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Community Preservation Committee
MINUTES OF THE August 14th, 2023 MEETING
Held Virtually using Zoom Online Software

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Members Present:

17 Nancy Heller, Chair

18 David Lescohier, Vice-Chair

19 John Spiers

20 Jenny Raitt

21 Samuel Burrington

22 Joanne Sullivan

23 Blair Hines

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Staff: Tina McCarthy

Members Absent:

Clara Batchelor

Mini Kolluri

Ms. Heller called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Meeting Minutes:

Review was moved to the end of the meeting by the Chair.

Public Comment for items not on the agenda:

Moved to the end of the meeting by the Chair.

CPA Plan Update, JM Goldson

Ms. Goldson reviewed the documents prepared for the CPA plan, the application process, and guidelines. She explained the benefit of a two-step process with an eligibility step first. This would give the staff a chance to help applicants with revisions to meet CPA requirements. She shared the application process timeline and discussed the stages in the process. She asked for questions after reviewing the timeline.

Ms. Heller explained that the Select Board also had a role in the pre-Town Meeting recommendations. Ms. Sullivan asked if a recommendation report would be submitted by both boards. Ms. Heller confirmed.

Ms. Heller asked if the community information sessions would be held by staff or the consultant.

Ms. McCarthy explained that the details would be worked out soon. Ms. Goldson spoke about the structure and purpose of the info sessions. She envisioned 2-3 in September at different times, to cover the 4 application categories. Ms. Heller wanted the sessions to be open to all categories to include everyone who could attend.

Committee members continued reviewing the documents. Mr. Lescohier mentioned the email he sent in advance to the consultants. Ms. Heller brought up related concerns about the details of the Town Meeting process.

48 Mr. Spiers asked for elaboration on the Contracting & Oversight section. He asked the intent of the
49 reporting process established. Ms. Goldson explained the difficulties with CPA projects getting
50 “stuck”, especially when the applicant is not the owner of the property. Projects could get held up
51 by many complications. Town staff and or committee members serve as liaisons, checking in with
52 applicants. If you go with quarterly reports, they often do not get done, and there is no remedy. If
53 anything can be done to facilitate, the liaison will assist. Often, calling the project contact to check
54 in is the best thing. She asked for feedback on the suggestions.

55
56 Mr. Spiers agreed that mid-term reporting was essential, to help improve project completion rates.
57 Supported the idea of a liaison to each project, with biannual reports. Ms. Goldson reviewed some
58 common items in closing reports, such as site visits by Preservation Planners at historic projects to
59 ensure compliance.

60
61 Ms. Sullivan thought the 24-month completion term for housing may be an issue. Ms. Goldson
62 suggested adding “or as otherwise agreed to with applicant”. She offered to share a sample grant
63 agreement, to show standard language for project oversight parameters. Mr. Burrington asked
64 about the process to develop grant agreements. Ms. Goldson suggested approving a template for
65 grant agreements and let staff and legal adapt them to each project. Grant agreement would be for
66 private entity; Town projects would use an MOU.

67
68 Ms. Raitt asked for clarity on the expectations around HABs role in the CPA funding process. The
69 board expected to request funds, but are they the ones working on compliance in the housing
70 category? She clarified that the funding clock should start when funding is disbursed on July 1.

71
72 Ms. Goldson explained how other communities defied the Role of the Housing Trust: They could
73 be just another applicant and follow the same rules. Or, funding could be funneled into the
74 Housing Trust and the Housing Advisory Board becomes essentially an arm of the CPAC. The
75 same could be done for an open space land acquisition fund. Sommerville took this approach for
76 its housing trust, but they are in the minority in the state. This is done to support and expedite
77 housing. Communities that operate this way allocate the whole % right to the Housing Trust and
78 then don’t accept housing applications. Some communities use a mixed approach. Applications
79 could be filed with one or both committees.

80
81 Mr. Lescohier asked if all applicants would apply to the HAB or only developers. Ms. Raitt
82 thought the HAB would prefer to review all applications and have executive power to distribute
83 funds. Ms. Goldson stated that either way, the CPAC can only fund according to its rules; the
84 HAB could not use CPA funds for purposes that do not meet the CPA criteria.

85
86 Mr. Spiers agreed that housing would benefit from a streamlined process, but it needs to be
87 explained to the community- why change the rules in this case? Members discussed required
88 reporting from HAB, as well as project management.

89
90 Ms. Heller thought the details of the process with the HAB should be discussed further at the next
91 meeting. She wanted to remember that “collaborative” projects with housing and other categories
92 was a goal identified by the CPA Plan.

93
94 Ms. Goldson asked for revisions by August 28th at 9 AM and stated that the revised draft would be
95 sent back to staff by September 1st.

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Ms. Heller opened Public Comment-

100 Deborah Brown- hoped the funding process would build in procedures that encourage diverse
101 voices, and that a fair amount of money would go to affordable housing.

102
103 Janice Kahn- was eager to learn more about the combined-category projects. She hoped funds
104 would be used for the greatest community advantage.

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107 **Minutes**

108
109 The minutes of CPA Plan Workgroup 6/9/23 and CPA Plan Workgroup 7/14/23 were postponed to
110 the next meeting so that all workgroup members could review them.

111
112 Ms. Raitt moved to approve the minutes of the 4/7/23 CPA Plan Workgroup. Mr. Lescohier
113 seconded the motion.

114 Vote:
115 David Lescohier- yes; Nancy Heller- yes; Jenny Raitt- yes

116
117 Mr. Spiers moved to approve the minutes of 7/17/23 as submitted. Ms. Sullivan seconded the
118 motion.

119
120 Samuel Burrington- yes; John Spires- yes; David Lescohier- yes; Nancy Heller- yes; Joanne
121 Sullivan- yes; Jenny Raitt- abstain; Blair Hines- had left the meeting

122
123 **Public comment for items not on the agenda:**

124 none

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127 **Other Business:**

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129 The committee discussed the September information sessions and asked staff to follow up with a
130 plan.

131
132 Ms. McCarthy reminded the members about the Farmers Market table on 9/7 & 9/21 and asked
133 members if they still wanted to keep these dates. Ms. Heller asked staff to cancel the dates in favor
134 of planning more appropriate information sessions for applicants. She asked for the meetings to
135 avoid Tuesday nights due to meetings scheduled then.

136
137 Ms. McCarthy updated the members on the new staff position; the job had been posted the previous
138 week.

139
140 Ms. Heller accepted a final comment from Deborah Brown. Ms. Brown thought the Committee
141 should keep their table at the community Farmer's Market event because it was an important
142 community engagement event. She also suggested special events at the Brookline Housing

143 Authority; in person, not on Zoom. Ms. Heller explained that the staff resources were not
144 available.
145 Ms. Raitt thought a table at Brookline Day would be a good opportunity. Sunday the 10th. Ms.
146 McCarthy agreed to email the committee members about available time slots.
147
148 The meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.
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