



City of Westfield

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2019 – 6:30 pm, Room 201, Westfield Municipal Building

Members attending:
Members absent:

Staff attending:

John Bowen (Alt)
 Cheryl Crowe
 Cynthia Gaylord
 Daniel Kelly
 Joe Muto
 Vincent Olinski (Alt)
 William Porter
 Thomas Sharp
 Michael Tirrell

Jay Vinskey
 Christine Fedora

Chairman Sharp called the meeting to order at 6:30 and asked the members of the Committee to introduce themselves. The above members were in attendance.

1. Public Participation & **PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING** to solicit the needs, possibilities and resources of the City regarding the Community Preservation Act.

Chairman Sharp noted this meeting is also a public hearing to give the community an opportunity to ask questions of the Committee regarding how funds are being expended as well as the residents to voice concerns or ideas they might have.

Questions asked by John Keilch – Root Road

- Inquired as to what the undesignated balance amount refers to (CPA funds were written on whiteboard)?
CPC explained this money has not been spent, and has accumulated to be used for any eligible project.
- Housing portion?
Chairman Sharp stated this could be for a new building, or taking old buildings, schools and converting them to affordable housing, which are projects the CPC has funded previously.
- How much of the city is Open Space?
Planner Vinskey stated that open space depends on the definition that is being used which could be broad, noting the open space plan is online and has maps and lists of open space areas. The CPA has its own definition as to what is eligible. It was also noted that open space was the big driver in Westfield participating in the CPA program.

Questions from Dan Call –

- Inquired as to if there is an open space committee, part of conservation? Chairman Sharp noted he didn't think there is anything official, he felt this closest resemblance to an open space committee would be the open space plan. Vinskey explained there was a committee that worked on the plan, the committee has disbanded with the completion of the open space plan.

Chairman Sharp asked if there are any additional comments before closing the public hearing. There being no further comments Member Muto MOTIONED, seconded by Member Kelly to close the public hearing. All in Favor.

2. Review and Approval of (12-13-18) Minutes.

Chairman Sharp asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the minutes? Chairman Sharp noted he would like some modifications to the form of the minutes. He felt there should be consistency in referring to who is speaking, as to "Member" or "Chairman" titles. He also felt an Attest/Respectfully Submitted by should be added to the minutes.

Member Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Member Muto to approve the previous meeting minutes with the amendments. All in Favor.

3. Review of Budget/Funds

Planner Vinskey informed the Committee there are certain categories they must be spent on, there are enough funds for most of the items that are contemplated.

Currently the budget is as follows:

	FY19	Balance
• Historic	22,000	52,737
• Open Space	50,000	52,937
• Housing	50,000	248,932
• Undesignated/Rec	65,000	808,193

4. Review of New/Pending Applications

- Columbia Greenway (recreation) - \$90,000

City Engineer Mark Cressotti addressed the CPC. He gave a brief review of previous meetings he attended. Two years ago he came to the committee, asking for CPA installments each year for 3 years. The first 2 years have been funded.

He further noted he has information the city has been approved for a state grant; the grant has not been formally approved yet, but it would eliminate the need for the 3rd year asks of

the CPC funding. He requested \$90,000 now to cover costs for obtaining real estate easements; the cost of the real estate easements came in more than previously anticipated, so they don't have enough money in this year.

He stated he understood there may be some complications in using CPA funds to acquire the easements, such as the need for a separate deed restriction by the owner, so they may be using the anticipated grant funds for the actual easements and the CPA funding would be used for other project costs, such as construction, lighting.

Member Gaylord asked if this is in addition to the first request? Mr. Cressotti replied no. The first year (year one) was for \$250,000. The current year (year two) \$250,000. The final year would have been thought to be \$350,000, but the state grant will cover that. Mr. Cressotti also added there are certain things the state grant will not pay for. He also felt by asking for the additional \$90,000.00 this year they don't think they will need the \$350,000 for next year from the CPC; he felt everything will fall into place.

Some members were confused by what exactly is being asked for. Planner Vinskey explained that CA legislation requires a deed restriction when funds are used to acquire a property interest, such as a permanent easement here – like the City acquiring an open space conservation restriction on private land. Here, it is complicated because these easements would actually be takings on private land. Mr. Cressotti hoped to use the state funds instead for this real estate piece and thus avoid these extra CPA requirements, and the CPA funds would be used later in the project for things like design or construction, under the creation category.

Mr. Vinskey further stated there is language in the CPA that seems to exclude takings from being considered acquisitions under the CPA, so possibly there may not be a requirement for the restriction, but that has yet to be confirmed by Law. In either case, all types of expenditures described are eligible under CPA, so that committee can leave it to the administration to work out the final details and requirements if comfortable with that. If a separate restriction ends up being required, we'll have to do it.

Mr Cressotti is asking \$90,000 from CPA now, based on easements cost, and asking the state to advance \$85,000 of its grant to actually acquire the easements, and the CPA funds could be used to effectively backfill the grant to pay for other project costs.

Mr. Call thanked the CPC for their support. Chairman Sharp asked next year instead of the \$350,000 ask, the CPC will shell out the \$90,000 now and be done? Yes, though Mr. Cressotti again indicated he does not officially have the state grant yet.

Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Member Gaylord to approve the additional \$90,000 of CPA funding for the Columbia Greenway project. The committee confirmed the funds may be used under the creation and/or acquisition categories, both being eligible expenditures. All in Favor. Mr. Vinskey noted it would have to come out of the undesignated balance account.

