



Community Preservation Committee

Regular

~ Minutes ~

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

Kevin Chaffee

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

6:00 PM

See Agenda

I. Call to Order

6:00 PM Meeting called to order on November 12, 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
November 12, 2019
City Hall Room 23
36 Court Street, Springfield, MA

Present: Lamar Cook, Gloria Defillipo, Juanita Martinez, Robert McCarroll,
Angela Robles, Ralph Slate

Absent: David Finn, Terry Mitchell, Terry Rodriguez

Mr. McCarroll began the meeting at 6:00 pm. Mr. Cook moved to approve the minutes of the October meeting; Ms. Robles seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

Mr. McCarroll stated that he asked the Park Department and Housing Office here to talk about how their 2018 projects are going and what they may see as future project needs.

Housing Department:

Gerry McCafferty thanked the Committee for the funding. Applications were available as of July 1. We put out the word in July and August with realtors, lenders and BuySpringfieldNow Program. We did a lot of work with those programs in July and August. We did a lot of outreach and we began getting applications in August. We have assisted twelve households so far. We have the funds to assist forty. The average sales price that people are paying for a home that these people are buying is \$182,000. The down payment assistance for those twelve people has leveraged two point million dollars in investment in the city. One thing that you should know is that Bob and I had some discussion about the income limits we have an existing program that serves up to eighty percent of area median income. With this program we can go to one hundred percent of the area median income. HUD who is our eighty percent and the CPA support people seem to calculate those amounts differently. So it ends up that there is not a lot of difference. So the band of people who we are assisting that are over eighty and below one hundred there is a six

thousand difference for a family of four. We are seeing people, we are helping them and they are buying houses.

Mr. Slate asked why is there such a narrow ban? I thought that the CPA limits were based on the HUD figures. Ms. McCafferty replied that they have gone back to the people that have calculated it differently. We are not going to go above the numbers that they have put out we asked them to review it, they reviewed it and they came back and said these are the maximums we are going with. Mr. McCarroll questioned Ms. McCafferty that does this pertains to a single person household is about \$55,000 under the CPA guidelines? Ms. McCafferty stated that it was \$53,200. She also stated that for a home is \$49,700. So there is a \$6,000 difference when you're a family of four where the CPA is getting us to \$76,000 a year. The \$76,000 figure is the annual income maximum to be eligible for the program for a family of four. That is the CPA program. It is slightly over \$70,000 for HUD. Mr. McCarroll asked do you find that people are buying homes across the city or are they focused on a couple of specific neighborhoods? Mr. Cook asked when you mentioned forty families how long will it take you to fill additional slots? Ms. McCafferty stated that we are hoping that we can spend it all in a year from when we started. Usually there is a lot more interest in buying homes in the spring hopefully. This fall we are getting everyone up to speed as to what the program is. There is one thing I wanted to ask. There are a couple of other places where we can't assist people with HUD funds. However, we could with these funds. One in particular is something that came up when we used HUD funds the house at time of sale has to pass all housing codes. Sometimes owners come to us saying that they want to do the work themselves after they move in and we can't give them assistance. I wonder if you have thoughts on using these funds. I would only consider this if there were only minor repairs. We are also thinking about some people that are below the seventy or eighty percent range. Mr. McCarroll felt that we might have to ask legal given that what we present to City Council was helping people above the eighty percent. I am not sure what the answer would be. We would have to do something there or they would say that we have the administrative ability. Clearly if you are dealing with someone who is above eighty who wants to do some work I don't think that is a problem because we never spoke to what kind of criteria has to be met in order to provide the first time homebuyer assistance given the state of the house. Mr. Cook asked Ms. McCafferty what is the average down payment amount? Ms. McCafferty replied that they give \$2500 per household. Ms. McCafferty also stated that it is less about the down payment and more about the closing costs. She stated that they find that that it isn't about the money being the barrier buying a house it is more an extra and we think of it as something that would encourage buying in Springfield verses buying somewhere else that we are able to offer this. We didn't want to create a completely different program than the one we have existing. The other type of down payment assistance that some communities create is to give a large down payment to try to get people to move in to a neighborhood that doesn't have a lot of homeownership and that's like \$20,000 or something that is a significant incentive. That is an alternate kind of down payment assistance that some cities do. Mr. Slate asked do we know when the guidelines get revised as far as the income limits? Ms. McCafferty stated that they increase by a couple percent a year as they increase we will definitely increase along with them. Ms. Lee asked will they need to apply for an extension if there are no funds? Ms. McCafferty answered

