

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

Minutes: Wednesday, December 14, 2016, Town Hall Conference Room #1, 5:00PM
Present: Floyd Carman, Anthony Ferrante, Karl Haglund, Lisa Harrington, Gloria Leipzig,
Anne Marie Mahoney, Andrés Rojas, Margaret Velie, Jim Williams
Other: Chris Donahue, Donna Ruvolo, Michael Trainor

Margaret Velie called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

Approve Minutes

Motion to approve minutes of November 9, 2016 passed with five votes.

- Floyd Carman, Gloria Leipzig, and Jim Williams abstained from voting as they were not present for the November 9, 2016 meeting.
- Karl Haglund was not present at the time of the vote.

Motion to approve minutes of the November 10, 2016 public meeting passed with four votes.

- Floyd Carman, Lisa Harrington, Anne Marie Mahoney, and Andrés Rojas abstained from voting as they were not present for the November 10, 2016 public meeting.
- Karl Haglund was not present at the time of the vote.

Review Final Applications

OSR-1: Grove Street Tennis Courts

Anthony Ferrante described the project as straightforward, noting that it uses prior CPA tennis projects as models for success (with a cost increase due to inflation) and is compatible with the Town's Master Plan for Grove Street Park.

OSR-3: Grove Street Park Intergenerational Walking Path Construction Site Plan

Anne Marie Mahoney warned that projects, such as the Grove Street Park and PQ Playground proposals, that may be worthy for the community but incompatible with the Town's overall plans. She suggested that a plan be created for addressing recreational assets and other major capital projects. While the current proposed Grove Street project only addresses the site plan and has a relatively low cost associated with it, Anne Marie Mahoney urged the CPC consider this issue when reviewing all CPA project proposals.

Karl Haglund arrives at 6:15pm.

Chris Donahue, a representative of Belmont Little League, relayed their concerns about any effect the Walking Path project may have on their separate and independent efforts to add batting cages to the site. Andrés Rojas stressed that the Grove Street project sponsors, through the Recreation Commission, should be reaching out to all stakeholders to obtain their support and to coordinate construction planning. Anthony Ferrante added that, while project sponsors should hear from all stakeholders, it may be impossible to arrive at a final outcome that meets

everyone's approval. He stated that the path is one part of the Master Plan for Grove Street Park.

OSR-4: PQ Playground Revitalization Project (Phase 2)

The CPA request has been reduced from an expected \$800,000 to \$649,665.64. This reduction is largely due to abandoning the plan to capture the 2-year storm with underground filtration basins in favor of piping the rain water into Wellington Brook. This method requires filtering out 80% of the suspended solids, per the Town's storm water bylaws. No fundraising efforts have been pursued by the project sponsors, as the sponsors suggest the user groups of this recreation asset are mainly from a middle/working class transient population.

Floyd Carman believes fundraising will be critical to the success of the project. Should this project receive CPC approval and be presented before Town Meeting without a fundraising component, Town Meeting members will likely vote to reject the project. While the user group of the PQ facilities may not have the ability to contribute financially to the project, it has been suggested to the project sponsors on numerous occasions to solicit donations from the local businesses in the area. Even if the total donations only comprise 10% of the project budget, Floyd Carman argued that it will at least convey a message to Town Meeting that the community is invested in the outcome of the project. Gloria Leipzig agreed, noting that, even if the project sponsors are unable to obtain donations from local businesses, they will at least be able to show that a fundraising effort had been made.

Anne Marie Mahoney stated that she was not opposed to the merits of the project. However, the project will put a strain DPW with the additional workload that will be required. The project proposal would also be presented at Town Meeting in the context of other major capital projects, including the Belmont High School and skating rink projects. While the PQ Playground proposal would be funded through a separate revenue source as a CPA project, Town Meeting members may find it hard to justify approving another high-cost project. This is especially true when it is becoming apparent that the CPA could be used to address the growing need for elderly housing in Belmont.

