



Community Preservation Committee

Regular

~ Minutes ~

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

Kathy Calvanese

Tuesday, November 1, 2022

6:00 PM

Utilizing Remote Collaboration Technology

I. Call to Order

6:00 PM Meeting called to order on November 1, 2022 at Utilizing Remote Collaboration Technology, (Online), Springfield, MA.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
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II. Public Portion

Springfield Community Preservation Committee

Remote meeting on November 1, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

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>>

Present:

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

Not present: Gloria DeFillipo (Planning Board Representative)

Guests: Pat Sullivan, Department of Parks, Building and Recreation Management

Davenport Advisors LLC, Joy Martin, Charles Irving and Juan Prieto

Agenda

Approve Minutes of September 6 and October 11

Presentation by Park Department of design for Forest Park Picnic Pavilion

Off-cycle Application for Parsons Apartment House, 169 Maple Street

Establish 2023 application dates

Revise 2023 Community Preservation Plan

Administrator's Updates

Other Matters

Next meeting -December 6

Motion to approve minutes of September 6 and October 11. Clinton Harris made that motion and it was seconded by Juanita Martinez. **All in favor.**

Presentation by Park Department of design for Forest Park Picnic Pavilion

(drawing shared) The intent of the Gazebo picture is to show the committee how the final design will look. The drawing appears to be square posts but the pavilion will be a natural round log as (the SCPC) requested. We could not use the original timbers so we are using a ten to twelve inch log post for all the posts. They will have the proper footing. The original had a wooden floor we will be going with a concrete floor, again to meet current code. We found a company that made this mountain laurel branch and the original pictures show that pavilions from the early nineteen hundreds have criss-cross branches in the railing. We aren't able to duplicate that but we found this mountain laurel branch option we felt was a great replica of the original pavilions from the nineteen hundreds. It will be incorporated into the design it will meet the current codes.

Juanita stated the front of the dingle is corroded and asked how it will be protected. Patrick stated that we came up with about eight feet and we have already put soil in that erosion area. We are doing our best to seed it since there are slopes of clay & sand and it will be moved eight feet for a buffer. Patrick also stated that there is good anchoring if you see on the S1 how far the footings go to the proper frost line and everything is just going to be well built. If there was any movement in the ground that would protect the pavilion as well. Robert then asked those present if they have any questions? Patrick wanted to give those present an update: This is ready for bid if there are no objections tonight and we should have the bid opening no later than the end of November and so I think that the construction will start for the first part of March or April depending how our winter goes. Juanita had one more question regarding the Ginkgo tree? Patrick stated it would be protected. We are going to put snow fencing around. Ralph stated that this looks fantastic and thank you for the extra effort to do this. Patrick then stated that you guys have great comments and I appreciate Bob. Bob I am sorry that we created that confusion with the color photograph square posts in the S1 picture the intent was to show how the laurel railing looks in the background. We appreciate the input and are happy to do a tour of the CPA projects that have been funded.

Off-cycle Application for Parsons Apartment House, 169 Maple Street

Robert stated this project was CPA funded about three or four years ago with a different developer. It languished. Since it was a city tax foreclosed building that had been put out for request for proposal (RFP), the City exercised the reverter deed and took back the property. New developers submitted an RFP and they are before us tonight to ask consideration for an off-cycle application.

Juan introduced himself as the Project manager of 169 Maple Street project. Juan stated that the project has not changed very much since it was originally proposed by the prior developer. It is a full renovation of the existing apartments. Very little is being done to the interior as far as changing the wall locations. Same number of apartments and same layout of three bedrooms with one change. The pantry will be eliminated to create a full bath rather than the present half bath and room for a washer and dryer. As far as the exterior, the primary change is to make it accessible by wheelchairs. We are proposing a sidewalk that is sloped up to the building. There is not enough room to just do a direct sidewalk up the street so it is going to be a half moon configuration starting at each corner and it is going to be a large sweeping curve of slope going up to the front door. Once you get inside the building you will then have a wheelchair access of an electric lift so you can get on a wheelchair. It will be folded when unused and the elevator will be renovated or replaced with a new one that goes to all six floors.

The original layout will remain including the finishes and floors. At some point the original windows were removed and we plan to replace again with historically accurate windows. We intend to file for state Historic tax credits and Federal Historic tax credits. We require more than what was originally granted to the previous developer. The project costs have nearly doubled in the five years. These are market rent apartments and will be available for \$2,000 per 3-bedroom unit.