that if it is a one year contract we will certainly need an extension. Mr. McCarroll asked if Ms. McCafferty was thinking of applying for more money in the upcoming funding cycle to continue this program? Ms. McCafferty said yes, my hesitation is thinking about how much we can spend a year and thinking about the amount not whether we will apply. Mr. McCarroll stated that if you're applying in 2020, you may want to think about a layered system. So you're buying a single family house you get the twenty five hundred you're applying for a two-family home with owner occupancy. Two-families are a lot lower. You can get an extra \$2500 if you're buying in Old Hill that has low owner occupancy as opposed to Sixteen Acres. So perhaps there can be a series of things that are additional incentives that would help those neighborhoods.

Ms. Lee stated that it certainly makes sense to increase the amount in places where you want to encourage home ownership. Ms. McCafferty stated that the underlying HUD Program that we think of as one of our fair housing programs actually has allowed many people of color to enter home ownership across the city and in every neighborhood of the city. So I think that is why it is set up that way. The kind of program that you are talking about is a different kind of incentive to raise homeownership levels in neighborhoods that don't have a lot of homeownership. So we need to think about whether we are ready to bring on another program next year. Mr. McCarroll stated that it would be good if you could get us a list where the neighborhoods in which the current program folks are buying. However we do an analysis of our HUD funds and really they buy in every single neighborhood in the city. Ms. McCafferty stated that she will look at the twelve to see if it is different. Ms. Defillipo asked Ms. McCafferty if she could provide us with a listing of home ownership by neighborhood so that we could see which neighborhood is low. Ms. McCafferty did state that she felt the report she did last year may have it. Mr. McCarroll asked if Ms. McCafferty has any other thoughts on housing, other housing needs that CPA can be helpful within the coming year. Ms. McCafferty stated that where some of the needs are bigger are things that the city probably isn't going to do. One of the reasons I will say is that we have some staff challenges as we are still spending out five million dollars of the disaster recovery fund that is housing related plus another two million in lead grant money. We have a ton of housing rehab which is very labor intensive. I have concerns in bringing in more staffing to take on more programs. We do get requests from non-profits. I would say any kind of housing rehab. There are huge needs for housing rehab and repair among homeowners within the city. There are some non-profits themselves that operate various kinds of housing that are in need of rehab. We have requests I know we cannot fill from Christina's House which is Transitional Housing. Living program from Open Pantry which has a permanent housing program so there is housing in neighborhoods that need upgrades. I think that these amounts of money that CPA funds for housing upgrades and rehab are really the highest needs. The organization's that will revitalize like CDC, Wayfinders and some of those community housing programs I think have the capacity to expand the work they are doing in this area. Mr. McCarroll stated that last year you talked about putting in a preliminary application to run a program within the local Historic Districts but we don't have to worry about affordability issues and it was going to be for owner occupied, income eligible but there was never a final application. Ms. McCafferty stated that she felt it would be long term I think that's where we run into not having a lot of capacity to oversee construction projects. It is incredibly labor intensive and we found it difficult to find qualified people to do that so we have one person that

is qualified to do that. Mr. Slate asked Ms. McCafferty if the city has any programs that guide people to a two-family or even a three family home ownership. Basically, teaching people like this is how you could move from being a renter to becoming a homeowner and here are how the financials work. Ms. McCafferty stated that Wayfinders does that and I would say that we assist a lot of people in buying two families. There is an interesting thing many people do not rent out the second unit. Mr. McCarroll stated that maybe that is the kind of program that could be a CPA project. I know someone that is in that situation. She is not renting for two reasons. She had a bad experience with the previous tenants and the apartment is frumpy and the bathroom needs work and she doesn't have the money to do that. Normally, doing rehab with CPA has to be with a unit that is either acquired or created by an affordable unit. If we could have a program that says, you the homeowner doesn't have to be income eligible and you don't have to restrict your unit but we will give you \$25,000 to fix this apartment you are going to put an affordability restriction on the apartment.

