

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021
REGULAR MEETING - 7:00PM
REMOTE LOCATION
MEETING MINUTES**

Members Present: Lara Dubin, Chair (LD), Robin Conley (RC), Mary King (MK), Tony Mateo (TM), Tammy Pelletier (TP), Carol Pike (CP), Joe Stacy (JS)

Members Absent: none

Others in Attendance: Lindsay McCarthey; Wendy M. Levy, Boards Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Chair LD called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

LD welcomed Lindsay McCarthey.

I. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 28TH MEETING MINUTES

Members requested two amendments to the October 28 meeting minutes: change "warning" to "warrant," and omit the reference to apple crisp.

MOTION BY TM TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2020 AS AMENDED. CP SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

II. FINANCIAL UPDATE FROM TONY

LD provided background on the challenges the CPC has had with receiving financial information. She reported the CPC will get a monthly report of the current year's expenditures.

TM reported he is in contact with Peter Schmidt, who is working on Fiscal Year 2020, and he gave TM some figures. TM noted the names of the accounts are incorrect and he will ask Erin to change them. The CPC's current balance in all accounts, said TM, is over \$160,000, and the only pending pay-out is to the Northfield Public Library.

JS thanked TM for his help with moving funds from the Recreation Department's budget.

MK asked for clarification on the \$160,000 figure. LD said she will work on a financial report and send it to all CPC members before the next meeting.

LD reviewed the various accounts the CPC has in its budget. TM noted the CPC has some funding that carries over and may not be reflected in the current report.

III. DISCUSS PROPOSALS SUBMITTED FOR FUNDING

LD began the discussion with a reminder that this is just a review of four proposals, and the CPC does not have to decide at this meeting whether to approve them. The next step, she said, is for a

representative from each project to meet with the CPC to answer questions and provide more detail. The task now, said LD, is for the CPC to develop their questions.

- Mill Brook Trails Restoration

The Open Space Committee seeks \$5,530, under the category "Open Space and Recreation." TM explained this is the amount of grant funding the Open Space Committee seeks, and it will be mostly reimbursed.

RC, who is a member of the Open Space Committee, announced the committee is not seeking a state grant to comply with the property owner's wishes. The committee is deciding what to do next, she said, and noted a local snowmobile club offered to provide volunteer labor and funding.

TM expressed concern about snowmobiles on the trail. A discussion ensued.

TM stated the funding request is a reasonable estimate.

A discussion ensued on the merits of the project.

- Council on Aging's Storage Shed

The Council seeks \$2,000 for a storage shed to house medical equipment. CP explained some background on why the Council seeks this funding, and some history behind it. She noted that when the Senior Center returns to in-person events, the donated medical equipment will take up too much room in the Center.

TM supported this proposal and the concept of a "lending library" for medical equipment, and suggested the Council, if presented with an option, choose a larger shed.

JS also supported the idea, but expressed concern with a shed's lack of stability. He recommended the Council consider sea chests, which are sturdy, especially for long-term use. He noted the elementary school uses them for sports equipment, and they are rodent-proof. A discussion ensued on the dimensions and merits of sea chests, and considerations for preparing the site.

TP raised questions about accessibility issues for the shed site, especially in winter. A discussion ensued. CP said she will explore site options.

- Elementary School Pavilion

The school's parent-teacher organization (PTO) seeks \$10,000 for an outdoor pavilion used for outdoor learning and the greater community.

TM explained this proposal is similar to the one submitted years ago. Then, he explained, the CPC was prohibited from funding it, but since then the law has changed. TM supports it.

RC argued this proposal is inappropriate for the CPC because its purpose is education, not recreation. She noted that during the school year, it cannot be used as a public park, thus is inconsistent with the Park Committee's purpose. Instead, she said, the elementary school should obtain sturdy tents for outdoor learning. RC added that next winter, they may not be necessary, and the CPC should save its

funding for the Schell Bridge project.

TM disagreed. He said the pavilion is an outdoor learning space, regardless of COVID—to that point, the PTO proposed it before COVID. He noted tents are getting harder to find because of the demand. But, TM expressed concern that this proposal is primarily for an educational purpose, and questioned how it fits in with the subject of "open space."

A discussion ensued on the need for the pavilion, who will be responsible for maintaining it, the cost, the durability of its structure and materials, the reliability of volunteer labor, and whether it will be useful in the winter.

LD reminded the group that COVID will not be "all gone" by next fall, and that represents an inadequate argument for rejecting this proposal. She agreed that it has an educational purpose, but pointed out its recreational uses beyond that. JS agreed. A discussion ensued on outdoor learning.

LD noted that until the CPC received proposals for the Schell Bridge, the CPC cannot set aside funding for it. That consideration should not enter into the CPC's process, and all proposals should be judged by their own merit. She said the group can bring their questions and concerns to the PTO.

- First Parish Church Clock Repair

They seek \$29,427.55 to continue repairs to the town clock. LD reviewed the history of the project, which has been ongoing. She posed the question: "Can the CPC award funding for a project that's already complete?" She said she did not know, and had contacted the state CPC in Boston for help. She is also in contact with Mike LaBue from the church.

A discussion ensued on whether these repairs are an insurance issue.

LD reported the state CPC sent her some guidelines, and she will forward his email to the rest of the committee. LD summarized his findings: the CPC cannot retroactively fund a completed municipal project, but there is no guidance on a private project—it is a local decision. LD noted the potential problems this could create.

A discussion ensued on the implications of the project's association with a religious entity, even though the repairs are to the town clock, and the cost of the project. LD will ask Town Administrator Andrea Llamas about contacting the Town Counsel about the issue.

CP reminded the group that the underlying problems with the town clock were discovered because of work the CPC already approved. This is not new, she said, and this should be considered. LD agreed, but noted the CPC approved funding for painting.

A discussion ensued on the CPC's policies, and possible exemptions.

TP asked for background on work done to the clock and steeple, and the CPC's participation. LD provided this information.

TP made a suggestion: the CPC establish a policy for what happens when they approve a project and complications arise. TM agreed. A discussion ensued.

TP said the group should ask Andrea if the town clock is considered a town asset—this could affect their decision. A discussion ensued.

IV. SET UP DATE FOR PROPOSAL Q&A SESSIONS

After a brief discussion, LD announced the tentative date of Thursday, February 4 at 7pm.

V. OTHER UNANTICIPATED BUSINESS

None.

VI. ADJOURN

MOTION BY TP TO ADJOURN AT 9:01PM. MK SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy M. Levy from minutes taken by Wendy M. Levy.