COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
OWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Minutes of Meeting
March 13, 2019

PRESENT: Peter Pingitore – Chairman, Artie Crocker – Vice Chairman, Robert Dermody, Paul Alpert, Robert Boder, Chris Gerstel, Rick Zimbone, Joe Barnes

STAFF: Carys Lustig, Staff Liaison
Kristen Wright, Recording Secretary

GUESTS: Tom Jacobs, Finance Committee

Mr. Pingitore called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM in the Highland Room at Town Hall.

Chairman's Updates

Mr. Pingitore shared that he and Ms. Lustig reported to the Select Board at their Tuesday meeting and discussed the changes of the Committee as well as the procedures that have been reviewed this year. Mr. Pingitore stated that the Select Board had some concerns about some projects. Mr. Pingitore stated that the Committee will continue with its due diligence. Mr. Alpert asked what the Select Board was most concerned with. Mr. Pingitore stated that they were most concerned about the financials and precedents that may be set. Mr. Pingitore told the Committee members to review the Town's CPC plan as well as the factors for consideration.

Review of Available Funds

The Committee reviewed the financial report provided by Assistant Town Manager Dave Davison.

Liaison Updates and Discussion

FY2019-01 First Baptist Church

This request is for $799,040 for the restoration and preservation of the front porch and historic clock at First Baptist Church under Historic Preservation.

Mr. Dermody stated that he and Mr. Zimbone met with Town Council Dave Tobin and Mr. Tobin stated that the project is a noted historic building so it meets that portion of the project criteria. Mr. Dermody also stated that other projects of this nature have provided access to the Town and that there may need to be some restrictions placed on the approval of any funds for this project and suggested another meeting with Town Council to discuss. Mr. Barnes stated that he supports adding a clause and having restrictions. Mr. Boder stated that the Town owns 2 historic properties and that future projects funded under historic preservation may have to be private entities within the town. Ms. Lustig stated that the Emery Grover, the other historic Town property apart from Town Hall, is receiving quotes for a potential rehabilitation. Mr. Crocker stated that the Town Common was listed as a historic property project and in the past the Echo Bridge project was classified under historic preservation as well. Mr. Alpert stated that he agreed with Mr. Boder that future preservation of historic assets may include funding of private properties within the Town. Mr. Alpert further stated that he would like to have a better understanding from the Historic Commission on how important this Historic property is to them and that he is concerned about the level of funding for this request. Mr. Barnes agreed that the level of funding requested is high and is concerned because the overall property needs a lot of work and the CPC cannot fund all the repairs the property needs. Mr. Zimbone stated that the proponent did not provide an accurate break-out of what is related to the historic portion of this building and what is supplemental to that. Mr. Zimbone also stated that items, like the hardscape, are not a part of the historic preservation of the property but would need to be competed at the same time. Mr. Zimbone continued that this project is showing a large amount of contingency, no engineering report was provided, no additional funding sources have been stated, the clock has a questionable historic aspect as it cannot be accessed by the public on a regular basis, and without the historic vs. non-historic funding break out he finds it hard to move forward with the project. Mr. Crocker shares Mr. Zimbone's concerns and added that the only consistent source of income is from rental, which have leases that currently end in 2020. Mr. Pingitore stated again that the members should take the time and review the factors for consideration. Mr. Zimbone stated that the proponent should be notified of the Committee's concerns prior to the Public Hearing. Mr. Pingitore asked what the procedure has been in the past at this point of the review process. Ms. Lustig stated that proponents can withdraw or amend their proposal prior to the vote after it is deemed eligible. Mr. Pingitore stated that when we vote, the reasons that we vote one way or the other do not have to be provided, but do have to be something that the Committee can present against at Town Meeting if it goes for Town Meeting approval. Mr. Pingitore further stated that the liaisons of this project should reach out to the proponents and should provide them with feedback from the Committee, have them review our factors of consideration, and reminded them that the Public Hearing is televised and that they will have to answer any further questions from the Committee and the general public. Mr. Zimbone stated that he and Mr. Dermody, as project liaisons, will reach out to the proponent to prepare them for the Public Hearing as well as give them all of their options.

FY2019-03 Needham Housing Authority – Consultants for Modernization/Redevelopment of Affordable Housing

This request is for $150,000 to hire consultants to manage the modernization and redevelopment of the affordable housing in Needham under Community Housing.

