



# Community Preservation Committee

36 Court Street  
Springfield, MA 01103

<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Regular

~ Minutes ~

Kathy Calvanese

Tuesday, October 11, 2022

6:00 PM

Utilizing Remote Collaboration Technology

## I. Call to Order

6:00 PM Meeting called to order on October 11, 2022 at Utilizing Remote Collaboration Technology, (Online), Springfield, MA.

| Attendee Name | Title | Status | Arrived |
|---------------|-------|--------|---------|
|---------------|-------|--------|---------|

## II. Public Portion

### Springfield Community Preservation Committee

#### ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING

Remote and In-Person at Focus Springfield, 1200 Main Street

October 11, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order concerning the Open Meeting Law, the Springfield Community Preservation Committee will continue to meet remotely until further notice. A video recording of this meeting can be viewed here: <https://www.facebook.com/SpringfieldCommunityPreservationCommittee/> <<https://www.facebook.com/Springfield%20CommunityPreservationCommittee/>>

Public comments can be mailed to Community Preservation Committee, City Hall Room 412, 36 Court Street, Springfield, 01103 or e-mailed to [cpc@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:cpc@springfieldcityhall.com) <<mailto:cpc@springfieldcityhall.com>>

#### Present:

Robert McCarroll, Chair (Springfield Preservation Trust) - Juanita Martinez (Conservation Commission Representative) - Gloria DeFillipo (Planning Board Representative) Clinton Harris (Park Board)-Willie Thomas (Housing Authority Representative) - Rhonda Sherrell - (Neighborhood Representative) Lamar Cook (Neighborhood Representative) who joined later

**Not present:** Judy Crowell - (Historical Commission) -Ralph Slate (Neighborhood Representative) -

#### **Guests:**

#### **Agenda**

Annual Public Hearing

Welcome and Introductions

Presentation overview of the CPA in Springfield

public comments (speaker is limited to 5 minutes)

Regular meeting

Approve Minutes of September 6

Extension Requests

East Springfield Library Reading Garden-November 30, 2023

Rockrimmon Boat House Study--December 31, 2022

Bike Park Study-December 31, 2022

Duggan Park-June 30, 2024

Marshall Roy Walking Path-November 30, 2023

Cottage Hill Park-June 30, 2023

Forest Park Picnic Pavilion-June 30, 2023

Hubbard Park Tennis Courts-June 30, 2023

Blunt Park Tennis Courts & Stone Soul Garden-June 30, 2023

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Request for Off-Cycle Application for Parsons Apartment House, 169 Maple Street

Historic Homes Lien Issue

Administrator's Updates

Other Matters

Next meeting -November 1

Tonight's Public hearing is being held both remotely and in the Focus Springfield Studios.

(Administrator introduction) The meeting will be recorded and will be available for viewing on the Community Preservation Committee Facebook page and in addition Focus Springfield will be broadcasting this public meeting on Channel 17 of the Comcast Network until October 31st. The schedule is available on your Channel lineup or the Focus Springfield Website or YouTube Station. In accordance with the CPA Statute the Committee shall hold one or more Public

informational hearings on the needs, possibilities and resources of the City regarding Community Preservation Funds. Public feedback is incorporated into a Community Preservation Plan and updated every year. Notice of a Public Hearing shall be posted publicly and published for each of two weeks preceding a hearing in a newspaper or general circulation in a city or town. Notice for tonight's hearing was placed in the Republican Newspaper for two weeks and on two consecutive Sundays. In addition, approximately five hundred people are on our mailing list including the City Council, various city departments and the mayor's office. A copy of the flier was mailed to the civic groups and posted on the city's bulletin board. Press releases were sent to Mass Live and African American Point of View, The Reminder, Al Pablo and Costa Rican committees. The purpose of the public hearing tonight is to solicit comments on leads and opportunities which CPA could address. We will start with an overview of the CPA in Springfield, the CPA plan and the next steps and then we will take public comments. Please state your name and address and limit your comments to five minutes per speaker. Once the hearing is over the committee will continue its regular meeting and you are welcome to stay but you will not be recognized to speak. The committee will take written public comments until October 31st mailed directly to Community Preservation Committee, City Hall, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA, 01103 or email to [CPC@SpringfieldCityHall.com](mailto:CPC@SpringfieldCityHall.com). Our telephone number is 413-530-1268. The annual public hearing can now begin with a welcome from our Chair, Robert McCarroll.

Thank you everyone for joining us tonight.

Robert thanked Karen and introduced the Committee Members and welcomed the public.