Ms. Lee stated that on the contract it states this Committee shall be provided with quarterly reports and a list of recipients and addresses of those assisted. Ms. Lee asked Ms. McCafferty is it the names or just the house location? Mr. Slate stated that he would prefer the names because we want to be transparent. If it isn't transparent we don't know who it is going to. If we are transparent we know who is receiving the assistance. Ms. McCafferty stated that she personally has a problem with that because it seems invasive to her. Mr. Cook brought up that this is public information. Mr. Slate stated that it be transparent so that nobody could come in later and accuse us of any wrongdoing. Ms. McCafferty did state that this is how they track it. Ms. Lee stated that after thirty days after the last grant you would provide a report.

Park Department: Laura Walsh began the discussion with the CPA 2018. The projects that they have going on currently are: The East Springfield Veterans Memorial on Bowles Terrace. That project has started construction; we had to put together a little scope of design and get some quotes from our on call contractors to do that work. when we received those quotes we got started on the site and the cobblestones around the memorial and the benches are all in place. The neighborhood is very happy. The next step we will be adding in the landscaping which will be some type of low coverage evergreen which will not block the monument and it will add more color to the area. The planting will be done by our horticulture team within the department. She noted that we wanted a CPC permanent sign at this location. She didn't know what that would look like. Mr. McCarroll stated that Ms. Lee is looking into options. Whether it's a little brass-like plaque or if it's a paver that acknowledges it. However, it will be the wording that would more or less that this project is supported by the citizens of Springfield through the Community Preservation Act. It was noted that there are two benches there so if you want to put a bench plaque or like you stated a paver. Mr. McCarroll stated that every physical project obviously the studies will only have an acknowledgement on their cover page. But a physical project will have something in the kind of project that may determine whether it's a paver or a plaque that is attached to something. Mr. McCarroll stated that this comes out of Project Budget. Mr. McCarroll stated that you have more experience at how you acknowledge donors on various projects. If you have some suggestions talk to Ms. Lee so she isn't reinventing wheels.

Bikeway, Walkway, Panel Signs and Banners: That project started as soon as possible and there has been back and forth on the design. We have pretty much have finalized at this point. To get together with our Procurement Process for all of the different things we will be purchasing. We reached out to three vendors for each quote and I'm happy to say that Design Workshops in Indian Orchard Mills is going to be the vendor for the Banners as well as the Panel Signs. We are at the point where we are ready to finalize and start the fabrication of the Panel Signs and the Banners. We did competitive pricing so we are able to purchase more banners than we had anticipated we started off with seven we are going to be getting ten and we are printing twenty so we can have a backup if there is vandalism or a windstorm we won't have to make new ones. Ms. Walsh showed the committee the banner sign which would go on the lamp post and this is the logo that the committee came up with. As soon as these are printed we can get them installed. The panel itself will be 24 x 36 it's going to highlight what you're looking at show a past picture of what it was and keeping with the vintage feel of the city and highlighting different things around it. The project originally started off that we were going to put in ten panel signs along the three mile trail now we will put in twelve. Columbia Gas donated \$1,500 towards a panel. Betsy has done a wonderful job reaching out to other folks that may be interested. Hopefully, the Electric Company will show interest. We do want to do Hampden Park where Pioneer Valley Rowing Company is now. Columbia Gas is the only one who has donated .

Future Projects:

The East Forest Park Rail Trail which is the Highland Trail, we went with Designer Services on this, a firm that would come in and look at the area and figure out the wetlands delineations, all of the ownership, any potential conflicts or roadblocks or anything like that we ended up going with the BSC Group out of Worcester. They have worked with the DPW on projects like this before. As soon as we got our contract we went out to get our RFP and they got to work as soon as they were selected. They are in the process of delineating all of the ownership along the path such as where it would start and where it would end. In the new year starting the community meetings about the Highland Rail Trail is and getting feed back from the residents. We can let you know when any public meetings get scheduled if anyone wants to attend. We are thinking of combining the East Forest Park and Forest Park Community meeting so that we could have both neighborhoods at one time.

