



City of Westfield
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Community Preservation Committee Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2018 – 6:30 pm, Room 201, Westfield Municipal Building

Members attending:
Members absent:

Staff attending:

William Carellas(Alt)
Cheryl Crowe
Kate Deviny(Alt)
Cynthia Gaylord
Daniel Kelly
Joe Muto
Vincent Olinski
William Porter
Thomas Sharp
Michael Farrell (Alt)

Jay Vinskey
Christine Fedora

APPROVED

In the absence of Chairman Muto Member Sharp called the meeting to order at 7:00.

1. Public Participation

Member Sharp 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 (10-12-17) Minutes.

Member Gaylord MOTIONED, seconded by Member Porter to approve the 10-12-17 minutes with the following amendment: Member Kelly was not in attendance. All in favor. MOTION passes.

3. Review of Budget/Funds

Vinskey gave a brief review of the budget. The budget total is approximately \$800,000.00. He further noted a big chunk of the annual funding had been designated to the Recreation Project for the Rail Trail in the amount of \$250,000.00, leaving \$65,000 in undesignated and \$50,000 each in

housing, open space and historic. Back balance is \$239,000 in undesignated and \$348,000 targeted for housing. annual State match is included in these numbers.

The committee noted they recently spent a lot of money and don't have fund reserve as before; should keep that in mind, budget wise. Vinskey noted there is nothing CPC can't afford that is before it right now.

4. Review of New/Pending Applications

- Stanley Park (historic) – Western Avenue - \$85,000

Member Gaylord initiated the discussion. She informed the members the Historic Commission felt this project was culturally significant if not historically significant (as replicas) they are fully in support of restoring the Colonial Village.

Member Sharp noted initially the cpc was not sure whether this was eligible to be funded. Read state wording into the record from Vinskey summarizing eligibility for funding.

Bob McKean, Jeff Glaze, Barbara Brain and Angela Geroin were in attendance and asked if the members had any questions and or concerns? Mr. Glaze noted they want to keep the park open and thanked the Commission for their consideration. He further noted the park is a public park which is open to the public, it is privately owned.

The petitioner updated members on the buildings they asked the funding for. He noted they are seeking funding for the Grind Mill, Meeting House, their intentions to update and restore those facilities. He voiced his concerns regarding the deed restriction that would be placed if the funding were approved.

Vinskey added he forwarded the draft restriction as it is the policy of the CPC to place a restriction on private entities that seek funding.

The applicant's addressed the Commission and stated the park was established as a private park and they have never charged admission, the park itself is already designated to be in perpetuity, he felt it was unusual to ask for a deed restriction when something is already in perpetuity.

Lengthy discussion regarding the deed restrictions and possible different terms of the restriction as well as the fact Stanley Park already has in its Incorporation Document the park will be in perpetuity and felt that would be ample. The Committee noted the restriction is not for unfettered access to the park but rather protection the buildings will remain unchanged, protection of taxpayers' investment. They also noted they did not want to approve until the Law Department had an opportunity to review. Mr. Glaze noted it already is permanently set aside.

Member Gaylord noted the alternative to this may be to lose the buildings.

Members inquired as to the leveraging of funds. They informed the Committee they have approximately \$46,000 from various donors.

Angela addressed the Board and wanted to assure the Board they are passionate about keeping this in perpetuity and keep the wishes of Frank Stanley Beveridge alive. The cpc generally was acceptable to considering a time-limited deed restriction, perhaps 30 years. Member Sharpe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Kelly to continue to the next meeting.

The Committee also discussed the possibility of holding a special meeting if necessary. The Board felt if this is something that would be necessary they would do it. Member Porter said he would like a legal opinion in writing as to if a shorter term of 30 years would be acceptable from the legal perspective. All in favor, motion to carries.

Councilor Dan Allie suggested the Committee could add conditions to their approval.

5. Status of Recommended/Funded Projects

- WHIP Museum

Carol Martin updated the Board as to the status of her project. The exterior is complete, the restriction has been recorded, and the sprinkler system is in. She added the accessibility is still being worked on.

She is hoping the main building will be open this fall or winter, the second floor currently is not working, if it doesn't work they will be able to show it as a display area. The third floor contains the company's records. The basement contains machinery.

She further noted the first opening will be the first floor which is the main floor it will be the Westfield room with state of the art space which will have a gift shop, food service.

Vinskey noted he's heard from people who are critical about the vines that are growing, some think it looks neglected. Ms. Martin informed the Board she is hoping to have them pruned but maintained.

- Athenaeum Accessibility -Vinskey informed the Commission the Athenaeum's restriction is tied up, the state requested a new draft be completed.
- YMCA-They have reported they have hired a surveying firm to isolate the mansion from its other properties in order to allow the restriction to be recorded.
- Stowe House -Cindy offered to follow-up with the applicant as to the status of this.
- West Farm School House - It was noted the transfer of the care and custody of the West Farms School House on Montgomery Road still needs to be transferred from the School Department to the Historical Commission, there is also a 2 reading requirement of the council prior to passing.
- Bismarck Hotel - Vinskey informed the Commission the details regarding the Bismarck Hotel and their mortgage holder have been worked out and they are ready to move forward. It is currently still in committee with the City Council.

6. Discussion of potential projects

- Elks Lodge -Vinsky informed the Committee they have not filed an application, they are planning on coming in April.
- Others

Member Gaylord informed the Commission she met with Pinehill Cemetery last night and it was her understanding they will be applying for funding for wrought iron fencing and possibly for a stone entryway.

Reporter asked about housing money? Member Kelly felt that could be something he might be able to touch base on and report back to the cpc at the next meeting.

7. Scheduling of annual public hearing

Member Kelly MOTIONED, seconded by Chair Muto to hold the public hearing at the next regular meeting scheduled for April. All in Favor.

8. FY 19 Budgeting.

The Committee discussed the possibility of changing the way the budget is currently being calculated, they thought possibly they may want to increase the open space funds, given the fact so much is going to the Rail Trail District, which would give the Committee some type of a shield. The possibility of setting up a Housing Trust to utilize surplus housing funds was also briefly discussed. After discussion the committee felt they should leave the funding line items as they currently are distributed.

9. Open Space and Recreation Plan update – not discussed

10. Annual election of chairperson, vice chairperson

A motion was made and seconded to re appoint Joe Muto as Chair. Chair Muto appreciated the nomination but felt it was time for him to step down as Chair.

Member Kelly NOMINATED Tom Sharp as Chair, Member Muto seconded. All in favor.

Member Kelly NOMINATED member Muto as Vice-Chair, seconded. All in favor.

Next meeting planned for April 12.

Motion to adjourn at 8:43. All in favor.