



City of Westfield

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes January 12, 2023

Members attending:
Members absent:

Staff attending:

Thomas Sharp
Richard Salois
Cynthia Gaylord
Daniel Kelly
Joe Muto
William Porter
Michael Tirrell

Jay Vinskey
Christine Fedora

1. Call to order. Chair Sharp called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. in Room 201, Municipal Building, 59 Court Street. Members introduced themselves.

2. Public Participation. Chair Sharp invited public comment. - None

3. Review and Approval of 10-27-22 Minutes

Chair Sharp asked if members had an opportunity to review the minutes and noted there was no adjournment time and asked that the preparer (J. Vinskey) be noted/signed
Member Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Member Tirrell to approve the minutes as amended. All in favor.

4. Review of Current Funds	FY 2023 + Balance unspent from prior years (as of FY 22)
Undesignated/Recreation	\$246,929 + 736,628+
Historic	\$50,000 + 528
Open Space	\$50,000 + 185,502+
Housing	\$50,000 + 448,932 +

5. Review of New/Pending Applications

- *Monument at Parker Memorial Park (recreation) - \$7,325.*

Presenting the application to the Commission was Julie Barnes, Director of Veteran's Services. Ms. Barnes stated the grant she is requesting is to assist in the payment of a Gulf War Memorial to be added to Parker Park. She also noted she found out today they have

been awarded a state Grant which will pay for ½ of the cost of the monument so they are now seeking half of the original request. Members reviewed the image of the proposed stone; it was believed it would be a type of granite. Member Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Member Kelly to approve the request of \$3662.50. After some discussion about the precise amount, Member Gaylord withdrew her motion. Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Member Salois to approve the request, rounded up to the amount of \$3700.00. All in favor. Funding to come from undesignated/recreation.

- *1237 Russell Road land acquisition (open space) - \$110,000.*

Planner Vinsky reminded members this property was discussed at a few previous meetings. The parcel is located on Russell Road and consists of 17 acres on the Westfield River and abuts open space property; possible use for kayaks, canoes and trails. The City owns an abutting portion of the land by tax-taking and the state owns conservation land, which creates a continuous protected block; also extends into Russell. Planner Vinsky informed the Board there is a potential state LAND grant that he intends to pursue; this grant is a reimbursement, so the City would need to front the funds and buy the land first. Member Tirrell asked if the City received the grant would the money come back to the CPA? Planner Vinsky informed him he believed it would reimburse where the funds came from, but couldn't confirm.

Chair Sharp inquired if the City would be able to monitor the land itself? Planner Vinsky replied the City cannot monitor itself, someone else like a land trust would need to hold the restriction. He further noted that Mass Audubon monitors the Pitoniak land perpetually, 70 acres for what he recalled was a one-time \$20,000 fee.

Planner Vinsky further noted there would be additional fees such as survey, legal possible improvements, and the budget should carry a healthy contingency for unknowns. The next step is to go before the Council, have a survey done and title work.

Member Muto MOTIONED, Member Tirrell seconded to approve the \$110,000.00 for the Russell Road ("Tekoa Narrows") land acquisition. All in favor. Funding to come from open space.

7. Discussion of potential projects (item taken out of order)

- *American Legion building - 38 Broad Street*

Presenting the potential project to the members was Wade Brunelle a Committee Member of the Legion and on the Financial Committee. Mr. Brunelle stated he is a former army infantry officer, auxiliary police officer; he does not live in Westfield but he respects Westfield as a community.

Mr. Brunelle gave some history of the American Legion Building. It was built in 1824 and became the home of the American Legion in 1962. The Legion participates in events in the community, the post is very active and invests in the community. Westfield has the third largest legion in the state.

Mr. Brunelle informed the Board in 2022 they had a contractor look at the facility to see what would be necessary to maintain, upgrade, and restore the facility. They had meetings with members of the Legion as well as the commanders and relayed the condition of the building at that meeting. The options discussed: Vacate the property and Resources for new property locations or Stay and work through the mechanics of the funding. Following the meeting the Legion decided they wanted to stay; he noted they do not have any specific numbers to submit for their request at this time. He proceeded to give a summary of some of the work that needs to be completed.

A list of the proposed work to be completed consisted of: Façade, foundation, brick, drainage. he noted He stressed to the contractors that looked at the facility the building needs to be preserved in its original state. He also noted he has revisited the contractors to update their costs to the current market.

Members inquired as to the possible funding amount they would be seeking? Mr. Brunelle said it was hard to tell but somewhere between \$ 200-\$500K depending on the detail. He stressed it was hard to say because of additional work that may be necessary. Member Gaylord inquired if they have received any other grants? Mr. Brunelle replied they received 2 grants with the help of Rep. Velis covering about 15%, which has already been utilized.

Planner Vinskey informed the Committee he has already spoke to the applicants and reminded the room if this is approved a historic deed restriction would be required.

- *Pine Hill Cemetery stone gates*

Gail Dickson, along with Kali Fantakis, addressed the Committee by informing them the last time they were before the Committee they received funding for the replacement of the fence. She stated a new application they'd like to submit to redo the gates, they have been looking for someone for quite some time and asking for bids. She stated they finally are starting to receive some quotes, one of the difficult parts of this is removing the shrubs that are along the gates. One of the quotes they received was between \$50,000 and \$100,000, they are hoping to receive 3 quotes before they come back. Members commented on how nice the fence looks.

- *Bismarck Hotel building – 16 Union Avenue*

Joseph & Donna Shibley addressed the Committee. Mr. Shibley informed them he purchased the Bismarck Hotel in '95. In 2015-2016 the City approved the CPC grant for the 16 Union Avenue project to renovate the front porch of the building, it is now a replica of the original. He then explained the second stage of the project. They would like to fix the inside of the elevator to have apartments on the 3rd floor of 6/7 units; complete the exterior/ add roof railing. He also discussed the next-door building as a potential other project (36 Union Ave) that need to stabilize and repair roof/cornice due to settling. He understood a historic restriction would be required. Mr. Shibley he did not have the application ready at this time but would hope to prepare it for the April meeting.

6. Review of open projects.

Planner Vinskey briefly listed projects with a balance: School House, Down Payment Assistance

Monuments, Canal study. Not started (full balance): Skate park, Yellowstone Farm. He also informed the Committee there was an interesting article in recent the Business West about the Lambson Building.

8. Other Business

Member Gaylord mentioned the Historical Commission may be submitting an application to repair the gate at the Old Burial Ground as it was destroyed by a car. She added she thinks they have \$4,000 to put towards the repair but it will be somewhere in the range of \$10-14K total to repair. Chair Sharp indicated he would be happy to consider the request.

9. Annual Election of chairperson, vice chairperson

Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Member Gaylord to keep the Chair and Vice-Chair the same. Chair Sharp was more than willing to serve and added he would be willing to serve under anyone, as he has a great deal of confidence in the members. There being no response those members accepted the nomination. All voted in favor of retaining the Chair Sharp and Vice Chair Muto.

10. Designation of the date/time of regular quarterly meetings.

The committee discussed meeting dates and times and decided to keep the date and meeting times the same - to be held the 2nd Thursday of every quarter. Member Muto MOTIONED, seconded by Member Salois to keep the meetings as scheduled, noting the next meeting to be scheduled for April 13. All in favor.

11. Adjourn

Upon a MOTION made and seconded and all recorded in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12.

Recorded by:

Christine Fedora