

Community Preservation Committee

April 29, 2020

Via Zoom Webinar

Minutes

1. Call to Order

Andy Port- Director Planning & Development opened the call and reviewed the process of the new meeting format.

Chair Mike Dissette called a meeting of the Community Preservation Committee to order at 7:03 p.m. He reviewed the guidelines for the meeting.

2. Roll Call

In attendance were Mike Dissette, Mark Rosen, Paul Healy, Ron Ziembra, Dan Koen, Don Little, Don Walters, and Jane Healey.

Director Andy Port and Katelyn Sullivan from the Planning Office were also present.

3. Welcome, Overview, and Updates from the Chair

Chair Mike Dissette advised following the order of agenda, Applicants will each receive 10-15m to present. Regular business of the meeting will take place after applicants have presented.

- Applicants for grant recommendations will be given the opportunity to present information and allowed an open dialog as needed for their projects. Public comment will be opened following each presentation and questions from the Committee.
- Reminder for everyone that they are still bound by rules for open meeting laws.
- Provided a recall of basic rules of any deliberation including electronic communication, dealing with matters that come within our jurisdiction; expectation being of schedules, agenda circulation, and documents to be discussed at the meeting.
- Applicant reviews should not contain any discussion or opinion coming before the Committee and should be cautious with any questions or discussions outside of the meeting, which should be directed appropriately.
- Committee members with questions outside of the meeting related to applicants should refer them to me (Mike) or Katelyn and we will get those questions into the public meeting.

4. FY 2021 Application Presentations for Community Preservation Funds

Cushing House Cobble Courtyard Phase II

Historical Society of Old Newbury

\$30,250

Presented by Susan Edwards

Committee questioned budget and who has been contracted for the job, other sources of funding, backup plan if additional funding is not secured, letter of support from Historical Commission, and if all events are free to residents along with average number of attendees.

Review and responses of Applicant:

- Phase II of the courtyard of the Cushing House to restore garden area and make it more available and accessible to residents. Reviewed pictures submitted with application of the area.
- Upgrades and restoration include: repairing/replacing existing cobblestones; granite handicap accessible path, improving grading and drainage, lawn sod, replacing non historic plants as listed on original plan, replacing rotted lattice fence and add an ADA standard gate for greater access.
- Renewing the space will allow greater access to free outside programs and small events.
- Project will be put out to bid as they usually do. Very pleased with work done over the summer by prior contractor but can't say who will have the contract until it's put out to bid.
- Prior Landscape architect has given numbers for both phases. Also have numbers done by architect who did Phase I. The numbers were provided last fall by the Landscaper who came in under bid for Phase I.
- \$20k in funds from Mass Historical; unsure if getting that funding at this time. With COVID-19 they are closed completely and unable to submit requests. We have a restricted fund endowment which may be used for the difference.
- We did ask Newburyport Historical Commission for a letters of support; not sure why you have not received it. (Katelyn Sullivan will follow up to check on status as Ron Z. advised he was present at meeting where the letter was requested)
- Site is open to the public for free. We had a few programs the summer before such as history programs, ship models, tavern songs, family oriented programs, workshops, and concerts. Only event with a fee is the annual garden tour. An average of 100 people attend the programs and larger groups for events. Annual attendance is approximately 4-5 thousand people.

Mike Dissette- verified no public comments or questions and reminded applicant to check city website for deliberations schedule.

Newburyport Public Library Archival Center HVAC Replacement Newburyport Public Library \$127,575

Presented by Giselle Stevens- head librarian at Newburyport Public Library

Committee questioned if report had been shared with Molly Ettenborough and the Agreeable Energy Advisory Committee for most cost effective approach. Also encouraged readers to review page 32, second paragraph to review damage done to archives.

Review and responses of applicant:

- Wonderful archival center and public reading room open 6 days/week. Houses invaluable local history, genealogy collection.
- Opened center with newly expanded library 2001.
- Separate HVAC system to control the space.
- 2 Units are at end of life and want to replace them with 2 humidifiers to preserve those unique materials.
- Have spoken with Molly Ettenborough and would be open to speaking with her committee. Got quotes for the unit and did have a company look into other units to install. Need specialized units for temperature control of the archive center.

Mike Dissette- verified no public comments or questions and reminded applicant to check city website for deliberations schedule.

Restoration of 1930s Maxim Fire Truck Newburyport Fire Department \$76,728

Presented by Chief LeClaire & Deputy Bradbury

Committee questioned putting bid out to negotiate restoration cost, how FD could increase public viewing and use of vehicle.

Committee also reviewed whether funding has been granted to this type of project where it is not "property"/land and eligibility of funds. Committee determined have not granted in past but is eligible. Also noted cases of fire trucks in the state receiving funds.

