

TOWN OF BELMONT
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC)

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DATE: January 20, 2023
TIME: 9:01 AM

Minutes: Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 6:00PM, Zoom Public Meeting

Present: Elizabeth Dionne, Margaret Velie, David Kane, Sarah Caputo, Juliet Jenkins, Roy Epstein, Gloria Leipzig, Michael Chesson

Other: Matthew Haskell, Matt Zajac (Cambridge Housing Authority), Brandon Fitts (Belmont Recreation Director), Jonathan Charwick (Activitas), Kathy Keohane (Belmont Public Library), Betsy Lipson (Belmont Housing Trust), David Beavers, Allison MacMartin (Belmont Housing Authority), Carol Moyles

Absent: None

Elizabeth Dionne called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Elizabeth gave a brief overview of the CPA process and then stated the goals of the meeting. Each applicant will make a brief presentation and then answer questions intended to improve each applicant's CPA Funding – Final Application, due on December 5, 2022.

Grove Street Baseball and Basketball Reconstruction

Brandon Fitts was joined by Jonathan Charwick from Activitas. Brandon gave an overview of the project, stating that this is phase 2 of a project for which the CPC had previously funded a study. Jonathan gave an overview of where the project estimate costs stand now and discussed the changes to each line item. Brandon also stated that they are planning to hold a few public forums for this project before Town meeting.

Roy asked about the seeding and shared his concern about the quality of the grass that will result from the seeding. Roy expressed his doubts that it would result in quality grass. Jonathan spoke to the benefits of seeding and what Activitas has in place for the cost estimates. Jonathan did agree that using sod in lieu of seeds is more of a guaranteed result; however, the sod is not as durable over time.

David confirmed that the walking paths would still be available during construction. Jonathan stated that they would utilize construction fencing to block off the area that is in the scope of work.

Peg asked about the public meetings and having outreach to all of the stakeholders for the park. Brandon stated that outreach and public meetings are definitely in their plan before this goes to Town meeting.

PQ Basketball Court Replacement

Brandon Fitts explain that this is a submission to repair the current PQ basketball court in-kind. This is not intended to be a phased project, as the plan is to replace exactly what is there with no design changes.

Underwood Park

This is a submission for Phase 1 of the Underwood Playground. This phase would pay for design and engineering costs for the playground. Requested funding was increased, because there could be creative ideas for redesigning the park, and they would like to hold extra public input meetings. Elizabeth asked about the possibility of delaying the project. Sarah asked if there could be a lower ask and replace and update some of the equipment while leaving the park as is. Roy asked about the cost and suggested that the Recreation Department hold public input meetings and then come back with those ideas and get funding for design and engineering at that time. Brandon stated that he would return with answers based on this discussion.

Predevelopment Planning Sherman Gardens

Gloria Leipzig introduced Matt Zajac and Allison MacMartin from the Cambridge Housing Authority, acting on behalf of the Belmont Housing Authority. Matt Zajac gave an overview of the Sherman Gardens area currently and what the Belmont Housing Authority hopes that the Sherman Gardens area can be updated to be. Matt Zajac noted that the CPC's continued support of this project will help the Belmont Housing Authority leverage funding from the state and federal level.

Roy inquired about the parking situation at Sherman Gardens. Allison stated that currently less than 30% of the occupied units have a vehicle, and that there are 80 units total. Matt added that the present design of the redevelopment would increase the parking to help accommodate the additional 60 units that are projected to be added.

Belmont Housing Trust Affordable Housing

Gloria Leipzig introduced Betsy Lipson, co-chair of the Belmont Housing Trust. Betsy gave an overview and explained that other communities call this a buy-down program. This application would provide funding for developers to apply for in order to incentivize creating more affordable housing in their development projects.

Conservation Fund

Margaret Velie gave an overview of the ask. This funding would be used to do an assessment of a possible property to be acquired for open space in Belmont. Elizabeth asked if \$50,000 was enough for this fund to be effective. Margaret said that this would be a good starting point, as the state allows for the creation of a Conservation Fund, but Belmont has never created one.

Historic Object Preservation Plan (Library)

Kathy Keohane gave an overview of the project and noted that the library had reduced its ask from the preliminary application. It was asked how this funding would tie in with the approved debt exclusion for a new library.

Project Status Update

There are final changes to the grant agreement with Town Clock, as approved by town counsel George Hall.

Roy moved to vote to approve the grant agreement as amended. Seconded by David. 6 Yeas, 0 Nays, 1 Abstention (Sarah). Juliet had to leave the meeting early.

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40PM. Seconded by Gloria. The motion was approved unanimously: 7 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstentions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Haskell