

**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
January 26, 2022**

LOCATION: Virtual, Committee members and members of the public may attend remotely

PRESENT: Peter Pingitore – Chairman, Joe Barnes, Rick Zimbone, Robert Dermody, Laura Dorfman, Jeanne McKnight, Reg Foster, Chris Gerstel

ABSENT: Artie Crocker – Vice Chairman

STAFF: Cecilia Simchak, Kristen Wright

GUESTS: Anne Gulati, Joel Bargmann, Connie Barr, Deborah Robinson, Michael Greis, Liz Dempsey Lee, Daniel Gutekanst, Stacey Mulroy, Charles O'Brien, Hank Haff, Mark, Cindy Chaston

Mr. Pingitore called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and completed a roll call for members of the Committee and staff, the results of which are noted above. Mr. Pingitore reviewed the rules of the meeting which was conducted virtually, via Zoom, in accordance with Governor Baker's emergency order regarding Public Meetings.

CHAIR'S UPDATES

Mr. Pingitore stated that late in the day a report was received from the Town regarding the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) which provided a snapshot of the twenty-three households ERAP assisted. Of the \$150,000 allocated to the program, a total of \$148,000 was utilized. Total funding provided by the CPC was \$120,000. \$95,000 will be reimbursed to the Community Preservation Fund from the Cares Act.

Mr. Pingitore stated that in future meetings he would add a topic to receive updates from the CPA funded projects and would like to bring back the discussion of adding signage indicating that projects were completed with CPA funding.

CPA UPDATES

Mr. Pingitore stated that he is hoping to receive feedback from the various Town Commissions in the next 30-60 days to complete the draft of the CPA plan for the Committee to review. Mr. Pingitore stated that once the plan was in final form, there would be public meeting to receive feedback from the Community.

APPLICANT PRESENTATIONS

1. FY23-07 – High School Tennis Court Improvements (Design)

This request is for \$50,000 for a design and feasibility study with respect to improvements to the High School Tennis Courts under Recreation.

Mr. Pingitore invited Stacey Mulroy, Director of Park & Recreation to present. Ms. Mulroy thanked Mr. Pingitore and presented to the Committee.

Future funding requirements for construction could be anywhere from \$550,000-\$1,550,000, depending on the scope of the project (i.e. resurfacing versus full replacement). J. Barnes is in favor of limiting use of these courts to competitive tennis only. S. Mulroy agreed that will likely be the case. Mr. Dermody asked about the anticipated longevity of the project. S. Mulroy stated resurfacing could last 3-10 years, a renovation 25+ years, dependent upon maintenance and wear and tear. R. Foster asked about age of the courts and previous maintenance efforts. Ms. McKnight asked about project oversight. S. Mulroy stated that there are four courts at this location and the high school team has not been able to use them competitively since Spring 2021, although they have been used recreationally. She was not sure when the courts were last renovated, but expressed her commitment to overseeing the project and implementing a maintenance program for all projects currently in que. Park & Recreation manages the maintenance of all outdoor facilities with the help and support of DPW-Parks and Forestry. R. Zimbone inquired as to Park & Recreation's plans for future funding requests. Following the design phase, S. Mulroy anticipates submitting a FY2024 application requesting construction costs. Mr. Pingitore asked about the status of the other tennis courts in Town. S. Mulroy advised that they are in good shape, but ripe for maintenance like resurfacing, seal coating, and pylon repair, which may begin in the spring. Mr. Barnes stated that the High School Tennis Courts were renovated in 2006.

Mr. Pingitore thanked Ms. Mulroy for the presentation.

2. FY23-05 – Emery Grover Renovation Project

This request is for \$6,000,000 for the comprehensive renovation of the Emery Grover School Administration Building under Historic Preservation.

P. Pingitore welcomed Director of Building Design and Construction Hank Haff, Superintendent of Schools Dan Gutekanst, and Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations of Needham Public Schools Anne Gulati, and Design Consultant from BH+A Joel Bargmann.

J. Bargmann presented the renovation plan which also included upgrades to the Hillside School to be used as interim workspace for school administration until the Emery Grover construction is completed. NPS estimated a total project cost of \$20,875,000, of which they believe \$16,882,000 (88% of the total project) would be CPC eligible.

Mr. Barnes asked how the CPA funds would be allocated within the overall project. Mr. Bargmann stated that they would be used for the CPA eligible portions. R. Dermody asked how they determined 88% of the project was CPC eligible. J. Bargmann explained that restoration of a historic building also includes required code and ADA accessibility improvements, thus a significant portion of the project should be CPA eligible.

