



Town of Sudbury

Community Preservation Committee

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MINUTES

MARCH 3, 2021

VIRTUAL MEETING

Members Present: Chair Sherrill Cline, Vice Chair Lynne Remington, Dave Henkels, John Hincks, Mara Huston, Jean Nam, Jennifer Roberts, and Anuraj Shah

Members Absent: Diana Warren

Others Present: Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau

At 7:04 PM, Ms. Cline called the meeting to order.

Community Preservation Act Grant Agreements and Supervision Tasks of Community Preservation Committee

The Community Preservation Committee had general discussion and comments regarding the accountability of the Applicant's funds spent on a Community Preservation Act project.

Mr. Hincks felt the Community Preservation Committee should consider how to have a strategy or plan to guide the investments made with Community Preservation Act funds. Ms. Huston agreed and stated there should be checkpoints to determine whether the organization/project, as defined by the Warrant Article, met the project goals and to verify the Applicant's reporting of the allocations spent.

Ms. Remington noted the Community Preservation Committee did not know from year to year who would submit a proposal and therefore it was hard to set up a Plan. Ms. Remington also echoed Ms. Huston's sentiments.

Mr. Shah noted that if the Community Preservation Committee was aware of big projects that are projected, such as renovation of Town Hall, then the Committee could/should balance projects not only against those which are presented each year, but also against the long term projects.

Ms. Cline stated the other item to consider was the Community Preservation Plan. She indicated the plan had been a hard item to get completed in the recent past and currently and that such a Plan would be useful to setting priorities.

Ms. Cline noted another item on the agenda was using Community Preservation Act administrative funding to hire staff to address Community Preservation Committee issues. She pointed out that having staff dedicated to the Community Preservation Committee would be helpful in getting the Community Preservation Plan completed. Such a Plan would be helpful for long term planning and the Grant Agreements and Annual Reporting Requirements are useful for the monitoring of approved projects.

Ms. Huston asked how the Community Preservation Plan worked with the Capital Plan for the Town. Ideally, the Master Plan, the Capital Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Community Preservation Plan would yield common goals.

Ms. Roberts asked if the Community Preservation Plan was a concrete list of projects to be considered in a specific time frame. Ms. Cline noted the statute required input from the community as to its priorities similar to the input into the Master Plan. Mr. Shah thought the Plan should include a timeline for the various projects rather than just of list of priorities.

Ms. Huston felt the Community Preservation Plan should include financial projections.

Mr. Henkels stated he was in agreement with everyone's observations. He asked if any potential land acquisitions would be factored into the plan. Ms. Remington stated in the past the Conservation Commission had a good working relationship with land owners to keep tabs on which properties might be coming available for possible acquisition.

Mr. Hincks noted there was a Land Acquisition Review Committee and there was a prioritized list of land the Town would like to acquire. However, this Committee merely evaluates whether the Town should purchase a parcel when the opportunity arises. It is not a planning/policy committee and the priorities may not duplicate those in the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Mr. Duchesneau added that once the Master Plan was completed, it would free up some time to complete the Community Preservation Plan. Ms. Nam asked if a volunteer could be utilized to advance the Community Preservation Plan. Mr. Duchesneau stated a consultant who had experience developing a Community Preservation Plan would be a better option.

Review of Community Preservation Committee Annual Reports

Ms. Cline stated the Featherland Park Multi-Court Project Annual Reports had been received. The reports regarding the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, the Melone property, and CSX had not been submitted.

Ms. Cline asked if the \$2,000 that was left over would be reverted to the Community Preservation Act Fund and Ms. Huston indicated that was correct. The funds can be reverted, but the Town records show a zero balance. Ms. Huston is working with Mr. Keohane to correct this discrepancy.

Discussion regarding Use of Community Preservation Act Administrative Funds for Staff Person

Ms. Cline stated Community Preservation Act funds could be used to hire staff to support the Community Preservation Committee. Indeed, on the Community Preservation Coalition website are links to job descriptions from other communities. The job descriptions include everything from preparation of minutes to preparation of Plans. Mr. Duchesneau indicated he had mentioned this idea to the Town Manager and they discussed getting this position possibly ready for the FY23 budget. When he presented it, Mr. Duchesneau suggested the person could do 50% Community Preservation Committee support and 50% economic development, as suggested in the Master Plan.

Ms. Roberts asked if this potential new position would need to get Town Meeting approval. Mr. Duchesneau noted the Community Preservation Committee administrative fund allocation of \$85,000 was in the yearly budget which was voted on annually by Town Meeting. Mr. Duchesneau clarified the new position would be funded by the Town through these administrative funds.

Ms. Cline wondered why they needed to wait until FY23 to implement this position if the administrative funds were already available for FY22. Mr. Duchesneau said the issue was not the funding, but the logistical considerations for such a position needed to be reviewed carefully and approved by the Town Manager and Human Resources.

Ms. Cline asked if money could be reallocated from the Community Preservation Committee expenses to salaries in the budget. Mr. Duchesneau stated the money could be moved anytime by a vote at a Community Preservation Committee meeting. The Community Preservation Committee voted a gross admin budget of \$85,000, but, unlike in previous years, had not voted on an itemized budget separating project expenses from salaries.