Anthony Ferrante would have preferred that some fundraising efforts had been made on behalf of PQ Playground, but reminded the CPC that the committee has been inconsistent in terms of what recreation projects require donations. Private organizations have been required to raise additional funds while Town-sponsored projects have no such donation requirement. Andrés Rojas explained that Town-sponsored projects innately have a vested interest in the outcome of the projects, while volunteer-based organizations should show that they are similarly invested through fundraising efforts. Anthony Ferrante responded by stating that the Recreation Commission is actively trying to eliminate the need for private organizations to contribute funding for improvements Town-owned assets, as it creates a climate of false ownership. Additionally, there are concerns that the CPA is becoming a mechanism for the Town to move forward on capital projects that should be funded through Capital Budget. For these reasons, the requirement for donations should be the same for all types of CPA projects, regardless of what organization is sponsoring them.

Jim Williams added that the Friends of PQ Park organization has taken the position that no fundraising efforts will be pursued, as the purpose of the CPA is to fund this type of community-based project. Friends of PQ Park are willing to risk presenting this project before Town Meeting without a fundraising component. Donna Ruvolo also argued that there is a danger in

having project sponsors, who are inexperienced in fundraising, soliciting donations from local business; specifically, an inconsistent reward system for donations of varying sizes. The CPC or the Town should communicate the expectation for fundraising more clearly going forward.

Margaret Velie highlighted a few aspects of the project that may not be eligible for CPA funding, such as landscaping maintenance and irrigation repair. Given that further detail about the project that was not included in the Preliminary Application is now available, the Final Application will be sent to the Community Preservation Coalition for further review and comment. The project sponsors should strongly consider fundraising opportunities in order to address the potential shortfall in eligible CPA funding for this project.

CH-1: Assessment and Project Redevelopment of Sherman Gardens

Gloria Leipzig clarified that the purpose of the project was to address the growing need for accessible elderly housing in Belmont, and that an added benefit is the potential for creating upwards of forty additional affordable housing units. The proposal is only for a site assessment so that the Town is able to seize on state funding opportunities should they arise in the future.

Floyd Carman added that increasing the affordable housing stock would be greatly benefit the Town, but cautioned that the issue of increased school enrollment may be brought up should this project be presented before Town Meeting.

HP-1: Belmont Headquarters Sons of Italy – Historical Artifacts Preservation

The CPC discussed whether the project would benefit the entire Town. While the Final Application noted the intention to have these documents available to the public, Jim Williams questioned the feasibility of this goal given the display would be located in a building with multiple commercial tenants.

Lisa Harrington stated that the Belmont Historic District Commission did not have “a lot of interest” in the project due to the limited perceived public benefit. The questioned was raised whether the Town of Belmont should pay for preserving artifacts that are the ownership of the State Headquarters of the Sons of Italy. Lisa and the Historic District Commission will meet with the Sons of Italy, and the Historic District Commission will issue a letter on the project after their January 10, 2017 meeting.

Anthony Ferrante argued that this project could be funded solely through the private organization’s own membership. The true historic value of the artifacts were brought into question, as well as if preserving historic artifacts in response to poor storage practices represented an appropriate use of CPA funding.

Lisa Harrington and Jim Williams leave at 6:49pm.

OSR-2: Music Hatch at Payson Park

The Final Application did not clearly state whether there was a design available for the Music Hatch or if the deliverable is an “off the shelf” item. The CPC will require further information regarding the final product before voting on the proposal in January 2017. There was a discussion about encouraging the project sponsors to pursue fundraising opportunities in order to address contingency costs and possibly reduce the amount being requested as a CPA grant

FY15 Project Extensions/Closures

Motion to grant a deadline extension of June 30, 2017 for the Belmont Community Moving Image Archive Project passed with seven votes.*

Motion to grant a deadline extension of June 30, 2017 for the Daniel Butler School Playground Project passed with seven votes.*

Motion to close the Underwood Pool Project passed with seven votes.*

* Lisa Harrington and Jim Williams were not present at the time of the vote.

Other Business

Motion to approve payment of \$1,333.53 (33 hours @ \$40.41) to Michael Trainor for November/December passed with seven votes.

- Lisa Harrington and Jim Williams were not present at the time of the vote.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 5:00PM, Town Hall Conference Room 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Trainor