J. Barnes and R. Zimbone asked about plans for the Hillside building after school administration vacates. D. Gutekanst shared that there are no immediate plans. It is possible it could be used as swing space for the Mitchell or Pollard schools as NPS is looking at the possibility of renovating both. H. Haff stated that converting Hillside back to educational use would require additional upgrades, but D. Gutekanst felt it was not out of the question. D. Gutekanst also shared that the long term plan for Hillside includes a return to Select Board jurisdiction when it is no longer needed for education programming, whereupon it will be razed and become park land.

L. Dorfman asked how the changes to the scope of the project would impact the programmatic needs of School Administration. Mr. Bargmann stated that although they removed the addition, they refocused the plan for the existing building footprint, including creating more usable space on the attic level. Also, the IT operation would remain at Hillside instead of being incorporated into the new facility. R. Foster inquired how NPS arrived at its \$6M request. H. Haff explained that \$6M reflects approximately one-third of the eligible amount, which NPS felt was appropriate based on previous discussions with the CPC. C. Gerstel expressed the importance of safety and traffic planning. D. Gutenkanst assured the committee that if the project moves forward a design review team will discuss and implement a safety plan in and around the site during construction. J. McKnight also stated that the Planning Board will address issues of traffic and safety as part of its role in review and permitting. J. McKnight also asked about parking. D. Gutenkanst shared that they are attempting to implement a design that provides parking for all employees on site, while also trying to restore the historic look of the building with a lawn in front.

P. Pingitore thanked H. Haff, D. Gutekanst, A. Gulati, and J. Bargmann for their presentation.

DISCUSSION REGARDING OTHER APPLICATIONS

FY23-01 – Needham Housing Authority (Property Existing Conditions Reports; Property Survey)

This request is for \$62,500 for existing conditions property surveys with respect to renovation of four buildings at Seabeds Way, six buildings at Capt. Robert Cook Drive, and the redevelopment of the 60 High Rock Estates bungalows into sixty duplexes under Community Housing.

FY23-02 – Needham Housing Authority (Pre-Development Design Costs, Linden-Chambers Redevelopment)

This request is for \$1,200,000 to prepare preliminary design required to obtain zoning relief and complete other due diligence for redeveloping the Linden-Chambers property under Community Housing.

FY23-04 – Needham Housing Authority (Funding for NHA Ass't Executive Director Position)

This request is for \$97,500 to support two years of the cost for the new position during the MRI's pre-development period under Community Housing.

With respect to the three NHA projects referenced above, R. Zimbone advised that the project liaisons intend to ask NHA to provide written background information about the Housing Authority, the purpose of the proposed projects, sources of funding, etc.

FY23-03 – Needham Housing Authority (Purchase of East Militia Heights Drive Property)

This request is for \$1,500,000 for purchase of twelve three-bedroom bungalows situated on 3.5 acres of land under Community Housing.

C. Simchak stated that any money granted under this application would be returned to the CPC if the NHA was not the winning bidder and that the contract could be written to make that clear. C. Simchak asked if NHA must have the money in-hand in order to make the bid, or if the money would be disbursed after the bid was accepted. R. Foster advised that NHA must make a cash bid and provide a surety, but would also look into this issue. He further advised that NHA is on track for obtaining the appraisal in

early-mid February. Should the appraisal come in higher than previously anticipated, the NHA will amend its application to increase the amount requested.

FY23-06 – Cricket Field Building Improvements (Feasibility Study)

This request is for \$50,000 for the study of field house building improvements at Cricket Field under Recreation. C. Gerstel stated that this application has been withdrawn and may be resubmitted next year when they have a better sense of the scope of the project.

FY23-09 – Boat Launch

This request is for \$285,000 for the construction of a new boat launch to improve access to the Charles River under Recreation. R. Foster stated that he performed a site visit, the design is being completed, and he hopes to meet with acting Town Engineer, Tom Ryder, soon.

FY23-10 – Walker Pond (Phase 2)

This request is for \$356,000 for the improvement at the Walker Pond waterbody under Open Space and Recreation. C. Simchak stated that the presentation has been pushed back to work around the ARPA application, but the Town will not be pulling this application.

FY23-11 – Construction of Growing Beds Available for Seasonal Rental

This request is for \$200,000 for the construction of 150 raised growing beds at the Community Farm under Open Space and Recreation. P. Pingitore and J. Barnes will be doing a site visit in the next few weeks.

FY23-12 – Preservation of Open Space (Purchase of Land)

This request is for \$1,000,000 for preservation of open space and purchase of land under Open Space. P. Pingitore stated that there will be further discussion about a potential funding opportunity.

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

February 9 – Boat Launch and Community Farm
February 23 – Walker Pond

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Dermody made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:49PM. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: **Barnes:** aye, **Dermody:** aye, **Dorfman:** aye, **Foster,** aye, **Gerstel,** aye, **McKnight:** aye, **Zimbone:** aye, **Pingitore:** aye. Motion passes 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Recording Secretary