Godfrey Triangle: We got quotes from our on call designers to take a look at this site and help us get a master plan put together and creating the documents that we need to have this area constructed. We are working with GZA with Anya Duffy who is the landscape architect with that company who is helping us to put the master plan together. We are expecting that we will have that plan finalized in the coming weeks and over the winter we can get our quotes from people. We may piece meal this one based on the budget so that we can keep the prices competitive. We also want to meet with the neighborhood once we have the master plan. Ms. Walsh did note that this neighborhood had applied for a One Hundred Cities Monument Grant that is focused on World War One monuments throughout the nation and they did receive that

grant. That grant was awarded to the city. That is a two thousand dollar grant. Anya has a heavy historic background and she is investigating ways for us to replicate the eagle.

Peter Krupczak asked those present if they had any specific questions regarding the fiscal 2019 Projects. Mr. McCarroll stated that there were two things. When Ms. Lee and I were going over the contracts we realized that the Dog Park said in its narrative that the feasibility study would be conducted by the Park Department so that is another one to add to your list. So the question I have for you is Ms. Lee going to be helping the Law Dept. assemble the contracts? Some of these are more of a time sensitive nature that you would rather see the Law Department turnout rather others. Mr. Krupczak responded by stating that he would like to see the basketball court at Angelina Park done for next summer if possible. Mr. McCarroll stated that he would like to see all of these things under contract by the summer. Ms. Walsh stated that Angelina Park would be a priority as well as Colony Hills because of the historic nature and we want to make sure all of our information is correct. We will be able to do this with our in house staff and our landscape engineer. Mr. Slate stated that he noticed that the Forest Park Trolley Barn has plantings around it that completely screen that property. Ms. Walsh stated that this is something we want to address.

Ms. Lee went back to the Dog Park stating that she had the contract. Her question was who is responsible to get this? Ms. Walsh stated that we funded them to do a feasibility study to locate a dog park somewhere in the city of Springfield. Mr. McCarroll stated that it was to design the dog park and find the location for the dog park. Mr. McCarroll stated that he has a vague recollection that at the presentation Orlando or Marcus said we would not have to buy more property for the dog park it would be going on existing city property. Mr. McCarroll stated that both the Forest Park Trolley Barn and Colony Hills are both being done under historic. We will have to have plans reviewed to make sure they are in compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards. Ms. Walsh stated that in the wording of the contract and the award is to hire an architect for the Trolley Barn that is familiar with those standards as well so that it's not just us.

2018 Funding Approvals Update:

Ms. Lee went to the East Forest Park Library. Mr. McCarroll stated that our plaque is going to be in the reading garden. Ms. Lee did state that most of the signage from different donors is on a glass wall. Ms. Lee stated that we have an idea of what each project signage is going to be I can go back to the plaque company and give them some ideas. So if we have the exact wording we could put the logo on but that may be a little pricey. Ms. Martinez interjected by stating that it is up to them to do. Mr. McCarroll added that they will do it but we can say here is the company. The wording is the wording of their construction sign. Ms. Lee read what their sign said: Received funding from the people of Springfield to the Community Preservation Act. Mr. McCarroll asked what did it say above that? Ms. Lee read: Creation of the Community Reading Garden Received Funding from the Springfield Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Lee will contact them and let them know we would like a paver, rock or a plaque on a bench. Ms. Lee stated that she would go to the library and meet with someone. Mr. McCarroll asked do we know when the reading garden is complete. I think she said in January they will do the grand

opening. Mr. McCarroll wants to know when is our one hundred thirty-eight thousand dollars expended. He wants to know the status as to when the reading garden part of it is done.

The Gunn Block: Ms. Lee began by stating that she spoke with Chris on October 28th and the project should begin in a few weeks and be completed by mid-January. It looks like something is being held up. They did receive the payment of \$90,000 already so we are waiting to see how that money was used before they get any more. The vendor did the reviews and they waited for the final report by the end of October. Once it's done they are going to invoice. Mr. McCarroll wants the specks because Shannon Walsh of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is giving us up to fifteen hours of local technical assistance for our Historic projects to make sure that they are in compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards. We need this sooner what we don't need is a month after the contractor begins. Mr. Slate suggested that we be on them a little bit because I suspect if we don't they won't do it. Ms. Lee said that when she spoke with Chris Russell he said it would definitely get winterized. Mr. McCarroll stated that it is important that in the future we will have to have the contact information.