This hearing is part of our annual solicitation of citizen input as to the needs and opportunities in which CPA can help address. The collection of input will be used for the CPA Plan for Springfield to set a criteria and basis of evaluation of applicants for the 2023 grant cycle. The next step is to tweak the Plan and make a final copy for committee approval and develop a timeline for the application process and hold a technical workshop in February. Applications will be due in early Spring and recommendations presented to the City Council next Fall. Over the last five years, the CPA has brought into Springfield nearly ten million dollars for Open Space, Recreation, Historic Resources and Housing projects that may not have materialized if not for CPA funding.

A slide presentation of the CPA and use of grant funds followed and can be viewed here:

[https://www.springfield-ma.gov/finance/fileadmin/community\\_preservation/2022/2022\\_CPA\\_ANNUAL\\_Hearing\\_Powerpoint\\_\\_2\\_.pdf](https://www.springfield-ma.gov/finance/fileadmin/community_preservation/2022/2022_CPA_ANNUAL_Hearing_Powerpoint__2_.pdf)

The presentation ended and the Chair asked the first member of the public to come forward and offer his comments.

**Elmer Biaz.** resides at 36 Westernview St in Forest Park in the Historic District.

I just bought my house recently. Thanks to you guys for communicating with the public, I found out about these meetings going on every month. I follow you guys every month since July, and it is helpful going through the neighborhood to see old houses being worked on and I see some changes in the Forest Park District. Robert thanked Mr. Biaz.

**Deborah Huber** (Remote). I am Deborah Huber and I reside in East Springfield, 342 Page Boulevard and I am happy to have been the recipient, not directly, but our neighborhood has for various CPA funds for things at our Marshall Roy field in particular. I would like to see the CPA funds could possibly help us look after our city better than we currently do. I recently took a walk in Indian Leap which is in the Indian Orchard section of the city to find that the people are illegally dumping their yard waste along the edge of the area and homeless encampments have been abandoned, it's very trashy inside the area. It is a beautiful spot and our current parks committee and parks and other departments are not able to or have not chosen to look after these little gems in our city. It's not just there, various conservation areas, people are complaining that neighbors are dumping their yard waste illegally. I don't know if CPA funds can help address looking after our city in a better way so that we may look at our city and think it is beautiful, instead of seeing all this abuse. So that is the thing that is on my mind

right now, is there some way that the funds through the CPA can go to keeping our city cleaner and

looking better? Even particularly on conservation and ignored park lands. Thank you for your time.

**Nicole Bernard** (Remote) My name is Nicole Bernard and I reside at 8 Putnam Street in Springfield. When I bought the house in 2021, shortly after purchasing it I was under the assumption that they were going to start building something at Duggan Park. There were some grants and funds given to the park like trailways, a dog park and something like that. I was just trying to see what the outcome of that or is it going to get started soon? That is one of the questions I have.

Also, across the street from me on Putnam Street the conservation area they are building a lot of

stuff. I can't even walk my dogs safely without either glass or something almost getting into her paws or me falling or something like that because there is a lot of debris as well. Also, if you look,

there are a lot of trees leaning towards the street that are very dangerous. If there was a storm to come they would probably fall on houses or something like that. I don't know about funds for the outside but I feel lots of these kids are bored in the City of Springfield. I feel that there should be enough money for some kind of recreation, not necessarily outside, however, something inside because obviously kids are starting to get violent because there is nothing else to do. That is pretty much what I have to say at this point. Thank you.

Robert replied to clarify that Duggan is on Wilbraham Road on Breckwood Boulevard and is identified as a major undertaking by the Park Department. CPA money is a small component of it. It is to build a better baseball diamond, community gardens, to build a walking trail and it is not a dog park, and to build what would be a replacement for the football field that used to be behind the old Putnam/Trade High School. CPA is part of it, it is funded by multiple sources. My suggestion is that you should check with the Park Department. We don't actually do the projects we provide money to Municipal Departments or Non Profit entities that actually do projects. There is something underway but it isn't started yet, they are still putting together the funds, it is going to be something like a \$3 million project when it is all said and done.

Ralph stated that the CPA did provide money for a study of a dog park which was undertaken by the City Council. It wasn't to actually build the dog park, it was just sort of to figure out where the best place would be for the dog park. I don't know the status of that. Robert then stated that the study came out and selected a site that is more or less that is behind that is adjacent to T.J. O'Connor's facility on Cottage Street. Once again that study, not sure where it is in the process of getting the money to actually build the dog park next to T.J. O'Connor.

Nicole continued by asking why is it only the historic part of Springfield that gets the help? My house that I purchased is relatively old and I just felt that if any houses that are one hundred years old you would have some type of funding. Basically things like that are falling apart after a certain amount of years. Why does it have to be specific to the Historic districts of Springfield?

