COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Minutes of Meeting
November 18, 2020
Zoom Meeting

PRESENT:	Peter Pingitore – Chairman, Artie Crocker – Vice Chairman, Joe Barnes, Chris Gerstel, Rick Zimbone, Robert Dermody, Laura Dorfman, Paul Alpert, Penny Kirk
STAFF:	Carys Lustig, Staff Liaison, Kristen Wright, Recording Secretary
GUESTS:	Andrea Longo Carter, Anne Gulati, Connie Barr, Dan Gutekanst, Gloria Greis, Hank Haff, Reese Schroeder BH+A, Steven Popper, Michael Greis

Mr. Pingitore completed a roll call for all members of the Committee and members of staff and the results of the roll call are noted above. Mr. Pingitore called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM via a Zoom Meeting. Mr. Pingitore reviewed the rules of the meeting that was being conducted remotely and online inline with Governor Baker's order regarding Public Meetings. Mr. Pingitore covered meeting ground rules for the meeting.

Vote: Approve Minutes September 16, 2020
Ms. Kirk made a motion to approve the September 16, 2020 minutes and Mr. Gerstel seconded. The roll call vote was as follows: **Alpert:** aye, **Barnes:** aye, **Dermody:** aye, **Dorfman:** aye, **Gerstel:** aye, **Kirk:** aye, **Pingitore:** aye. Motion passes 7 – 0.

Review of Agreements with Private Historic Projects
Mr. Pingitore opened the discussion of the agreement that is being proposed to be used with the Private Historic Projects that were approved for funding at the Special Town Meeting in October.

Mr. Alpert gave notice of a numbering typographic error within the agreement. No other comments about the agreement were presented.

Emery Grover Presentation
Mr. Pingitore welcome Superintendent Dr. Dan Gutekanst to the meeting. Dr. Gutekanst thanked the Committee for their time and asked Project Manager Hank Haff to present the updates to the project. Mr. Haff introduced Reese Schroeder from BH+A to presented to the Committee.

Dr. Gutekanst stated that it is no longer feasible for the Emery Grover building to be used in the same manner that it is currently being used in and something needs to be done sooner rather than later. Dr. Gutekanst stated that the community will need to determine what can be done with the Emery Grover Building and he hopes the Community Preservation Committee will provide support in renovating the Historic Emery Grover building so it can continue to be used as the School Administration Building and allow it to remain the Community Gateway of the downtown area of the Town.

Ms. Gloria Greis from the Historic Commission stated that preserving the Emery Grover and maintain an educational use for the building is the highest priority of the Historic Commission and something the Historic Commission has been in favor of for some time.

Mr. Alpert asked what the timing of this proposal is and if the intent is to have an application submitted for the FY22 funding cycle and further asked if the parking issues have been resolved with this design. Dr. Gutekanst stated that the daily parking needs would be sufficient, but overflow parking would still take space at the Steven Palmer building. Dr. Gutekanst stated that this is a preliminary discussion, and an application will be submitted to the CPC in the hopes that it would be funded at Town Meeting in the Spring. Mr. Haff stated that there are two phases to this project, the first being Design that will be submitted this year and phase two would be the following year with updated cost estimates.

Mr. Barnes thanked Dr. Gutekanst for the presentation and for the work that his staff does everyday and appreciated the safety concerns that were highlighted. Dr. Barnes asked if the School Administration can make it through the next few years during the design and construction process. Dr. Gutekanst thanked Dr. Barnes for his question and stated that while the clock is running out but with the Town's current support of helping with repairs that can be made they can make it through the next two years if the project continues to move forward. Dr. Gutekanst shared that if the community cannot find a plan forward within the next two years that he will advise the School Committee that alternate space for the School Administration operations will need to be located and he would recommend abandoning the Emery Grover building. Dr. Barnes asked how close to the guidelines for restoring a historic building with the contractors have to work and as an example he noted that the slate roof would be replaced with an asphalt shingles. Mr. Schroder stated that with guidance from the Historic Commission a slate roof has been proposed and throughout the design process, the exact materials that will be used will continue to be discussed with the Historic Commission. Ms. Greis stated that the Historic Commission has an advisory role and not a statutory role. Mr. Pingitore asked what standards would be followed and where can those standards be found. Mr. Schroder stated that the Sectary of the Interiors standards are a guideline and that the general character of the building would be maintained and during the design the exact materials would be selected under the advice of the Historic Commission. Director of Public Construction and Design Mr. Steven Popper stated that the designer has not be selected at this time and during the design the Permanent Public Building Committee (PPBC) would engage a preservationist to ensure the Historic Preservation standards are upheld. Mr. Pingitore stated that the Department of Interior Standards are identified in the Community Preservation Act and in for other Historic projects, the Committee is requiring these standards to be followed as a part of the funding agreement.