Ms. Nam asked if the Town Manager had the understanding that the new position would be funded through Community Preservation Act funds and Mr. Duchesneau stated he was aware.

Questions were raised as to whether the person could be a consultant or use the opportunity to get an intern. It was suggested that the function of the person would be a role that is needed over the long term. It was not a short term project.

Mr. Duchesneau, Ms. Cline, and Mr. Hincks agreed to meet with the Town Manager to start the process of hiring a staff person to support the Community Preservation Committee.

Ms. Roberts asked if there would be any impact to existing staff salaries if this new position were created. Mr. Duchesneau stated this would be something to look into further with the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager.

Discussion regarding Community Preservation Committee Application Process and Meetings with Other Town Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Ms. Cline explained the Community Preservation Committee presented the applications submitted to them annually to the Select Board, Finance Committee, and, if needed, the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee. She expressed concern regarding the numerous meetings Applicants were required to attend to present their projects, as well as the Chair of the Community Preservation Committee and Town staff. Ms. Cline stated she would like to see the application review process streamlined and made more efficient for Town staff and volunteer time. So two issues: 1) is it necessary that all the applications be submitted to all three other committees every year, and 2) how can we go about making the process more efficient for all the board and committee members and staff.

It was noted the Community Preservation Committee has had 110 projects passed at Town Meeting and only two had failed. 31% had a value of less than \$50,000 and 11% between \$50,000 and \$99,000, and the rest are over that amount. Ms. Cline stated some applications, such as the Regional Housing Services Office Membership application, were repetitive funding requests each year. Is there a more efficient process for reviewing the Community Preservation Committee Warrant Articles?

Ms. Huston agreed with Ms. Cline's statements and felt some of the duplicate meetings were often a rubber stamp with no new questions or issues raised. It was suggested that members of the Select Board, Finance Committee, and Capital Improvement Advisory Committee could watch the recorded presentations to the Community Preservation Committee and submit questions to the applicants.

Ms. Nam explained this past year she had put together a summary of each project for the Finance Committee. She noted the Finance Committee only requested the presence of Applicants for new projects or ones where additional information was needed. She also solicited written questions that were submitted to Ms. Cline which could be answered by email. This was a more efficient process.

Ms. Cline pointed out the By-Laws re: Capital Improvement Advisory Committee gave that committee jurisdiction over all capital improvements with a value over \$100,000. The By-Law re: Finance Committee gave it the obligation to comment on all projects which has any financial impact on the Town. Can these committees and the Select Board review the proposals at a joint meeting? It was suggested that Finance Committee and the Select Board may have a joint meeting and/or follow that procedure Ms. Nam used at Finance Committee as stated above. Ms. Cline stated she felt the best advocates for the projects were the Applicants and those were the people who needed to explain the projects to the additional Town boards, committees, and commissions.

Ms. Huston asked if there could be a Capital Improvement Advisory Committee liaison or member on the Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Cline noted that would require a bylaw change by Town Meeting. However, having a liaison might not avoid the requirement by Capital Improvement Advisory Committee for a live presentation.

Ms. Roberts suggested the applicants could make pre-recorded presentations for the various meetings of the Town boards and committees. Ms. Cline pointed out they could also watch the Community Preservation Committee public hearings where the projects were presented. Ms. Roberts was thinking of something shorter and more refined than is presented initially at the public hearing. She pointed out that sometimes the projects are different than originally proposed. The other option is that the liaisons provide more information to their Boards, including any updates from the original proposal. Ms. Nam suggested that the less expensive projects and the repetitive projects can be resolved without live presentations.

Mr. Hincks emphasized the Town boards have selected their members to represent them on the Community Preservation Committee and they have therefore empowered the liaison to represent. There was also discussion re: the role of the liaison to relay information and questions between the Select Board/Finance Committee and Community Preservation Committee.

Ms. Nam and Ms. Roberts stated they would bring this topic back to their respective Board/Committee and give them the feedback from the Community Preservation Committee.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: January 6, 2021 and January 20, 2021

Ms. Huston made a motion to approve the minutes of January 6, 2021. Ms. Remington seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cline – Aye, Ms. Remington – Aye, Mr. Henkels – Aye, Mr. Hincks – Aye, Ms. Huston – Aye, Ms. Nam – Aye, Ms. Roberts – Aye, and Mr. Shah – Aye.

Ms. Remington made a motion to approve the minutes of January 20, 2021. Mr. Hincks seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cline – Aye, Ms. Remington – Aye, Mr. Henkels – Aye, Mr. Hincks – Aye, Ms. Huston – Aye, Ms. Nam – Aye, Ms. Roberts – Aye, and Mr. Shah – Aye.

Administrative Report

Mr. Duchesneau stated the 2021 Annual Town Meeting would be held on May 22, 2021 at 12:30 PM. If a second day was required, that would be on May 23, 2021 at 12:30 PM. Mr. Duchesneau also indicated the

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Town Meeting would be held outside at the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School field. He stated Warrant Article proponents would be submitting recorded presentations which could be viewed in advance of the Town Meeting, as was the case with the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Henkels made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Shah seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cline – Aye, Ms. Remington – Aye, Mr. Henkels – Aye, Mr. Hincks – Aye, Ms. Huston – Aye, Ms. Nam – Aye, Ms. Roberts – Aye, and Mr. Shah – Aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.