Ralph responded if you are in a historic district there are certain requirements that are put on you for your house. For example, you are not allowed to vinyl side the house, you are not allowed to replace the windows, you are not allowed to move your porch, that kind of thing. So the Historic Homes Program which I think you are referencing, is sort of a way to help homeowners who reside in districts that have these additional requirements with the additional expenses of being in a Historic District. It is not meant to be a general fix-up for the City but to recognize these homes incur additional expenses.

Judith Crowell mentioned that the City does have a healthy homes program for homeowners and they do have funding for that and for the exterior repair program and you can find that on the City website (and she entered the link into the chat).

Juanita who is the Conservation Commission Member pointed out that the State Law doesn't allow us to do maintenance. Bob used Indian Leap as an example to respond to how CPA funds can be used. If you want to build a walking trail there, you can do that. You want to put in picnic tables and benches. You can do that. You want to plant trees, you can do that. You want to pick up mattresses and trash that has been deposited, we can't do that. That is something that the Park Department or the Conservation Commission or whatever city department owns that land has to handle maintenance which is routine cleaning. We can help with improving it. We can rehabilitate it. We've got playgrounds that we put in and new play equipment. We have resurfaced basketball courts up in Hubbard Park and in Blunt park where we are resurfacing the tennis courts there. In terms of maintenance state law doesn't allow us to use CPA money for that.

Ralph then stated that perhaps clearer signage so people know that it is a conservation area might be in the realm of something that we could do. Obviously, we can't clean up the park.

Robert stated that with that we will go into the regular business of the Committee and folks are welcome to stay or you can choose to leave. If any other members of the public show up tonight, we will give them the opportunity to address us, but for now we will conclude the Public Hearing.

#### Regular meeting

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We will defer approving the minutes until our next meeting.

#### Extension Requests

The Parks Department submitted extension requests along with their Quarterly Report (see above). . Ralph asked if the overall rationale for the extension due to COVID related delays? Karen stated that it was. Robert asked for a motion to approve the extensions. Clinton made the motion, Ralph seconded.

Discussion overview of projects.

Ralph stated that he can appreciate the COVID rationale but the bike park study seems

a little off. Juanita added, and the boathouse study. Robert stated that his recollection is they may have extended to November 30th of this year and now they are extending it one month. Robert asked for a vote in favor of granting the extension requests. Willie: yes Juanita: yes Ralph: yes Judith: yes Clinton: yes and Bob: yes Robert stated that we will prepare those contract amendments. The other thing though is for Karen to remind the Park Department that the Committee was to be involved in the design of the Forest Park Picnic Pavilion. One of our conditions was it is supposed to look like

the original pavilion that was torn down. .

#### New Contract for Administrator

The administrator's job is a contractual one and it cannot be longer than three years and the job goes out to bid again. An RFP was issued and the only proposal that came in was for Karen. The Law Department drafted a new contract which is a one year contract that can be extended

twice. It could be extended up to three years. I need a vote to enter into the contract and to authorize Robert as the Chair to sign that contract. Clinton: made the motion. Juanita: second the motion. Robert asked for discussion, seeing none a vote to approve Karen's contract was made. Clinton: yes Judith: yes Willie: yes Juanita: yes Ralph: yes and Bob is yes. Robert stated that he would let the Law Department know that we are moving forward.

#### Request for Off-Cycle Application for Parsons Apartment House, 169 Maple Street

You all have the letter of request from Davenport Advisors LLC for the Parsons Apartments building which is the vacant and deteriorated apartment building in the Ridgewood local Historic District. It was foreclosed and the City gave the option to a developer who came to us several years ago and we voted to support the restoration project. He did not move forward for several years and the city exercised the reverter deed and took the property back. We then terminated CPA commitment and the City has since re-advertised the building and the proposal has come in from Davenport Advisors. The company is the same firm that fixed up the Willis Overly Building, the deteriorated building at 151 Chestnut Street near Worthington and Winter Street. Davenport is asking if they be permitted to submit an off-cycle application for CPA funding.

Robert stated that if the committee votes to allow the off-cycle application, they would then submit one by the next CPA meeting. Ralph made the motion that we allow the submission of an outside application for 169 Maple Street. Robert asked second and Juanita made the motion.

Comments by Committee members. Ralph stated that our criteria has generally been that we would hear an off-site application if we felt the property was sort of in danger of being vacant and of an urgent nature. I think that the letter outlines the fact that the urgent part is a need to show to the City Council that funding is recommended (and it would still need to be voted on by the City Council).