Re-Green Invasive Plant Program: Ms. Lee began by stating that David Bloniarz is an echo friendly gentleman. He would like to come here to discuss the program and he wanted to up-date you on why it was going to take a little longer as well as what they have done for now. The work that has been done was three acres of getting rid of the Knot Weed in Forest Park, Blunt and Van Horn Park. It's a lofty goal in eliminating invasive plants in 300 hundred acres. This is a long term project. He is going to need an extension. Mr. McCarroll stated that if he is coming to the December meeting we need to make it very clear to him that he has ten minutes.

McKnight Rail Trail: This is a missing contract. It is being overseen by Chris Cignoli. Mr. McCarroll wanted to speak to the Committee regarding the 2019 projects. If a property is Historic we have asked for an exterior preservation restriction. However, the French Row Houses and Parsons Apartment Building are already within local Historic Districts which basically do the same thing. In some cases if you have a fabulous interior you could protect that as well. I am not sure that it is necessary that we require an exterior preservation restriction would be done because it is superfluous. We can remove that and it is one less thing that Ms. Lee has to worry about and we have to create for protecting those billings. Mr. McCarroll did state that we will no longer ask for the restriction. Mr. Slate made the motion to strike the requirement to an exterior preservation restriction from properties which are in local historic districts. Ms. Robles second the motion and Mr. McCarroll asked those present if they were in favor of this motion. A unanimous vote was taken. Mr. McCarroll stated that he would send Ms. Lee a revised draft of that. Mr. McCarroll stated that he is making some changes to the contract. I am adding some things more in favor of texts. The Historic ones that are going to the private developer: I want whereas the properties within a local Historic district created by the city in 1977 and whereas it is a contributing part of the building and whereas it is a deteriorated blighted building. There is the public benefit of fixing the exterior. I want that in the contract. Ms. Lee asked Mr. McCarroll if he was going to send her the adjusted contract. Mr. McCarroll also stated that he would like quarterly reports from everyone no matter how small it is. Ms. Lee

asked Mr. McCarroll if in the body in the contract we should ask them to e-mail the quarterly report to me. This year Ms. Lee and I will sit down with the applicants because we will go over this so Jerry McCaffery doesn't say oh, I didn't know we were supposed to do that. Mr. McCarroll suggested that Ms. Lee ask the contract holder what their schedule is. Send me a schedule so I can attach it and be aware of the fact that it is a contract. Ms. Lee asked Mr. McCarroll do you suggest that I call all the applicants and ask them these questions and it will be part of the contract.

Annual Community Preservation Plan:

Mr. McCarroll stated that we need to tweak our Community Preservation Plan. Some of it is fairly routine in that Ms. Defillipo has contacted Steve Desilett at the building department to see if he has an updated list of vacant buildings. I will be revising the list of Historic Buildings that we have lost since we last did the plan. The church that used to be on the corner of Carew and Dwight Street that Historic church is gone and that gets moved from the appendix that we have deteriorated vacant Historic buildings to lost Historic buildings. We will be incorporating the letters that we have gotten and the testimony that we had at the public hearing. One of the things in determining what kind of time table we want to have next year. This is two options if we decide if we adhere to the schedule we had this past year which is preliminary applications this is a suggested time frame. And if we decide that we are not going to bother with preliminary applications this would be the proposed time table. Ms. Defillipo asked if we are going to have a help session if we just eliminate the preliminary applications and just have a help session. Mr. McCarroll stated that he was thinking that sometime in January after the holidays we could have a session that wasn't a formal meeting but anyone could come that needs specific guidance. Mr. Slate asked Mr. McCarroll what do we gain by moving everything up? Let's assume that everything gets done by July 7 and the following year it is still going to be an annual process. So from July until the end of the year it is essentially dead time. Mr. McCarroll responded by stating that in the fall once again we would do the public hearing and working on the revised Community Preservation. Late autumn is working on the Community Preservation Plan. Ms. Defillipo stated that it is helpful that we finish by July because it is summer vacation and it is difficult to get people to meet in the summer. Mr. McCarroll stated we could take August off. Mr. Slate asked if the City Council meets in July. Mr. McCarroll stated that they meet once in July and once in August. The July meeting is their regular meeting. Whether this means City Council will approve things any sooner will be seen. It could still be in City Council hands until September. Mr. McCarroll stated that over time working on the 2020 plan and we are working on the plan a month earlier than usual it means that in 2021 we could say applications are due on January thirty-first. Mr. McCarroll would love to get us in a position where contracts occur before the winter. People could actually get some work done in the fall. Mr. McCarroll stated that if we go with the abbreviated schedule, Ms. Lee would have the ability to be e-mailing or Facebooking all the neighborhoods. All the departments will be notified that we have moved up the timetable and it is February 28th. After much discussion Mr. McCarroll stated that if we look at what other communities you will find that the vast majority of their CPA comes from their government.

