

**Community Preservation Committee
January 26, 2022
Hybrid Meeting Minutes**

PRESENT:

Chair Patricia Griffin Starr, Housing Authority representative (In-person)
Vice Chair Joseph Sheehan, Planning Board representative (In-person)
Julie Barbour-Issa, Selectmen-appointed representative (Remote)
Cheryl Doyle, Historical Commission representative (In-person)
Maria Gallesyan, Selectmen-appointed representative (Remote)
Joseph Greeley, Selectmen-appointed representative (In-person)
John Hall, Selectmen-appointed representative (Remote)
Matt Lane, Selectmen/Parks Commission representative (Remote; left prior to adjournment)
Catherine Walsh, Conservation Commission representative (In-person)

Kristen Phelps, Community Preservation Coordinator (In-person)
Paul Halkiotis, Director of Community Planning and Economic Development (Remote)

ABSENT:

None.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:34pm by Chair Patricia Griffin Starr at the Norwood Senior Center.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Cheryl Doyle to approve the meeting minutes of January 12, 2022. Motion seconded by Joseph Sheehan.

Roll-call vote:

Patricia Griffin Starr: **Aye**
Joseph Sheehan: **Aye**
Julia Barbour-Issa: **Aye**
Cheryl Doyle: **Aye**
Maria Gallesyan: **Aye**
Joseph Greeley: **Aye**
John Hall: **Aye**
Matt Lane: **Aye**
Catherine Walsh: **Aye**

Result: 9-0-0 (Approved)

The financial report was distributed to the Committee.

Presentations by Community Preservation Act Applicants

Playground at Norwood Memorial Airport

The application for this project was submitted by the Recreation Department.

Airport Manager Russ Maguire provided an outline of the project. He stated that the site is a great location for a playground given the foot traffic seen over the years, particularly with the number of children that are there to see planes with their families. The Airport Commission partnered with the Recreation Department to submit a proposal.

Concerns regarding contaminated soil were expressed. Mr. Maguire stated that he spoke with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Mark Ryan about this issue recently, and that soil testing can be conducted.

The site of the proposed playground will be adjacent to the Welch Administration Building, which has water accessibility for cleaning the playground equipment. There are trash barrels throughout the site as well.

A resident spoke in favor of the project, but cautioned that traffic is fairly heavy. She advocated for a set of traffic lights being installed.

Recreation Superintendent Travis Farley arrived late to the meeting. The Committee asked about other sources of funding for the project. He stated that he always explores grants and private funding. He agreed to attend the meeting on February 9 to discuss the project further.

South Norwood Riverfront Park

The application for this project was submitted by the Conservation Commission. Conservation Agent Holly Jones presented.

The land area, previously referred to as the Saint Streets lot, was purchased using Community Preservation Act funds in 2019. It borders Hawes Brook and the Neponset River, opening up a riverfront trail, providing a connection to the Balch School, Eliot Park, Coakley Middle School, and Endean Park.

The Board of Selectmen and the Conservation Commission have indicated a desire to name the area for the late Assistant Town Manager Bernie Cooper.

A series of meetings took place over the summer, working with stakeholders to gather feedback.

Ms. Jones then presented a conceptual plan for the site, including path type and parking, use and planting areas, and elements and views.

There may be a possibility for a 50/50 funding split with the Town or a three-way split among Community Preservation Act funds, Town capital, and free cash. The Commission is requesting for potentially half of the total project budget which is \$1.61M for permitting, construction of elements as presented, and contingency funds. There is a backup plan to complete the project in phases; and to seek additional grant funding. A "friends" stewardship group is also in the initial stages of development.

Cheryl Doyle asked whether anyone had conducted an analysis to showcase funding if the Committee approved funding for the entire project through borrowing. Joe Greeley reported that for \$1.6M, a ten-year bond would be approximately \$230k per year.

John Hall stated that he was uncomfortable regarding the softness of financing and phasing for the project. He would like to see a budget, a phasing plan, and letters indicating financial support from the General Manager and the Board of Selectmen, if it will be funded from the Town's General Funds.