- Landlord Fowler Tavern (historic) - 171 Main St. - \$180,870.24

The applicant Mike Tierney addressed the Commission. He is seeking \$180,870.24 dollars from the Community Preservation Fund, this covers phase 2 of his project, and phase 1 was the restoration of the door.

Mr. Tierney gave a brief recap of phase 1 of the project which was the restoration of the door that was hit by a car and proceeded to show photos of the work completed so far on the first phase of the project.

Architect Chris Carey reviewed the current application before the CPC. Some of the items they are seeking funding for is:

- New trim
- New windows
- Composite siding, not vinyl (he noted the historical commission has seen it, it lasts longer than wood and it will not detract from the outside)
- Interior frame work needs to be addressed
- Roofing will be replaced they are trying for a slate look

The idea of the renovation is to have it look historic, to make it a cleaner crisper look.

The committee also inquired about the applicant's portion of funding. Mr. Tierney noted the insurance coverage for the accident was \$ 11,492.50. which was being used as his portion.

Discussion regarding the phase one and phase two funding. Member Porter voiced his concern regarding the funding and that he didn't see where the applicant was contributing money to the project, he further noted he would like to see a match similar to a homeowner were to seek money, would he be willing to put in 50% of the project? Mr. Tierney replied no, he's being doing restoration on the project for years, he's been putting money into the project from his pocket; this is not a gold mine. This house is used for low income housing, for them to put 90,000.00 into it would not be worth it, financially it doesn't make sense. Mr. Porter further stressed he was uncomfortable funding 100% of a private project, adding if he was asked if this was the best way to spend the money he would not support this project. Mr. Tierney noted he respected the Committee's decision but if the it decides not to fund the project he would just paint and patch, the building itself will not be restored and the structural damage will remain; this is not an investors dream.

Further discussion among the members and as to whether or not they felt this is something they should be utilizing the Community Preservation funding on. Should the structure be mildly taken care of or should the structure be total restored to its full extent possible?

Further discussion among members as to the applicant's contribution of his funds versus the CPC's funding. Members voiced their concerns regarding the percentage the CPC would be funding versus the applicants. Chairman Sharp noted he wouldn't mind seeing revised quotes for the front of house. It was further noted it would be to everyone's' advantage to have the house repaired. The Committee also briefly discussed having the architect work the numbers

over again. Mr. Tierney felt the numbers as submitted were pretty good and if they were to be revisited it might come up with a higher figure.

Mr. Tierney noted he would be able to live with a 20% of the cost. The Committee agreed with the 20% and Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Member Gaylord to approve the CPC funding in the amount of \$145,000. (Rounded from \$144,000.00)

Member Porter inquired if he was aware of the requirement for a deed restriction? Yes well aware, sent to state to get approved. The historic restriction should cover the whole building. Planner Vinskey noted the restriction was already required by the previous phase 1 funding. Member Gaylord noted she would like to see a sign in front of the building stating the funding from the CPC. Planner Vinskey further noted per the law department precedent, the funding will not be released until the restriction is finalized, likely several months.

Planner Vinskey noted some funding would be coming from undesignated after all historic is zeroed out.

5. Status of Recommended/Funded Projects

- Outstanding historic preservation restrictions
 - Athenaeum Accessibility

Jane Mulligan addressed the Committee adding the revised restriction was sent to the state 2 weeks ago, the last one rejected stating the reason was more pictures were necessary and they still had questions they needed to be addressed at the local level. One of the concerns they raised was the fact that in perpetuity was put in the restriction, it was her belief the city can put their own local restrictions in rather than the state and felt it should be changed to 35 years.

Planner Vinskey noted a permanent restriction needs to go to the state, he further noted until last year's discussions the historic projects always needed a permanent deed restriction (in is in the Athenaeum's grant agreement). General direction was given that the state restriction should still be pursued; Planner Vinskey noted they may want to discuss with Joe Shibley who just did the restriction on his own for his building (Bismarck Hotel).

- YMCA

Lisa Sullivan, chair, Deb McCarthy vice chair, Andrea Allard present. The Committee was addressed by the YMCA regarding the grant they received from the Community Preservation Committee for \$93,900.00 for the slate roof on the mansion. They proposed a limit of 10 years on the restriction pointing out the life expectancy of the work completed was for 10 years. The Committee members as well as the applicant discussed the restrictions in great length and felt further investigation should be done in regards to the time limits attached to the restrictions possibly setting different time limits for different dollar amounts, maybe funding under \$100,000 could be local/time limited on a case-by-case basis, but no decision was reached.

- Stowe House

The Committee also briefly mentioned the Stowe House which previously had come to the Board regarding doing a local-only restriction, but has not yet returned a draft. Planner Vinskey noted he has reached out but not heard from the applicant for months. After discussion the Committee felt they should ask the Law department to followup with the restriction requirement.

- Hotel Bismarck

Planner Vinskey noted work is beginning and a CPA banner has been ordered and will be placed at the Bismarck Building.

6. Discussion of potential projects

Planner Vinskey noted he had a discussion about Pine Hill Cemetery, but no formal application has been submitted.

7. Annual election of chairperson, vice chairperson

Member Kelly MOTIONED, to retain all current officers. All in favor.

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

Same schedule to be followed. Next meeting second Thursday of July. (7-11-19)

9. Other Business/Future Agenda Items

Planner Vinskey informed the Committee the colors for the sign for the Pitoniak project previously selected had to be changed to tan and green due to availability issues. Hopefully WTA will install this spring.

Motion adjourn at 8:42. AIF

A true record, attest:

Christine Fedora

Community Development, Office Manager