This building has been abandoned for eleven years now I believe, since the 2011 tornado. So to me it is a building that is at risk because every year like that isn't occupied, it's an opportunity to be burned down by somebody. Robert asked those present if there are any other comments from Committee Members? Robert stated that he would echo Ralph's thoughts, it's a building that we were interested in helping previously and time is the enemy of vacant buildings. So I would be certainly willing to consider an off-cycle application given that we have a vacant deteriorated building. The developer who has credible credentials has a time table for showing if they can come up with some kind of financing.

Robert then asked if there were any other comments and if not we will take a vote.

Ralph stated he had one more question. As far the money was returned to us, did we ever allocate that? Or is that still allocated? Robert stated that this year we are recommending sixteen projects so that money actually came back into the CPA pot as well as for the French



Apartments, the row houses across Maple Street which was another failed project. The returned funds are part of the money that is being used for the sixteen projects that we are recommending tomorrow night at the City Council.

If we choose to go forward with an off-cycle application and we choose to recommend it, that money will come out of this 2023 budget what I call new money.

Will the money be restricted to a dollar amount that was previously allocated for the

profit? Robert stated that he is not bound to that and we also are not obligated to grant the same amount to the new developer. I think the Parsons Apartment Building was around \$98,000. They can come in with an application that is as high as our limit, or \$250,000 in any one cycle, or a different figure. If no further discussion, the Chair asked for a vote. Ralph Slate: yes, Juanita Martinez: yes, Willie Thomas: yes, Clinton Harris: yes, Judith Crowell: yes and Robert is a yes.

Robert told Karen that you can let them know that they can submit an off-cycle application for consideration.

Two members of the public asked to be recognized remotely.

**Charlene Diaz** (Remote) I'm Charlene Diaz, I live at 16 Ridgewood Terrace, in Springfield in the Ridgewood Historic District. I am very interested and happy about the Historic Grants. I did want to mention since the grants have a limited income to qualify and I was able to qualify for that, however, I am sure that those who are in my position don't want the grant to also become a burden. If we have to pay about a third of the cost and that is why I joined tonight because I wanted to mention that it would be so much more helpful if the entire cost of the project could be paid by the Preservation Committee, rather than having the homeowners paying a third of it. When you're talking about projects that cost several thousand dollars it would be a good chunk with five or ten thousand at least for the homeowner and that could be difficult for many I'm sure. So we are hoping that the Community Preservation Committee would consider offering a full grant.

**Michael Farrier** (Remote) I live on 14 Fairfield Street in the Forest Park section of Springfield and think the income limits (of the historic homes program) and paying a portion every year or quarter isn't sufficient because some houses can't wait that long. They need to have it sooner rather than later. Things like that and not having twenty thousand dollars to kick in. For me to do my house I need a lot more than that. Those are my thoughts. We want to avoid having a burden on the homeowner to pay a portion of it. The thing is we want to restore these homes so they are easily maintainable and affordable to maintain and in great shape, the financial bullet has to be bitten to do it right the first time. That would be a better way to preserving some

instead of piecemealing throughout the neighborhood and getting the whole project done. Robert thanked them.

#### Historic Homes Lien Issue

(Resumed agenda) The promissory note and mortgage were a requirement in the pilot program as well as the contract. Attorney Hannifin explained that decision to create the promissory note and mortgage lien was a policy choice and not a legal requirement. It was put in place to protect against the work not being completed, and at the time, that is what the committee wanted. There may be occasions when a job doesn't get finished and that would be unfortunate but since CPA funds are not expended until the work is accomplished or completed in an agreed upon intervals, is it reasonable to potentially encumber a person's home with failure to complete the work when CPA funds are not at risk and the documents are not required for any other grantees?

The Committee reconsidered the purpose of the documents and Robert if that something the subcommittee asked Planning to do two years ago? Ralph stated he thought that Planning raised the initial issue about fronting the deposit for the contractor. The thought was not to be in a position where the City sent money to a homeowner or a contractor and the work didn't get done. I think that is probably why the City then went down the lien path.

Since the City doesn't allow for expenditures of work not yet started, and the homeowner would need to make a deposit or come to an agreement with the contractor I think it is reasonable to drop the lien condition as long as the city is not putting money out and fronting the money. Robert stated that it sounds reasonable to him as well. Ralph stated that the downside is that I suspect is that if a homeowner does not have their deposit and the City can't give a deposit then they won't start but that is sort of a consequence I guess. Robert stated that we need a motion by a committee member to remove the requirement of a lien with the Historic Home Program.

Clinton made the motion that we let go of that lien. The motion was seconded. No further discussion.

Clinton Harris: yes, Ralph Slate: yes, Juanita Martinez: yes, Willie Thomas: yes, Judy Crowell: no

and Robert McCarroll: yes

Our next meeting is on Tuesday November 1<sup>st</sup>.

Motion to adjoin.