Paul Halkiotis, Director of Community Planning and Economic Development, stated that he has discussed financing options with Mr. Greeley. At a meeting last week with General Manager Mazzucco, Finance Commission members, Joe Greeley, and Holly Jones, they discussed various options. At Mr. Mazzucco's recommendation, they started to think about approaching a funding split from three sources: Free Cash, general bond, and Community Preservation Act. The Committee has the final say on the recommendation for the financing of the park. The Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission have all unanimously supported the project.

Judith Hall, a resident of District 3, spoke in support of the project and for borrowing funds.

Pocket Park at Stearns Drive and Elliot Street

The application for this project was submitted by the Community Development Department. Director of Community Planning and Economic Development Paul Halkiotis presented.

Mr. Halkiotis indicated that he was approached by General Manager Mazzucco about a project to take a piece of tax title land owned by the Town for 85 years and to develop a pocket park located at Stearns Drive and Elliot Street.

In collaboration with the late Selectman David Hajjar, a public meeting on the project took place in September where conceptual design plans were presented. The estimated cost of the project is \$72k, which may need to be reassessed due to the current economic climate. It is anticipated that the project could be completed in one construction season by the Department of Public Works if it is funded.

A neighbor is currently using a portion of the land for parking and they would like to develop a solution for this.

The deadline for the pre-application was missed as Mr. Hajjar had died. The Committee agreed to accept the application, however. Mr. Halkiotis then took the lead on the project proposal.

Chair Griffin Starr read a letter that was submitted by Sue Bartlett, a resident of District 3. She stated that it is a narrow road with limited on-street parking, and advocated for a small, permeable parking surface with space for three vehicles.

A second meeting with the neighborhood will be scheduled, as the project is not wedded to a design.

Catherine Walsh stated that she was opposed to adding parking and in favor of preserving open space, which is consistent with the mission of the Conservation Commission. Vice Chair Sheehan agreed.

Judith Howard, a resident of District 3, spoke in support of the project.

Shattuck Park Improvement Study

The application for this project was submitted by Gordon Smith and Tom Cummings. Community Preservation Coordinator Kristen Phelps made attempts to reach the applicants and was ultimately able to speak with Tom Cummings today. He was unable to attend.

The Committee discussed a potential deed restriction that exists for the property. It is not believed that there is anything explicit. The Board of Selectmen approved the concept, without lights.

The Committee agreed to placing the applicant's presentation on the February 9 agenda.

Ann Haley, a resident of District 4 on Nichols Street, stated that she utilizes the park frequently, and strongly urged that residents of the area have a say in what happens to the property.

Judith Howard, a resident of District 3, is a proponent of a park in its natural state.

Sue Banta, an abutter of Shattuck Park, expressed a desire to be involved. The Committee agreed that the desire for neighbors' input will be brought to the attention of the applicants.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on February 9, 2022. The Committee agreed to schedule an additional meeting on February 16, 2022.

Adjournment

MOTION made by Cheryl Doyle to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Joseph Sheehan.

Roll-call vote:

Patricia Griffin Starr: **Aye**

Joseph Sheehan: **Aye**

Julia Barbour-Issa: **Aye**

Cheryl Doyle: **Aye**

Maria Gallesyan: **Aye**

Joseph Greeley: **Aye**

John Hall: **Aye**

Matt Lane: Absent

Catherine Walsh: **Aye**

Result: 8-0-0 (Approved)

The meeting adjourned at 7:18pm.

Articles/Exhibits Used at Meeting

- Cooper Riverfront Park CPA Funding Application slideshow presentation
- Correspondence from R. Maguire to K. Phelps regarding CPC Meeting - Wednesday, January 26th, dated January 24, 2022
- Correspondence from K. Snyder, Advocacy Director, Neponset River Watershed Association regarding Support for Funding for Riverfront Park at Saint Streets lot, dated January 24, 2022
- Draft meeting minutes of January 12, 2022 for the Committee's review and approval

Minutes respectfully submitted to the Committee by John Cianciarulo.