Review and responses of applicant:

- Request to restore fire truck that has been with department 82 yrs. Built in 1938 and repainted with color that doesn't match in some areas.
- Invaluable part of City's history. Used for parades, funerals, City events. We put it out to the public every chance we get, but it has to be watched carefully as it is fragile and pieces may fall off. When it is out it has to be guarded. Open for more use once it's restored.
- Recently taken out of service for fires but still in use for many other things and road worthy.
- In the past there were mechanical issues so it wasn't out. Had \$15-20k out of own budget put into it. City has also provided money to support in the past.
- Areas in need of repair include full frame work restoration, hood, fenders, and cosmetic.
- No budget line items for this type of work as it is unique; was suggested we request grant funds.
- A few restoration companies contacted for the project but many are retiring. Only one interested was Coastal Truck and Auto body.
- Coastal Truck and Auto body is where the quote came from. Most restoration companies that specialize in this are few and far between as it is intricate work.

Mike Dissette- verified no public comments or questions and reminded applicant to check city website for deliberations schedule.

Artichoke River Woods Watershed Land Conservation Project Newburyport Planning Office \$225,000

Presented by Geordie Vining

Information and support also provided by Vanessa Johnson-Hall of Essex County Green Belt and Thomas Cusick, Superintendent of the Newburyport Water Treatment Plant

Committee questioned whether plans included purchase of additional land south of the area shown on the map as well as land on the Newburyport side, referral to page 3 of application the West Newbury approval of \$175k, if other parties are involved in getting additional money to fund the project, and are there any restraints attached.

Review and responses of applicant:

- Referred to page 8 of the application showing map of area working with. Overview, in short, project will help to protect City's water quality. Approximately 38 acres.
- Drinking supply for Newburyport. 86% from system and surface reservoirs. Runs adjacent of reservoir and protection zones
- Demonstrates how Newburyport owns abutting land in West Newbury as part of watershed and one of dams just south of property
- Reviewed threats to the drinking supply due to existing incompatible land uses. Septic systems failing, household hazardous waste, fertilizer. Many new comers in area not aware of the surroundings.
- No plans of new sources on horizon for City so have to protect what have. Beautiful woodland designated prime forest by State. Natural Heritage as critical natural landscape. Trail system people use Essex County Green Belt in position to maintain.
- Terms of funding- Coalition project Essex County Green Belt, City of Newburyport, City of West Newbury.
 - Good news recently- City notified of \$300k drinking water grant. Entire project estimated over a million dollars.
 - 800k in other funding
- ECGB purchase & sales agreement of property shown
- Request for CPA allocation to draw from existing Open Space Reserve Fund. As CPC Reserve Fund on hand for certain projects. If funding request is successful will still have money left for other projects in reserve.
- Vanessa Johnson-Hall advised Watershed project is a high priority of the ECGB and optimistic funding will be reached.
- Thomas Cusick reiterated importance of the project to secure the Watershed and area/ land around the reservoir. Project has his full support and hope can continue the effort and move forward. Noted completed RSP; awarded contract for them to expand on this type of work with West Newbury, which makes it worthwhile.
- City doesn't have any negotiations or any foreseeable deals for additional purchases of land. These sort of opportunities aren't around that often. Land South of the property has a house and property developed. Possible ECGB has some interaction with that owner.
- Vanessa Johnson-Hall stated ECGB has reached out to neighboring land owners. Nothing recent since we got this property under agreement but is part of my to-do list.

- Deadline is March 31 of 2021. General approach to pull project together this calendar year and have some breathing room due to property and land owners (maintain relationships)
- This project lion share for City of Newburyport Watershed. Some water sold back to West Newbury in summertime, but its Newburyport water supply. Newburyport bigger than West Newbury and has a bigger pot of CPA funding. Open Space Reserve fund we have contributed to right along. West Newbury has a one much smaller.

Mike- any comments from Public? None

Clipper City Rail Trail: Closing the Gaps Newburyport Planning Office

\$250,000

Presented by Geordie Vining

Committee questioned stability of funding and probability of CPC grant being given back should project halt; elevation of northern driveway Parker St; Phase 3 related to \$50k to Parker St and suggested \$200k for riverfront and water treatment area; and permit and additional money needed for riverfront since PCP problem.

Review and responses of applicant:

- Overview of completed parts of project over past 2 decades, including trails; open space; transportation, and park recreational space enjoyed by thousands of people. Trail loops around heart of City. Very complex project with pieces and gaps to fill. Funding is critical to this project and request your support.
- Clear high valued trail and annotation project. Public safety real component- getting residents, families off the roads. Safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Parker St shared pathway listed as priority with the City.
- Seeking and securing grant funding from multiple sources. Require leveraging from City funding. Nearly 10million dollars secured. 5 dollars to every 1 of City raised.
- Risk wasting great deal of money not completing. Working on contaminated soil
- In application shoreline section created 1872 by railroad. Had vertical seawalls for protection. Section in disrepair. Base flood elevation is 14ft for this shoreline. Adjacent area 12ft flood line. 26% chance of flooding every 30 yrs impacting it. Shoreline is vulnerable now and with sea level rise. Need to rebuild and raise to 14ft elevation. Raised berm to 14.5ft then put path on top of that.
- Use of funds, number of options dependent on how other funding plays out. Alternatively Mass DOT funding route CP allocation could help with significant design cost. Smaller Brownfield grant to help clean up.
- National grid property did their shoreline and installed trail
- Parker St end- will match \$400k grant CPC provided. \$75k design phase. \$450k construction status of Phase 3- 50% design on Parker St shared use pathway. Upgrading the crossing of State St and Parker St. Pedestrian activated signal. Recent funds Rte 1 rotary project; coming behind ours so we can connect back up to Phase 1 trail.
- Virtual Public meeting in mid-May. Permitting with Conservation commission on coming weeks.
- Mast arms- preorder for signal and finalize plans this summer and start construction this fall
- River Front section- work on permitting. Submit Chapter 91 application in next few days.
- There is a risk of stopping in our tracks if we don't have funding to match a grant or to complete an intensive review process with MA DOT. We have resources in place to manage that construction process. We definitely need resources in hand to pursue. If apply and can't match it, we could be awarded it but wouldn't be able to see that through if can't match it. Similarly if we have federal