Robert asked the project cost (Three Million Three Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand) Ralph asked how many units are there? (eleven units) and parking on the side street on Avon Place or down Central Street. When the City of Springfield put the RFP out they put it out for this building and a vacant lot. We will ask for approval on a zoning change for the parking lot or eleven spaces, one for every apartment. Chuck stated it is a vacant abandoned lot and we have met with the local Neighborhood Association and they have given us a letter of support in favor of it being a lot and new lighting, fencing, and landscaping will be a very attractive parking lot. Juanita asked about other resources and Chuck replied that they have a letter of commitment from Athol Savings Bank and a second lender to fund the construction financing. The project already has some State historic tax credits and approval on Federal Tax Credits so we need to reinstate those applications to become a new developer. We are also applying to the Springfield Preservation Trust fund. The Bank is willing to provide us a bridge loan with commitment from the CPA and the SPT. We don't need the money at this time but the commitment. Robert asked about the Willis Overland Building and if it was Tif or tax incremental financing and have they applied? Chuck stated that we intend to apply for a tax incremental exemption that will allow for a lower property tax for the first ten years of the property. We applied for an HDIP with Willys Overland but the wait list is long and we would like to get this project started immediately. Our hope assuming that we can get a commitment from you and from Springfield Preservation Trust is to start construction and have people living there by 2024. We will apply for an HDIP a little later.

[HDIP provides Gateway Cities with a tool to develop market rate housing while increasing residential growth, expanding diversity of housing stock, supporting economic development, and promoting neighborhood stabilization in designated areas].

We submitted a One Stop growth application that covers various programs by the state. Applications are closed and unlike the CPA, doesn't offer any kind of out of cycle application. This project and the timeline did not fall within that perimeter to have a check from the state. At this time Robert then asked those present if they had any other questions from the committee members? Robert stated thank you so much for your presentation. Does anyone want to make a motion on funding this project? Ralph stated that he would like to make a motion that we approve funding of an off cycle grant for the Parsons Apartment project in the amount of \$250,000 which is our ceiling on funding. Clinton second the motion. Robert asked those present if there was any further discussion from Committee members? Ralph stated that he made the motion that this the project that we had approved in the past and we identified it as something that needed to be done. This building has been vacant for over ten years now I believe, it was hit by the tornado. I think it is going to be done according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and doing the Federal Taxes and State Tax Credits so that keeps the project Historic. Adding new eleven Apartments to the city is a positive thing in general. They are not necessarily in line with the CPA income limits but it's eleven or ten apartments to a city that has eleven people and get a house that they previously couldn't. Robert then stated that he wanted to recognize our Neighborhood Representative Rhonda Sharill who has arrived. Hearing no other comments, the vote was taken.

Ralph Slate: yes, Clinton Harris: yes, Juanita Martinez: yes, Judith Crowell: yes, Rhonda Sherrell: yes Robert McCarroll, yes

Bob will present the recommendation to the City Council and if they approve, we will go under contract with you once you own the building. CPA money is always structured as reimbursement for specifically named work. You give us canceled checks, receipts and bills, we inspect the work and forward to the comptroller for processing the reimbursement. I don't have our 2023 budget in front of me so we are safest in recommending that it come out of the undesignated reserve. Is that acceptable to everyone? **Those present agreed.**

Establish 2023 application dates

One of the components of the Community Preservation Plan is to establish the timeline for the next cycle of applications. The Committee reviewed the plan for changes and agreed to the following 2023 dates:

Workshop at the February 7th meeting.

Applications due by March 30th

Applications delivered to Committee for April 4th meeting

Applicant interviews in April and May

Deliberations in June and July

Votes in July and August

Robert asked for a motion to accept the schedule.

Ralph made the motion and Juanita second the motion. Robert asked if there are any discussions, hearing none, a vote was taken.

Ralph Slate: yes, Juanita Martinez: yes, Clinton Harris: yes, Rhonda Sherell: yes, Judith Crowell: yes Robert McCarroll: yes

Revise 2023 Community Preservation Plan

Comments from the Annual Public Hearing and received by October 31 will be incorporated into the Community Preservation Plan and new income limits for housing will be updated. Karen highlighted areas for consideration and the document was shared on the screen.

Robert stated that we don't have to vote on this document tonight. We will do that as at the December meeting. Robert asked if there was anything heard at the public hearing or learned over the last year that should be considered in the 2023 goals. The Committee reviewed the document and Robert asked for suggestions.

Summary of discussion.

1. Ralph stated he'd like to see studies discouraged because all the projects that we have - and we have done a number of studies - seem to be put on a shelf. We've had six or seven studies and only the Spanish American Monument materialized into a project. Robert stated that Ralph had a valid point and we could invite the Park Department to come back to see about the Bike State Park Study to get an update. I wonder if the past studies are a little bit too open ended. I understand the need for them but some seem too disconnected. It's more like we are speculating to decide if we really want to do a project. Rather than saying we want to do this project and a study is necessary first. It's a subtle difference. Robert stated that he agreed.
2. Over the years there were a number of Park projects and some of them are cookie cutter or typically stating that they would put trash cans, benches, kind of the same old stuff. I am wondering if Parks could slow it down a little bit and/or should we determine if we are actually doing work that had traditionally been done with City money in the past. Have city departments shifted some of their renovation style park projects to us and are we doing more work for the city?