Mr. Gerstel stated that there were no new updates for this project and that Mr. Foster is ready to present at the Public Hearing. Mr. Pingitore made the Committee members aware of some discussion about the Housing Authority on Social Media, and that may spill over to the Public Hearing. Mr. Zimbone asked if the funding for the master project has been secured yet. Mr. Pingitore stated that this proposal goes to filing the RAD application, for the master funding, and as this has not yet been determined yet, the funding has not been fully secured. Mr. Alpert stated that from Mr. Foster's presentation that his, Mr. Foster's, conversations with the HUD representatives left him feeling optimistic about the master project funding. Mr. Gerstel stated that there is a consultant that is working with the Housing Authority that oversaw the Facilities Master Plan that Mr. Foster provided, but there time is coming to an end and this proposal will fund the next segment of this process to keep the momentum going. Mr. Zimbone asked why the request is a 50/50 split with no guarantee of return. Mr. Alpert stated that the funding is available for this type of project and it seems to be a reasonable request to him. Mr. Pingitore stated that while there is a risk, if it all goes according to plan, there will be a great reward for a relatively small risk. Mr. Alpert added that the Housing Authority only approaches the CPC for funding when it is truly needed and when the project is well worth it regarding the benefits of community housing.

FY2019-06 Design of Fisher Street Trailhead, Needham Rail Trail

This request is for $15,000 to design the Fisher Street Trailhead on the Needham Rail Trail under Recreation.

Ms. Lustig shared that she and other Town employees were at a meeting today in Boston regarding a proposed addition to the existing rail trail to Chestnut Street. Mr. Boder shared concern that the project under the review of the Committee does not meet the need of the trail and the proponent has not provided a reasonable estimate for any return on investment. Mr. Pingitore stated that currently there is no designated parking spaces for this trail which is causing trouble in adjacent neighborhoods and this project would work to alleviate some of that burden.

FY2019-07 Town Common Renovation
This request is for $117,000 for the renovation of the green space in the Town Common under Open Space, Historic Preservation and Recreation.
Mr. Dermody reported that there are no further updates for this project and that Mr. Olsen is ready to present at the Public Hearing.

FY2019-08 Passive Recreation Improvements – Dwight Field/Charles River Center
This request is for $35,000 for design to improve the passive recreation space between Dwight Field and the Charles River Center under Open Space and Recreation.
Mr. Gerstel stated that after reviewing all the projects on the table, the Park and Recreation Commission has voted to defer this project for 1 year.

FY2019-09 Rosemary Lake Projects
This request is for $200,000 for construction of a new dock and a picnic pavilion on the camp side of the Lake under Recreation.
Mr. Crocker stated that there are no updates for this project. Mr. Boder shared concerns for the project including the water quality. Ms. Lustig stated that the water quality at Rosemary Lake is the same as the Reservoir and that fishing and boating occur at both locations. Mr. Zimbone asked about the timing of the project. Ms. Lustig stated that it will work into the schedule for the sediment removal project.

FY2019-10 Cricket Field Fieldhouse
This request is for $163,765 for the renovation of the current Cricket Field Fieldhouse to make it accessible for all abilities under Recreation.
Mr. Gerstel stated that after reviewing all the projects on the table, the Park and Recreation Commission has voted to defer this project for 1 year.

FY2019-11 Cricket Field Renovation
This request is for $480,000 in construction funding to replace the irrigation system at Cricket Field under Open Space and Recreation.
Mr. Barnes stated that there are no updates for this project. Ms. Lustig stated that the Town is preparing Bid Documents now and there should be exact numbers for the Town Meeting presentation, should the funding be approved by this Committee.

FY2019-12 Playground Improvements
This request is for $350,000 in construction funding to add ADA features at Greene's and Cricket Fields under Recreation.
Mr. Boder stated that there are no updates on this report. Mr. Gerstel stated that this project is still a top priority for the Park and Recreation Commission this year. Mr. Pingitore asked if private/public partnerships had been considered to fund playground repairs. Mr. Jacobs stated that many renovations are being including in the larger school renovation.

Mr. Pingitore reminded Committee members to reach out to their proponents to remind them of the date, time and location of the Public Hearing as well as remind them that they are presenting and will need to answer questions from the Committee as well as the public. Mr. Pingitore further reminded the Committee that liaisons will introduce the projects and give a brief overview of the project prior to the proponent's presentation. Ms. Lustig reminded the Committee that any projects that move on to Town Meeting will be presented by the Committee members and not the initial proponents.

Vote: Approve Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes of February 27, 2019. Mr. Gerstel moved to accept the minutes from February 27, 2019. Mr. Crocker seconded, and the motion passed 7-0-1.

Ms. Lustig stated that the League of Women Voters will be holding their Annual Warrant Meeting for Annual Town Meeting on Monday, April 29 from 6:45pm – 7:30pm and it would be best to have a member of the Committee in each room to field questions about CPC projects. Mr. Alpert stated he would be in Precinct C/D for Planning Board and could answer questions for CPC as well. Mr. Gerstel said he would be in C/D as well for Park and Recreation. Mr. Dermody and Mr. Zimbone stated they would be in the G/H room. Mr. Pingitore stated he would be in I/J.

Adjournment

Mr. Zimbone made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:56PM. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:56PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Recording Secretary