150,000 this year and committing to an award of \$100,000 for next year without bonding. She said the City should fund phases three and four, as those phases are less related to historic preservation. Bob Uhlig said if future funds were committed for the high school, he would want the City to match these funds so that the entire project is not funded through the CPA. Don Little pointed out that the second phase might cost more than the \$100,000 estimated if the work were to be phased.

Margaret Welch said it is too early in the process to consider bonding for the Kelley School. She said the school is a valuable building and the feasibility study should be funded. Mike Dissette said it would be premature to bond the project because the scope of work is not yet known. He said the feasibility study might indicate other options for the building, such as a public/private partnership or the adaptive reuse of the second floor, or the building might be sold with preservation restrictions. He said the building is an important part of the historic built landscape and it is in a good location for the Department of Youth Services but he questioned if the City could afford to house the program in the structure. Mary Lou Gagnon said both the new elementary school and the rehabbed middle school should be able to accept after school programs and the children are already in these locations. They are transported to the Kelley School from the other schools. She said the building might be better used in other ways. Judith Grohe said the estimates for the mortar and accessibility work total close to \$1 million and she asked about the source for this money. She said it is premature for even a feasibility study to take place and this would not be a good use of CPA funds. Paul Healy said he agreed with her assessment. Margaret Welch said the feasibility study might allow an informed decision to be made on how the building would be best offered for sale. Paul Healy said a potential buyer would be the best party to conduct the feasibility study. Mike Dissette said the market is the best source for information. The City could ask for RFPs with a deed restriction included as a condition.

Mike Dissette asked how many members of the committee would support each of the projects in any amount. A majority did not vote in favor of funding six projects. One of these projects was the Cherry Hill Soccer Field. Bob Uhlig spoke in favor of the project, saying the NYSA has been a significant partner for the City and the Parks Commission. He said it would be a disappointment to not fund the project at some level because the group has invested funds and worked with the community to arrive at an acceptable plan. After the discussion the project received a majority vote for funding. The committee members also decided to reduce the cushion from \$30,000 to \$27,400 in order to fund the projects at the desired levels.

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Mike Dissette moved to recommend the following expenditures to City Council:

Inn Street Fountain	\$0.00
Clipper City Rail Trail and Harborwalk Phase II	\$100,000.00
Newburyport Housing Rehabilitation Program	\$75,000.00
Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust	\$75,000.00
Open Space and Recreation Plan: Maps & Brochures	\$0.00
Joppa Park Renovation Project, Phase II	\$20,000.00
Cherry Hill Parcel B Soccer Field Improvement	\$50,000.00
Atwood Park Improvement	\$20,000.00
Kelleher Park Playground	\$6,000.00
Frog Pond Restoration at Bartlet Mall	\$12,000.00
Open Space Reserve	\$50,000.00
Newburyport High School Exterior Woodwork Restoration	\$150,000.00
Kelley School Preservation Project	\$0.00
Newburyport National Register of Historic Places Signage	\$6,500.00
Little River Nature Trail Kiosks	\$8,000.00
Historic Landscape Preservation	\$20,000.00
St. Anna's Chapel Restoration Project	\$0.00
Firehouse Center for the Arts' Restroom Restoration	\$0.00
City Hall Debt Payment	\$12,000.00
Open Space Debt Payment	\$195,187.50
FY14 Administrative Costs	\$128,818.75
Total Expenditure	\$928,506.25

Paul Healy seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mike Dissette moved that the chair of the Newburyport Historical Commission approve the RFP for work at Newburyport High School. Margaret Welch seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Upcoming Meetings

The next regular meeting of the CPC, scheduled for Tuesday, May 28, will be cancelled. The June 25 regular meeting might be rescheduled due to a State election.

7. Adjournment

Paul Healy moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m. Judith Grohe seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.