3. Could CPA money be used to enhance a project that is currently being planned rather than doing a new project? In other words let's say that the city is going to do over the Forest Park Playground and they plan to put in a cookie cutter playscape just like they do at all the other parks. Could the CPA money be accessed to enhance and make something unique or include an expensive piece of equipment rather than using the CPA money to do the whole job?

If the Parks Department has on their wish list the places where they want something done it's either the city or our funding that is going to do it. Maybe what has to happen is we know what is going to be renovated or where the city plans on constructing and they come to us for the enhancement rather than the entire job. For example, if the city is going to do a splash pad, let's get a better splash pad. I was just thinking that there may be a different way of looking at the money. Instead of saying let's do this splashpad with the money if the city was already going to do it, then let's put in the Cadillac version instead of the Chevy version of the splash pad. Like Potato Head Park over there in Longmeadow. It's a really cool park. Why can't we have the best park around? Instead of renovating another park, why don't we use CPA money to make it a great park? Rhonda and Juanita stated that they liked that idea. Instead of coming to CPA with a request for the entire project, ask for funds to enhance or that wouldn't normally get done because the City can't justify it in the budget. CPA could put the icing on the cake. We want to use the CPA money for the icing rather than for the basic project.

Robert suggested we could have that conversation with the Park Department and invite them to have the conversation. Robert stated he wasn't convinced, for example, that the Blunt Park tennis courts are kind of the run of the mill. I'm not sure that the answer would have been if it hadn't been for CPA money these things would be languishing much further down on the Capital Improvement list and wouldn't be done for another five years.

Ralph stated that it is always a priority because I am sure the cities list is almost infinite. They will always say we got more than we can do, but in seeing all of the projects that they have tried to do aren't getting done. Are they trying to do too much? It is just a different way to use the money. Even if we did it for a year. Instead of coming up with ten projects and new things. Why don't you come up with five enhancements for things that you're going to do. It's just a way of shaking it up a bit. Robert stated that it is easy for us to say shake it up but when you have to use the department head having to come up with the resources to do the basic things, that is the problematic thing at least in my mind. Robert stated that I'm going to ask Pat if he can come back and have a chat with us at our December meeting regarding park projects going forward as well as an update on the couple of studies that fall under the Park Department offices to let us know what is going on there.

In the meanwhile, Karen will make the routine administrative changes and send a copy to you for review at our December meeting. Karen asked if Ralph wanted to reword the paragraph about studies. Ralph stated yes and the current paragraph was read: *The CPC also recognizes*

that in some cases preliminary work must be undertaken in order to complete a viable application. When this is the case, the CPC will consider applications for study grants that could be used to test feasibility and develop a work plan and it would result in a strong project. Ralph stated that it could be a best practice or what we are trying to accomplish but we can always vote differently.

Robert stated that he felt that it makes sense that if indeed funded there will be follow up to actually implement the study. Karen suggested that preference to proposals could follow what is already in place to address as many criteria as possible and is consistent with priorities as identified in the plan or that serve more than once CPA purpose.

4. Income limits. Often the city will be using HUD money as well for CPA projects and the HUD's limit is lower than ours. If I am reading the information on the Community Coalition Website it is saying that there is a difference in the eighty percent figure stipulated by the CPA legislation which is used on this spreadsheet and 80% is used by HUD. Robert said the eighty percent I believe the state has a goal that every community should have at least ten percent of its housing legally restricted affordable. For the purposes of that it is for folks that are under 80%. Some communities have pitiful percentages in deed use their CPA to get to that level so they can get a higher percentage. Springfield is like the fifth highest community in Massachusetts. In terms of the percent of units that are legally dedicated to folks under 80%. With the CPA projects that we have seen and come before us we frankly don't care as long as it is under 100% AMI. The city sometimes using HUD money has to obey the HUD restriction causes it to be lower down and we don't argue with that. We just say fine as long as it has to be under 100 percent. For those communities that really want to get more credit on having low income housing units they have to be below 80%. I think the mystery why CPA 80% and HUD 80% aren't exactly the same I don't know because we never worry about that it is not an issue. Karen stated we should just be consistent and use one and not change it each year. The figure we will use for our purposes are the income limits found on the CPA coalition website.

Karen will send changes to the plan based on the discussion we had tonight and we'll continue discussing it next month. If a member feels we need to insert or delete an item, it can be brought up at the next meeting, if no one brings it up, the plan remains the same. Karen will share the highlighted changes as a Goggle Document where members can make comments and we can discuss next month

Administrator's update. The CPA computer died and was replaced, unfortunately we did lose some data. I did have a backup so I can piece together most of it but we did lose some data.

Historic Homes update. One person dropped out so the next person on the list was notified. The person who withdrew had the lowest reimbursement level (18%) and the quote from the contractor was less than \$5,000 and the homeowner made other plans to complete the work.

Robert asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Ralph made a motion. Second and the motion. Robert asked those who were present to raise their hands.

Our next meeting is December 6th

Pat Sullivan will be invited to attend to chat about updates on park studies and a conversation about using CPA funds for park enhancements.

Adjourned.