transportation funding allocated and can't act our part, then they will bump the project. Money would go back to CPC to reallocate if project halts.

- Time restraint on this. Pedestrian was killed crossing street, don't want that happening again. Don't want unnecessary delays. Not wise to have this project stalled.
- Enough funding to carry through design of Parker St side and riverfront side. As some things may fall through, additional permits, change orders of additional \$30k unanticipated. Parker St side permitting and design, more complicated than anticipated and may need more money.
- See grants being flexible enough to support entire project. If we need to go with Federal Transportation funding route, inevitable increased demands on consultants for design review. Ma DOT process very intense with multiple areas reviewing and commenting on design which increases cost of design. Often worth it as one has funding in hand, but part of trade off.
- Low point around 8ft of driveway. For trail ramping up at 4.5% grade to meet ADA requirements to get to that 14.5 ft elevation. Complicated process with sea levels and neighborhoods. Treatment plant looking at parallel project to build flood walls from this berm at Water St.
- City doesn't provide construction match but does provide construction management

Mike Dissette opened line to questions

Councilor Eigerman- President City Council, speaking for self. Oppose this application. Referred to email submitted to CPC prior to meeting asking CPC to reject grant for this project. High cost project where CPA money already funded with no clear ending. Other deserving projects waiting for a turn that the CPC funding could go towards.

- Only \$50k towards Parker St so really about riverfront section, which feel is mistake.
- Two different projects going on. Segment of Rail Trail II: \$1.74million dollar cost estimated. Already given \$250k last year so this would take project up to a half million dollars.
- Wastewater treatment project is what grant is for, can't have it both ways. Not reserve fund for all projects.
- \$47k could build new segment at State and Parker St not \$250k. Already in hole; \$250k gone and not to mention other funding provided to support this project.

Mike Dissette- other comments from public? None

Open Space Reserve Fund Newburyport Open Space Committee

\$100,000

Presented by Mike Dissette on behalf of the Open Space Committee

- Similar to applications received in past requesting contributions be made to the savings account to take advantage of opportunities of acquiring Open Space/ Preserve
- \$100k preserved- point out the OSC supports application of \$250k to help secure protection of water supply heard earlier this evening
- Continue to replenish the reserve
- For reserve not appropriation. Project specific requirements before committee

Any questions or public comment- none

Mike Dissette- now closing this section of agenda

5. General Business

Edible Avenue- grant extension

Mike Dissette- extension of grant for Edible Avenue.

Forwarded emails to committee. Clear request to extend the use of prior grant. Second part in terms of changing the scope of the request and allocating some to design. Not sure from email if that aspect redrawn due to other resources.

Jane Niebling- Yes have withdrawn that. Half way through design at this point.

Mike Dissette- How much more time to extend?

Jane Niebling- May do everything by June 15, but if had until Aug 15, would be better. Think can do by June 15.

Mike Dissette- Entertain motion?

Roll call taken with all CPC members in agreement to grant extension up to August 15, 2020.

6. Upcoming Schedule

Mike Dissette reviewed upcoming Deliberation Meeting and suggested to move it out one day to 5/27 of next month. Asked Committee if any objections and there were none.

Asked Katelyn Sullivan to reschedule to 5/27

Paul H. asked to discuss taking money from Open space Reserve for that property, get ball rolling next meeting?

Mike D. responded he did not believe Geordie indicated necessary acceleration

Geordie V. confirmed that a month wouldn't make a difference to the project; appreciate support but fine to keep it on track with the others.

Ron Z. reminded of March meeting minutes to approve.

Mike D. motioned to approve March 10, 2020 minutes.

Paul H. yes

Jane H. Second

Mike D. Conducted Roll Call and all replied yes with exception of Don W. who was not in attendance for March meeting.

Mike D. Asked if there was any further business?

Geordie V. questioned if he should respond to any of the points Councilor Eigerman raised?

Mike D. advised not at this point as that portion of the meeting was closed and Councilor moved on

Andy P. recommended he put together an email to take into consideration at next meeting

Mike D. commented that Councilor Eigerman provided comments via email and Geordie can provide an email as well with his comments.

Jane H. requested a review of what to do if receive any questions from applicants.

Mike D. replied that they should send questions to himself, Jane Healey, and Katelyn Sullivan along with related materials which will be shared with the entire committee as a part of the agenda materials.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by Mike Dissette at 8:58