

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE (CPC)**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: July 9, 2020

TIME: 9:21 AM

Minutes: Wednesday, April 15, 2020, Zoom Meeting, 5:00PM  
Present: Elizabeth Dionne, Margaret Velie, Stephen Pinkerton, Floyd Carman, Lisa  
Harrington, Roy Epstein, David Kane, Gloria Leipzig  
Other: Glen Castro, Jon Marshall  
Absent: Andy Rojas

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Elizabeth Dionne called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

**Approve Meeting Minutes**

- Motion to approve regular meeting minutes, as amended for Wednesday, March 11, 2020, passed unanimously (Stephen Pinkerton abstained).
  - Roy Epstein moved to approve meeting minutes. Second by Margaret Velie

**Discussion and Planning Town Meeting Projects**

The Select Board met on Monday, April 6, 2020. Elizabeth Dionne stated that the Select Board and Patrice Garvin asked the CPC to discuss postponing non-urgent CPC projects to the second round of Town Meeting in July. Homer House Window Restoration, Town Field Playground Restoration, and the Feasibility Study for the Redevelopment and Creation of New Affordable Housing Units would be postponed until the Special Town Meeting, whether in July or later in the fall. The Repair and Weatherization of the Chimneys on Town Hall will be on the Warrant for June Town Meeting because of safety issues. Elizabeth Dionne emailed Jay Marcotte, Director of Public Works, who confirmed the bidding schedule and postponing the Town Field Playground project to July would not be a problem. Elizabeth Dionne confirmed with Gloria Leipzig the Feasibility Study for the Redevelopment and Creation of the New Affordable Housing Units at Belmont Village will be on the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting.

Roy Epstein suggested that it is not clear that the second round of Town Meeting will be in July. It could be in August or possibly November. Roy Epstein agreed with Elizabeth Dionne having the Repair and Weatherization of the Chimneys on Town Hall at the June Town Meeting. Elizabeth Dionne was concerned with having Town Field wait until November. Stephen Pinkerton stated if the Town Field Playground went to November Town Meeting, approved by the Attorney General in December 2020 or January 2021, that bidding could be done in spring and ground work could get started in July.

**Gloria Leipzig moved to recommend that Repair and Weatherization of the Chimneys on Town Hall go on the June Town Meeting Warrant and that the Homer House Window Restoration, Town Field Playground Restoration, and Feasibility Study for the**

**Redevelopment and Creation of New Affordable Housing Units at Belmont Village be on the Special Town Meeting Warrant (date to be determined), passed unanimously. Second by David Kane**

**Discussion of Adam Dash's proposal that we use the \$250K appropriated to the Housing Trust for FY2019 to support an emergency rental assistance program for Belmont residents**

During the April 6 Select Board Meeting, Adam Dash suggested that the CPC consider using the \$250K from the Funds Set Aside to the Housing Trust to support an emergency rental assistance program for Belmont residents. Elizabeth Dionne had the following concerns: the original application did not include a rental assistance program, and Town Meeting did not approve nor appropriate the suggested use of funds for rental assistance. Elizabeth Dionne stated that supporting rent is an allowable use under the Community Preservation Act for qualifying individuals. The alternative is for the Housing Trust to submit a special application for June Town Meeting.

Gloria Leipzig stated that the \$250K was for the development and creation of new affordable housing. Although the Trust supported the development of a rental assistance program using these funds, the obstacle was the administration of such a program since there were no Town resources available. However, Jennifer Van Campen, Executive Director, Metro West Collaborative Development in Newton, contacted other cities and towns about how an emergency assistance rental program could work. The basic guidelines for a temporary rental assistance program (3 months) would be to establish a budget, set criteria for participation, and for the Housing Trust to decide on the Area Median Income (AMI) for eligibility. The Housing Trust proposed to set the amount based on the bedroom size that people are living in. For example, 1 bedroom - \$750 per month for three months and 2 bedrooms - \$950 per month for three months. Landlords will have to participate, applicants will have to provide documentation before submitting an application, two weeks of advertising to market the program, applications accepted, zoom lottery, and screening begins based on lottery numbers. Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD) provided sample agreements and applications if the Town decided to manage the program or if an outside agency was selected to administer the program.

Elizabeth Dionne inquired whether program would encourage landlords to forgive some rent in exchange for receiving rent support from the Town, such that landlords are sharing some of the burden with taxpayers.. Gloria Leipzig was concerned that landlords might not choose to participate if that was a condition. Roy Epstein inquired whether the amount appropriated of \$250K, under the previous article could be used, or whether a new program would come forward requiring a new proposal that would address all the questions being brought up at today's meeting. Does it apply to somebody currently renting or somebody who had not rented before? The rental assistance program would be for current residents only.

Gloria Leipzig agreed with Elizabeth Dionne's suggestion to submit a special application. Elizabeth Dionne inquired about the interest of the Select Board or Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator, in using CPA money for this type of program, because the initial suggestion had come solely through Adam Dash. CPC does not initiate proposed projects, so someone else needs to initiate the proposal. The CPC will scrutinize the project once it has been properly introduced. Roy Epstein stated that the Select Board has not discussed the program at all. Select Board will react to the proposal that someone puts forward.

Floyd Carman stated that four CPA projects approved to advance to Town Meeting and that three projects were tabled to the Special Town Meeting. Elizabeth Dionne stated that the appropriation of \$250K approved by Town Meeting motion approved "developing affordable housing units" and did not think that the money already appropriated was fungible.

Elizabeth Dionne suggested that Housing Trust submit an application for reserve funds available for an emergency situation. Stephen Pinkerton suggested the Housing Trust could ask Town Meeting to amend their earlier project and not have to submit a new one. Town Meeting would need to allow an additional use of the funds – rental assistance – be added to the grant that Town Meeting already approved for \$250K.

Elizabeth Dionne conducted a straw poll to gauge support of CPC members for calling an emergency meeting to review an emergency rental assistance proposal from the Housing Trust, and it passed unanimously.

### **Report to Town Meeting**

Elizabeth Dionne will work on the report to Town Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Glen Castro