



Community Preservation Committee

Regular

~ Minutes ~

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Kevin Chaffee

Tuesday, October 1, 2019

6:00 PM

See Agenda

I. Call to Order

6:00 PM Meeting called to order on October 1, 2019 at See Agenda, City of Springfield, Springfield, MA.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
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II. Public Portion

III. Minutes

Springfield Community Preservation Committee
October 1, 2019, at 6:00 pm
John Shea Facility 299 Sumner Avenue, Springfield MA

Present: Juanita Martinez, Robert McCarroll, Gloria DeFillipo, Terry Mitchell, Ralph Slate
Absent: Lamar Cook, David Finn, Angela Robles, Terry Rodriguez

Mr. McCarroll offered an overview of CPA and projects that are eligible for funding. CPA is a state program and a funding source the City did not have until 2016 when Springfield voted to participate. Applications for use of the funds are limited to 1) Community Housing 2) Historic Resources 3) Open Space or Recreational Use. Applications are reviewed by the Committee and recommended to the City Council for approval. This year the Committee recommended 15 projects. Those applications are waiting for approval at the next council meeting on Monday, October 7. Approximately 1.3 million dollars is available for the fiscal year 2020.

Mr. McCarroll opened up the floor to public comment about the needs and opportunities of the community in the upcoming fiscal cycle.

Ms. Zaida Govan, President of the Indian Orchard Neighborhood Council, stated that Loon Pond area was neglected for a long time until many members of her community cleaned it up. Swimming was allowed years ago but not now and the pond was shut down over the July 4th holiday. This action resulted in testing the water and it was determined the water is fine for swimming. The neighborhood would like to open up the pond again to the public. The IO Council is seeking business support to pay for a lifeguard and other expenses. Loon Pond is currently managed by the Park Department and the neighborhood would like to see the pond brought back up to standards using CPA funds and then maintained by the Park Department (and perhaps some local business funding).

Mr. McCarroll offered that it sounds like a project that could be potentially eligible except that CPA funds cannot be used to pay for maintenance or a lifeguard. A good practice for all applications is to be sure to know who owns the land before submitting any application.

Ms. Debbie Manfredi, Springfield, member of the Springfield Dog Park Committee, said she attended tonight to learn how CPA works and to advocate for recreation areas for pups and to lend her support for the dog park application study. Mr. McCarroll reported that the application for \$50,000 was recommended to the City Council and the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center will be performing the study. As a reminder, the public is invited to speak out before any Council meeting and signing up in advance is suggested. Ms. Martinez pointed out the public could also send an email to any of the city councilors and to look on the city website for their contact information.

Mr. James Johnson, from the McKnight Neighborhood Council, proposed the possibility of grants for homeowners who 1) have or purchase a historic home to receive funding to repair front porches, windows, and roof and 2) educational component for homeowners to understand the nuances of owning a historic home (maybe in cooperation with a First Time Homebuyers Program). And a second project. Develop a venue to source out and repurpose raw materials that become available from demolition of an older building or home.

Mr. McCarroll thought it was an interesting proposal and suggested that he speak with the Building Department about recapturing the raw materials. The application should provide details on how the proposal will assist to repair porches, windows, roofs and that working with the office of housing or a city department is advisable because the city council isn't comfortable with privately funding homeowners. Other comments from committee members were to check with real estate offices, Wayfinders and various city departments that would be interested in a partnership. Mr. McCarroll reminded the audience that tonight's meeting is to ascertain the broad needs of the community and the application is when you'd flush out the detail.

Mr. Mark Dorsey, East Springfield Neighborhood Council, wanted to know if funds can be used to provide an open space for a safe walking path around the train tracks or a walking trail to cross over the bridge area in Ward 1. Mr. McCarroll related that there is a current proposal for 'The East Forest Park Rail Trail Feasibility Study' to determine if previously used train tracks could potentially be used for a bike/pedestrian trail. A proposal should stay as close to the CPA eligibility guidelines i.e. open space is defined as aquifers, woodland, field, farmland and the first step is to determine who owns the space (talk to the railroad and various city departments). In addition, Adam Gomez, Ward 1 Councilor might be a good resource.

Mr. David Gaby, McKnight Community Development Corp. declared he's been involved in historic preservation activities for a long time and supports the work on the Geoffrey Triangle in Indian Orchard and the other conservation projects. His interest, though, is to see more emphasis on the practical preservation of homes in the historic districts. Mr. Gaby also stated that with the decline in homeownership and the high cost of maintenance, resources need to be available for stewards of these properties and not only for complete restoration projects. Housing alternatives should be explored and replace the institutional construction of rental units that exploit the poor. Ordinary people need help to preserve their home (painting is preservation but costly on these large old homes). Normal, ongoing care is not being supported in favor of a capital project that results in housing segregation, more low-quality apartment projects and for-profit developers who seek tax breaks. He would like to see more funding for an actual item instead of a study.

Ms. Zaida Govan, asked, "how can CPA help develop a community land trust that results in creating affordable housing for working people?" Mr. McCarroll replied that CPA can help with community housing. The Community Preservation Coalition has income limits for the building of new housing and land. Mr. McCarroll thanked the public for speaking out and urged the

review of the revised CPA page on the City website. He noted that when applications are available, neighborhood associations will be notified sometime in January.

Motion to approve the Minutes from the last meeting. The vote was unanimous.

Administrative Consultant & Computer Update

The paperwork for the consultant was fully signed on September 30. Karen Lee, Administrative Consultant has now started work with the CPA. Gloria will investigate with the Procurement Office about our computer and printer.

FY18 Funding Approvals Update

The neighbors adjacent to the Veterans Memorial Park in Indian Orchard have registered a complaint; they don't want the benches installed as it will encourage loitering. Bollards for trails will say "walking trail." Ms. Martinez will check with Kevin Chaffey for the signed contract. Gunn block stabilization project will soon begin.

FY19 Budget Recommendations Update

The City subcommittee met last week and was not able to take a vote. Councilors Gomez, Ryan, Allen, Whitfield and Orlando were present. No one from the Park Department was there. The Councilors had a series of questions that went unanswered: 1) what are the implications on the maintenance budget for new funded park projects? 2) Council wanted to know, why an accessibility study costs \$107,000? Councilor Orlando abstained from the dog park vote because he's involved with the project. The CPA has about \$80,000 in reserves but it could be used if needed in the current cycle.

Annual Community Preservation Plan

The website needs revision. Gerry McCafferty and Pat Sullivan are invited to the next meeting to discuss their thoughts on priorities for this cycle, what their potential spending or funding needs are, and update the Committee on their current projects. CPA has been active for two years, processed 60 applications and only one application was thrown out due to insufficient copies. Full applications are due March 1. There was discussion to eliminate the preliminary applications. The timetable needs tweaking. Steve Desilets or Gerry McCafferty would know the number of occupied and homeowners. Ms. Martinez asked if we have a place to store CPA paperwork? Mr. McCarroll replied that we have a drawer in the Budget Office and Karen will organize it.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm