

Town of Agawam Community Preservation Committee

Minutes
January 22, 2020

Members Present: Henry Kozloski, Louis Russo, Rich Maggi, Violet Baldwin, Ray Moreau, Les Tingley, Doreen Prouty, Vin Ronghi, David Cecchi

Others Present: Jennifer Bonfiglio; CPA Administrator

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Kozloski

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Member Russo made a motion to accept the October 23, 2019 meeting minutes as corrected. Seconded by Member Baldwin. All in favor to approve minutes.
2. CPA Balances & Project Updates: An update on all outstanding projects and current fund balances.

\$434,275.11	Reserve for Open Space
\$466,801.76	Reserve for Historic
\$806,667.40	Reserve for Community Housing
\$308,673.66	Budgeted Reserve
<u>\$1,434,673.25</u>	Unreserved fund balance
\$3,451,091.18	

Jennifer Bonfiglio provides a summary of all accounts open as well as those completed and needing to be closed. Motion to close the following accounts and return to the fund appropriated from by Member Ronghi. Second by member Baldwin. All in favor.

TR2011-38	Org/Obj: 61152 52247	Laserfiche Software	\$.05	Historical
TR2017-38	Org/Obj: 61152 58258	Fire Museum Doors	\$ 450.00	Historical
TR2017-63	Org/Obj: 61152 58260	Soldier On Rehab	\$95,000.00	Historical
TR2018-88	Org/Obj: 61152 58261	Minerva Davis Library	\$ 1,121.00	Historical
TR2017-10	Org/Obj: 61152 58432	Bench Replacement	\$ 201.36	Undesignated

3. **Request for funding- Wayfinders-Rosewood Way Townhomes**

James Lynnfield- Project Manager presented the application on behalf of Wayfinders requesting \$564,000 in CPA funds for the project at 586 Mill St. A comprehensive Permit has been issued by the Town. Mr. Lynnfield provides a presentation to the committee which includes information such as Wayfinders experience, history, portfolio and photos of similar projects.

Mr. Lynnfield states the project consists of ten two-story townhomes located on approx. 8 acres. He states the project is a mixed income rental development including 47 affordable units and 15 market rate units. The affordable units' eligibility is 60% of the area wide median income. Currently that is \$53,220 for a family of four to qualify. He adds the projects meets the needs identified in the Housing Needs Assessment and follows goals outlined in the Housing Production Plan.

Member Baldwin asks if the units are built on a slab. Yes

Member Russo asks how big the units are. The average size is 750 sq. ft for a 1 bedroom and 1,200 sq. ft. for a two bedroom.

Member Baldwin asks if the exterior photo of the building is an accurate representation. Mr. Lynnfield states yes, and the plans have been approved by the comprehensive permit.

Chair Kozloski questions what the use of the open parcel in front of the property is. Mr. Lynnfield states there are no plans at this time. Member Baldwin asks how large the open unused parcel is. Mr. Lynnfield states. 5 acres.

Member Ronghi states there is local preference for up to 70% of the units, but there is no mention of these figures in the application. Michelle McNamara, Senior Vice president of Real Estate for Wayfinders, states local preference must be approved by DHCH. Wayfinders is requesting 70% of the units be set aside in a lottery for individuals who work or live in the community. Member Ronghi asks if DHCH declines this request, will Wayfinders consider voluntarily doing local preference. Ms. McNamara states she would be concerned about a fair housing violation. She adds states it is not customary for the state to decline the request. In her 15 years' experience she has never seen the request declined. Member Baldwin asks if other Wayfinders developments provide local preference. Ms. McNamara states yes, Olympia Oaks & Butternut Farm.

Chair Kozloski asks if there are any recreation facilities besides a ½ basketball court as a part of the project. Ms. McNamara states they are limited by state funds although if money allows it will be considered. She added there will be a community room.

Chair Kozloski opens the meeting to the public.

George Bitzas, City Councilor asks why CPA funds? Residents have recently opposed the project and now we are asking the taxpayers to fund a project they opposed. He does not believe it is fair.

Chair Kozloski states the project qualifies for CPA funds under the act. Half of the money raised is from state matching funds.

Motion by Member Maggi to approve the project as proposed. Second by Member Ronghi.

Discussion: Member Moreau is not crazy about the amount of money and would like to see it reduced in half. Member Moreau motions to reduce the approval amount to \$282,000. Second by Member Ronghi for the sake of discussion. Member Maggi states that he feels that the CPA request amounts to 2.6% of the total project cost and it is reasonable for the Town to commit to a valuable project. He feels this is a meager share for the Town to put up. Member Prouty agrees with Member Maggi. She states there is a housing reserve fund in place which is specifically for housing projects. The Committee has supported the housing goals identified in the Housing Production Plan. She feels it is a lot of money but overall it is a very worthy project and beneficial to the Town. The fact that it is a private entity is irrelevant, it qualifies for CPA funds.

Chair Kozloski clarifies the request amounts to \$12,000 per unit for 47 units with an affordable restriction of 45 years. Member Moreau believes it is a lot of money. Chair Kozloski states there is \$800,000 in the housing reserve at this time. He believes CPA should do something in housing.

Member Tingley stated Jennifer provided a breakdown of similar projects funded and the cost CPA contributed per unit. If you throw out the high and low, the average amount similar communities contributed in CPA funds was just around \$11,600 which is close to the requested amount. He feels the committee is now arbitrarily throwing out numbers, but the request is in line with the comparisons. He thinks it is time the CPA committee steps up in regards to contributing to our affordable housing inventory.

Chair Kozloski reminds the committee the motion on the table is for \$300,000.

Member Moreau changes his motion to \$300,000. Second by Member Ronghi. Chair Kozloski calls for vote. 3 in favor, 5 opposed. Motion fails.

Motion remains on the table for \$564,000. Member Ronghi moves the questions. 8 in favor, 1 opposed. Motion approved.

Motion to fund the project from the community Housing Fund by Member Maggi. Second by Member Moreau. All in favor.

4. Request for funding- Learning Tree Conservation Park & Outdoor Classroom

Member Ronghi asks if the item will be reviewed since there is not an opinion of the Solicitor. He suggests tabling until the opinion is received. Jennifer explains the opinion from the solicitor came during the design phase which stated at that time the project was an eligible use of funds. Other Committee member agree and recall the letter, therefore the project can be acted upon.

Chair Kozloski presents the application as the Chair of the Conservation Commission. He states this project began in 2005. The Conservation Commission oversees the parcels. The project was delayed due to the baseball field construction. A meeting was held with High School staff to determine their needs and the public.

Jennifer Bonfiglio provides a brief history. CPA approved design of the project in 2019. R Levesque Associated was hired as the landscape architect. The design was completed in November with input from school and town officials. A copy of the design /site plan is included in the application and is discussed. Plan meets accessibility standards. Jennifer and Chair Kozloski review plan details. Two letters of support included in the project. Member Baldwin asks who the applicant is. Jennifer states the Conservation Commission in conjunction with the Town and School Department are submitting the application. It is a joint effort.

The project was put out to bid. Ten bids were received in December. A high bid of \$584,000 and a lowest bid of \$383,275 was received. J. L. Construction Corp. is the low bidder. They had previously constructed the dog park for the Town.

Member Maggi asks if the site will be open to the general public. He is advised when school is not in session, members of the public can use the site, similar to other school properties.

Members of the committee expressed concerns of security and vandalism. It is explained that there will be security cameras and the site will generally be kept in its natural state while providing access to all individuals. There will be no lighting. Member Baldwin asks about maintenance. The Town will be responsible, although the school will be responsible for the raised bed gardens. The DPW is already plowing and shoveling the area. It is a seasonal site. The trail will not be plowed.

Member Tingley asks where the public would park. The parking area will not be affected. Lines may be added after the conclusion of the construction.

Member Ronghi, Is the path from the school to the site accessible. Yes. Either paved or stone dust. It was designed to accessibility standards.

Member Ronghi questions the accessibility to the full town. Questions providing full funding if not available to public 24 hours/day. Jennifer explains there are many projects in town CPA contributed to that are not available to the public at all times, for example. The tennis courts, track, Perry lane playground. Jennifer also states the intention of the CPA act is to provide a public benefit, the time of use should be irrelevant.

Member Cecchi feels the students of the Town are residents and benefiting from the project during school hours and remaining member of public can use during off. The public overall is not being excluded, just at certain times.

Superintendent Lemanski also in attendance to speak on behalf of the project. He states he has been involved with this project since 2004. The project was delayed for various reasons over the year but feels so close now. Many teachers and departments in the building are excited to use the outdoor classroom. The project will provide a great teaching opportunity for the kids. The science department currently uses the site and project will provide so many opportunities for many other departments, teachers and kids to be outside in a learning environment.

Chair Kozloski opens the meeting to the public.

City Councilor George Bitzas feels it is a great project. It will benefit the whole town. As a former teacher he sees the value of education. He hopes CPA forward to application to the Council.

Motion to approve \$421,600 by Member Ronghi from the open space fund. Second by Member Prouty. All in favor.

5. **CPA Application:** A draft of the revised application submitted to the committee for review and feedback. This will be voted on and discussed at the next meeting.
6. Member Maggi made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Member Moreau. All in favor. Chairman Kozloski closed the meeting at 7:34PM