For us to try to figure out how we are going to have unengaged private citizens do it is truly trying to do something different. Mr. Slate, prior to the next meeting I want you to go to the CPC Coalition website and you are going to look up Agawam, I am going to assign it. Ms. Martinez is going to speak to someone in Northampton. Mr. McCarroll said the issue is who is doing the projects. My guess is you're going to find it is either Friends of the Homeless or Wayfinders or the Park Department. You are not going to find that there is a lot of Bubble Up Groups that's doing that.

Mr. Slate agreed and he stated that he will do that. The only counter that I have is that other communities have governments that are less overwhelmed by the things that are going on with their towns and have excess cycles to do this kind of work. The Housing Department here doesn't seem to have excess cycles. Mr. McCarroll asked Ms. Robles what town do you want to take and she chose to look at the web-site. Mr. McCarroll said that the fact of the vast majority of the applicants applications come from the municipal departments is not unusual. You may want to change that but at least recognize that other communities don't have that. Whether Barrows Park gets fixed because it was a bubble up group or whether the Park Department fixes it the park gets fixed. Mr. McCarroll stated that we would have a special mid-month April meeting with some of the applicants, our May 5 meeting with some of the applicants and we would start the deliberations in June. We could have a mid- June meeting with the applicants. And still take a vote on July 7. Full applications are due April first. A workshop will be held in March. We would have a special meeting in mid-April and the April 5 meeting would be with applicants and a mid-May meeting would be with applicants. Mr. McCarroll asked if we could have a motion that we are setting April 1 as our deadline? A unanimous vote was taken.

Computer and Stationary Update: Ms. Lee stated that apparently they have to upload the software. So Whalley computer has to upload the software which is Outlook. This computer has nothing to do with the city. Ms. Robles and Mr. Slate stated that they paid for the computer. Mike sent an e-mail to Tim Brown to ask him how to proceed with this. Ms. Robles stated that she would call Mike tomorrow. Ms. Lee asked Ms. Robles not to call. Ms. Lee said that they have to upload the MUNIS system for her so she can have access to disbursement, and get me a log in. Mr. Slate stated they are going to say that they can't upload a computer that the city doesn't own. Ms. Lee asked that we let Tim Brown respond.

Stationary Update: Mr. McCarroll stated that he found the City seal troublesome. He asked if they could have a shade of green. Mr. McCarroll suggested that they use a shade of green for the words Springfield Community Preservation Committee in dark green. Ms. Lee stated we have to decide which design we want. After much discussion regarding color and style and cost they made their decision. Mr. McCarroll stated that for \$150 we could get a ream of paper. Business cards for 250 it would cost \$40.00. For 500 envelopes it would cost \$246. Ms. Lee will be looking into permanent name plates and Ms. Defillipo offered to make the name plates. Ms. Martinez said that she would like to make the name plates because she has a lot of card stock.

Ms. Martinez made the motion to close the meeting. A unanimous vote was taken.

The next meeting will be December 3 at 6:00 pm. Location to be announced.