



City of Westfield

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2016 – 7:00 pm, Room 201, Westfield Municipal Building

Members attending:
Members absent:

Staff attending:

Peter Fiordalice
Cindy Gaylord
Daniel Kelly
Joseph Muto
Vincent Olinski
Bill Porter
Thomas Sharp at 7:02

Jay Vinskey
Christine Fedora

Chairman Muto called the meeting to order at 7:00.

1. Public Participation

Chairman Muto asked if there was anyone in the room who would like to address the committee regarding items not currently before the Board? There being no one heard the Committee proceeded to the next item on the agenda.

2. Review and Approval of 10-8-15 Minutes.

Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Fiordalice to approve the October 8, 2015 minutes as submitted. All in favor. MOTION passes.

3. Review of Budget/Funds

Vinskey presented the committee members with a breakdown of the finances of the CPC. He informed them the open space and historic categories are depleted for this fiscal year and there is approximately 2 million in the balance of the undesignated and the fund balance accounts.

Member Sharp entered at 7:02 and agreed with the minutes. Chairman Muto briefly updated Sharp of the meeting.

Chair Muto felt the report looks fine but felt the Committee should work with the funds they have available and not bond.

4. Review of New/Pend Applications

- *Old Town Hall Restoration*

Addressing the Committee was Bob Brownlee, Chairman of the Church Property Committee. He gave a brief review of the application presented at the Commissions prior meeting. They would like an elevator added to make the second floor accessible, the elevator will be located in the back of the building. He added the church has already spent \$8200.00 in architectural fees.

The Committee reviewed the architect's estimated costs as prepared by Roy S. Brown Architects as well as the improvements which have been done to the church over the years. Chair Muto stated the new kitchen funds would have to be designated from other sources also noting the main entry would be from the back of the building.

Ms. Gaylord presented the Committee with a letter from the Westfield Historic Commission showing their enthusiast support for the renovations planned for the building on 20 Broad Street noting it is one of the oldest buildings, (163 years old) in the city, so it is locally significant.

Chairman Muto asked about a time line moving forward? Mr. Brownlee replied it depended on the funding and if they get tenants to come in, he also noted he doesn't have a specific time line as they would have to have approval from the church for the items that would not be covered by the grant.

Further questions?

Member Sharp inquired if there was anything done regarding a historical restriction on the building? Vinsky informed him that would be something the Committee would typically condition as part of the funding agreement. Chairman Muto added this would allow the Committee to have control over the building. Vinsky also added it has to go the state for approval as well. Member Sharp said he would like to see that prior to making any recommendations. He asked if there would be no significant architectural changes, does it have to show a benefit to the taxpayer? Could something be built into the language as part of the deed? Vinsky informed him the restriction would go on the deed. Vinsky informed the Commission once the funds are approved it is spelled out in the standard grant agreement how the money is to be expended. Vinsky informed him there are special conditions which are written into the grant referencing the Whip Factory restriction as well as the Y's restriction. Mr. Sharp said he would rather see the wording before making a recommendation. He asked if they considered public access to the building, would the city have first dibs on space there, do we want to consider those things? Vinsky felt that would the committee could impose reasonable conditions. Chairman Muto was not sure if the city could have the ability for first refusal.

Vinsky informed the Committee he asked the law department for their opinion on this, they said the Committee could move ahead on this or wait, adding it's a little complicated because of the church and the rental income coming in, apparently the building is not taxed.

Member Gaylord asked if the church would be benefitting or would it be the community? Member Sharp thought it would be prudent to allow the city's legal team to make an opinion here, its thorny condition, granting CPC money to a religious organization. Vinskey asked if may be an issue if this was to support a religious use, but this is considered a historical expenditure because of the building itself. Kelly inquired if there are funds for historical? Is it a clash between church and state? Chairman Muto felt the Committee should look at it as a building, he felt the Committee should be looking at the building itself as historical value to the City of Westfield or are is it benefitting the church and free tax dollars. Member Sharp voiced concerns regarding setting a precedent if the Committee moves ahead with this.

Discussion continued among members as to whether they should vote on this tonight and whether they should be considering the church versus state in their decision or should it be considered on the building itself. A suggestion was made that a site visit be scheduled prior to the Board's next meeting so the members could visit the site. Member Sharp MOTIONED, seconded by Member Fiordalice to continue to the Commission's next meeting unless a meeting is required prior to the next scheduled meeting.

All in favor.

5. Status of Recommended /Funded Projects

- Historical records marriage, birth certificates

City Clerk Karen Fanion addressed the Commission regarding the project the Committee had funded for the historical preservation of the Clerk's records. She brought samples of some of the work the company had preserved. She also noted how the vault is redone. She thanked the Committee for their support in approving this project.

- Pitoniak Project

Vinskey informed the Committee we own the Pitoniak land and he had received his money. The restriction is not in place they are still being worked on adding there is no time limit as to when the restriction has to be completed.

- West Farms Schoolhouse

Vinskey informed the Committee there is more work can to be done. Gaylord noted Historical Commission control of the building.

- Old Burying Ground

The next round of repairs will be completed in April.

- Hangar II

Vinskey informed the Commission the Historical Commission was supposed to review the final plans. Vinskey also said there should be Memorandum of Agreement with the Airport Commission at some

point; he'll follow up. Member Sharp asked if there would be bonding for this project? Vinskey informed him there would be some bonding adding the Committee didn't want to deplete their funds. Chairman Muto added the Commission is staying away from bonding now, there were a lot of projects at that time.

6. Discussion potential projects

- Vinskey informed the Commission that Moseley School may be coming in April.

7. Discussion of CPC plan, priorities, procedures –no discussion.

8. Annual election of chairperson, vice chairperson

- Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Sharp to continue with Chair Muto and Vice chairperson Porter. All in Favor.

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

- The Committee voted to keep it every 3 months, second Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

Kelly MOTIONED to adjourn at 8:26. AIF.