Mr. Crocker asked if part of the funding request will be the relocation of the current Emery Grover staff or if the staff will remain on site during the various stages of construction. Dr. Gutekanst that if the funding was approved as currently presented then the School Administration staff would temporarily move to the swing space at the old Hillside Elementary School location as the Police Department will vacate it by that time. Mr. Crocker stated that the project could potentially take three years and is it feasible to continue to use the building with the safety concerns. Dr. Gutekanst stated that the roof and the furnace are the main issues, but the Town has done a great job keeping the operations going. Mr. Schroder stated that the sloping stairs are stable, but the interior of the building is structurally sufficient. Mr. Crocker asked about the attic space and the roof as the floor of the attic is the ceiling of the second floor. Mr. Haff stated that it is being maintained and Dr. Gutekanst noted that there were not any structural damages to the second floor that he was aware of.

Mr. Dermody asked if the proposal met the needs of the School Administration. Dr. Gutekanst stated that the proposed building does meet the needs of the School Administration and has been well thought out and has vast improvements to the accessibility of the building for the public.

Ms. Dorfman asked how soon the addition be accessed for use. Mr. Haff stated that it would be a logistical problem as the space is not sufficient enough to have the main operation of the School Administration while the construction of the addition was occurring which is why the relocation is necessary. Ms. Dorfman asked if there is a second budget to continue to maintain the building. Dr. Gutekanst stated that maintenance of the current building is under the Town's main budget but if something catastrophic were to happen then a separate appropriation would need to be made.

Mr. Gerstel shared the same thanks to the staff of the School Administration to continue to work in the building in this current state of disrepair and feels strongly that something needs to be done to support the education system in Needham that the residents are so proud of.

Ms. Kirk stated that she is quite impressed by the current Emery Grover building and asked how much structural work is necessary or is this building to far gone to perform the work now. Mr. Schroder stated that the interior structure concerns are the stairs that do not currently meet the fire compliance codes and the attic floor so it can be used more efficiently. Mr. Schroder continued to say that when a renovation of a building is completed, ensuring that it is up to all the modern codes and standards is required and in the case of Emery Grover a seismic bracing upgrade will also be necessary and have the ability to be installed properly in the current building.

Mr. Pingitore asked if the cost of the new addition would be. Mr. Schroder stated that approximately 51% of the project cost is allocated to the addition. Mr. Schroder stated that the estimate are derivatives of items that are specific to the historic building site. Mr. Haff stated that the report that was shared with the Committee has a very detailed breakout of the cost estimates. Mr. Pingitore asked if the standards that were applied are consistent with what was used for Town Hall and what are the objective standards that are in the industry. Mr. Schroder stated that CPC guidelines under section C identify what items are eligible and that is what the numbers are based on. Mr. Popper stated that is consistent with the standards that were used with the Town Hall project. Mr. Pingitore echoed other committee members in thanking the School Administration staff for working in the building with the current constraints. Dr. Gutekanst stated that the Administration staff is grateful and proud to work for the Town of Needham and that the Town has done a tremendous job keeping the building operational for as long as it has and they are further excited about the potential to remain in a historic school building that has a rich history for educators.

Ms. Kirk was excused from the meeting at 8:10pm. Mr. Zimbone arrived at the meeting at 8:15pm.

Mr. Zimbone asked about the due diligence questions that were circulated after the last presentation. Ms. Lustig stated that many of the questions were answered but there were some outstanding questions mainly regarding the financial modeling, but she will circulate those for the next meeting. Mr. Pingitore hopes to have a new financial model in place for the next meeting.

Update of Previously Funded Projects

Ms. Lustig reviewed the provided list of all CPC projects.

Financial Updates – State Match

Ms. Lustig discussed the state funding match was higher than anticipated. Ms. Lustig stated that the estimate was $350,000 and the Town received over $700,000.

<u>Review of Anticipated Upcoming Projects and Financing</u>
Ms. Lustig reviewed the applications that may be coming into the CPC.

<u>Plan to Review and Update Community Preservation Plan</u>
Mr. Pingitore stated that the hope is to update the plan during the Committee's typical off-season. Mr. Zimbone stated that we should try to fast track update and review the plan to ensure it is still inline with the Town's priorities and it would be in the best interest of the Town and the Committee. The Committee discussed future priorities of the Committee and the potential to update the plan in the future.

<u>Anticipated Meeting Dates – Wednesdays at 7:00pm</u>
The Committee reviewed the proposed meeting dates.

<u>Any other issues not reasonable anticipated by the Chair within 48 hours</u>
Mr. Barnes discussed receiving acknowledgement from the former projects identifying that the project was funded by the CPC. The Committee agreed with Mr. Barnes.

<u>Adjournment</u>
Mr. Gerstel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55PM. Mr. Alpert seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: **Alpert:** aye, **Barnes:** aye, **Crocker:** aye, **Dermody:** aye, **Dorfman:** aye, **Gerstel:** aye, **Zimbone:** aye, **Pingitore:** aye. The meeting adjourned at 8:55PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Recording Secretary